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Secularization and the Development of Religion in Modern Polish Society

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Edited by
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INTRODUCTION

LEON DYCZEWSKI

In European societies there are three characteristic phenomena related to religion:

- a progressive secularization in various forms and different areas of life,
- increased interest in non-material values, the meaning of life, a renewal of religious life and new forms of religiosity, especially in the younger generation,
- the formation of extra-religious spirituality.

The beginning of the 21st century is marked with a strong emphasis on a rationalized, effective and empirical approach towards man and his activity, including the religious. This is being enhanced by the maximization of a multifaceted consumption, which is becoming more and more often the indicator of man's presence and development in contemporary society. This way of perceiving man and his identity effectively drowns out spiritual needs and pushes them into the private sphere of human life. Many contemporary people do not make the effort to understand the previously accepted truths of faith since these seem worthless when juxtaposed to materialism, obsession with numbers, and the expectation of immediate results, faith seem worthless. So, the presence of God in people's consciousness, the presence of religion and the Church in social consciousness and public space have become an existential and intellectual problem. Even more so the former than the latter. More people live now as if there was no God than those determined to reject God. For many, God still exists, but has "lost" the power to influence their life choices. They achieve the goals set by themselves and judge their own actions, as well as those of other people, without referring to God. The gap widens between people's life in the individual and social dimension and the axio-normative system, based on God. This is the deepest expression of the secularization of modern societies. It is becoming a difficult, or even impossible, task to determine how many people function in this kind of "instability" in particular societies of Europe, but their style of life which differs from the Christian one, is a fact. Non-religiosity as a binding principle in

politics and lawmaking has also been accepted by the European Union, which through constantly growing institutions exerts decisive influence on many areas of the social and economic life of its member and candidate states. Liberal and non-religiously oriented politicians dominate the discussion on the shape of the future of Europe, determined to void it of values and erase all mention of Christian roots in European culture. Will this tendency result in making man happy? Historical experiences, especially in the 20th century, cast doubts. Anti-Christian socialism and German national socialism did not bring about anything good, both have destroyed millions of human beings and a large part of the heritage of many generations.

Beside the secularization processes outlined above, in European societies of late 20th and early 21st century there are symptoms of renewal and religious awakening; new forms of religiosity and spirituality are taking shape. These transformations occur with different intensity in different countries. Notions of God and attitudes toward Him are diversified, as are the approaches to the religious community. Many young Christians make choices in the fundamental truths of their faith and interpret them in their own way. Their selections also include moral norms and Christian models of behaviour, which function only in the private sphere or only during meetings which are definitely religious.

Many people seek to satisfying their religious needs outside the Church, in para-religious or therapeutic groups, in lay institutions or in non-religious ways. More and more often there occurs some kind of sacralization of psychotherapeutic practices, artistic, political and economic activities which become a nearly divine sphere with unquestioned authority in everyday decisions.

New forms of religiosity in Europe are usually set in the Christian tradition or a particular Christian denomination. There are also forms which take their core from Christianity and combine it with elements of various religions and lay practices or are a typical compilation of beliefs and practices originating in different religions, traditions and cults, often connected with the philosophy of the Far East.

Religiosity today has many changing “faces”; comparatively uniform in the past, now it is being transformed into diversity. This is one of the most important features of contemporary culture, based on the contemporary person’s sensitivity to spiritual matters, often reduced to intense experiences.

In modern society spirituality has become an important social and cultural phenomenon and usually has positive connotations, since it is associated with the effort of achieving a higher spiritual state, it is expressed in self-education and the development of personality, coping with suffering, striving after comprehending the world and finding the meaning of life.

Whereas in the past all spirituality had an exclusively religious character, now it is developed independently of any religion or even as an alternative to it, so one can be at the same time a spiritual and non-religious person.

Religiosity is associated with a concrete religion, dogmas, moral norms, priests, Churches, religious institutions and social organizations, with some traditional forms of expression and group practices. Conversely, spirituality is directly associated with experiencing the meaning of life and God, and invokes a lifestyle. Religiosity is often described as an objective, external reality, individual and social, while spirituality is something subjective, internal and exclusively individual.

The majority of people consider themselves to be both religious and spiritual persons, while the minority define themselves as spiritual, but not religious; for them spirituality means rejecting religion. Religiosity can be easily observed, defined, and attributed to some qualities, whereas spirituality is quite difficult to define and identify. It is a new phenomenon, diverse and not much researched, but still characteristic of many individuals and social groups.

Confrontational and competitive approaches to religiosity and spirituality have arisen in the culture promoting individualism, where traditional authorities and cultural norms are questioned and rejected. In spite of the ubiquitous critique of religiosity, new religious groups and new forms of religiosity are gaining ever greater popularity and the existing ones continue to exist. In turn, people who abandon traditional religiosity and look for something deeper than satisfying basic needs often share the beliefs of believers, and establish organizations which differ from the traditional religious ones only in their being new.

Political, social, cultural and economic transformations which have occurred in Polish society in the last 50 years on one hand are favourable to the secularization processes, but they take a slower and different course than further West in Europe. On the other hand, they are a challenge for religious people, who are open to a dimension of life deeper than consumption. Religion in Polish society is still a widespread phenomenon, and the Catholic Church has its place. These are the issues to which this volume is devoted. However, it does not contain a description and comprehensive analysis of all Christian Churches and religious associations in Poland. In the first seven chapters the reflection is focused on the situation of religion and spirituality in contemporary Polish society. The authors try to find the answers to the following questions: is religion necessary for contemporary man, can he live and develop himself without it? Do modernization processes have to drive religion out of social life? How can religion cooperate with the so-called modernity? What are the prospects for religion in a modernizing society? (L. Dyczewski). What is the attitude of the Catholic Church

towards new religious phenomena and new forms of spirituality (K. Klauza). After the chapters trying to answer these questions a statistical presentation of the Catholic Church in Poland bring one possible positive answer (L. Dyczewski). Then, transformations in morality in Polish society are analysed, since morality is a constitutive part of religion. According to the Christian religion God holds each person accountable, after their death, not for their beliefs (or the quality of these), but for how they have lived: whether or not their life conformed to the religious truths and norms (M. Hułas). The next two chapters speak about the important role of Church (L. Dyczewski) and feasts (A. Sugier-Szerega) in shaping the religiosity and personality of man. New phenomena manifest this a particular religiosity and spirituality in contemporary culture (M. Sławek Czochra, A. Zduniak).

The media have a very big impact on the situation of religion and Catholic Church in Poland. In the process of modernization they have developed instantaneously, becoming modernized and gaining in diversity. Commercial, foreign capital media which dominate the Polish media market are secular and mainly left-wing. Catholic press has only about 2% of the press market and even less in TV and radio.

The extent and form of religiosity and spirituality present in the media create a new space for bi-directional information and communication and shape the future character of evangelism. In the apostolic times St. Paul appeared in Jewish synagogues, on the Greek agora, in Roman theatres here he proclaimed the Good News. Today Christians have at their disposal tools of virtually global scope and use them effectively. Religion, spirituality and Church issues appear not just in the so-called confessional media. Therefore, the next chapters deal with the presence of these topics in opinion-making secular press – the left-wing oriented one (J. Szulich-Kałuża), in social networks (J. Szegda), and the internet (K. Jurek, J. Kloch, M. Przybysz).

The analyses presented in the present volume, completed with other papers concerning the transformations in Polish society, make it possible to formulate the following conclusions in relation to religion, and in particular to the Catholic Church and its role.

In Polish society there is a strong connection between the Christian faith and culture, which is particularly noticeable in the customs and traditions of religious, national and local holidays, as well as in the situation of national or state threats. There is still a relatively strong transfer of faith in the family, with a large participation of grandparents. Polish religiosity includes a strong emotional element, perceptible in elaborate forms of celebrations, which overshadow the content, which also finds its expression in a relatively low level of religious knowledge and growing concern about decorative (esthetical) elements in religious services where an esthetization of liturgy can be

observed. There is a marked development of religious movements and groups, new forms of religiosity, especially among the young generation. On this basis religious elites are formed, expressed in more conscious connection between religious beliefs and everyday life, care for a higher quality of family life, a larger number of children in the family, a stronger family bond, critical attitude towards consumerism, using free time for one's development, care about prayer and broadening one's religious knowledge. There is an increasing awareness of Catholics getting involved in charities and aid initiatives, in economic, political and cultural activities. Undesirable phenomena of Polish religiosity include: the decline in the regularity of religious practice among the young, a selective approach to dogmas and moral norms, a lack of consistence between one's behaviour and the professed moral norms.

The following tasks of Catholics in Polish society can be considered fundamental: – propagating a personalist concept of man and social life and interpreting in a more comprehensible manner, the fundamental value triads: 1. the good, the true and the beautiful; 2. faith, hope and love; 3. the dignity of the human person, social justice, solidarity; care for a greater consistency between religious norms and everyday life. This means giving Christian witness; showing the Christian to be a joyful person, open to people and the world, skilfully combining modernity with tradition. This requires a language of dialogue and a culture of reconciliation; a more effective use of the new media in spreading the Good News; a fuller involvement of lay people in evangelization; and showing the Church as the milieu of freedom, dialogue and creative activity.

The situation of the Catholic Church in Poland resembles in part the situation of other European Union countries. It manifests such phenomena as: a silent discrimination of Catholics by state institutions and mainstream media, manifested, for instance, in blocking the Catholic candidates for important public posts and positions in the public media; a lack of definite Catholic authorities or weakening them through the application of the collective responsibility principle in the case of the clergy when individual cases of negative behaviours are revealed; strong consumer attitudes following the celebrities' lifestyles; focusing on one's career and the gratification of personal needs; aggressive, confrontational laicism; propagating anticlericalism and negative attitudes towards the Church.

The tendencies outlined above, concerning the religiosity and spirituality, as well as the Catholic Church which is still important, though strongly criticised, in Polish society, are difficult to associate unambiguously with a optimistic or pessimistic scenario of the prospects shaping Polish religiosity. In the historical and social perspectives the

Church and related religious and cultural traditions seem to be one of the most long-lasting institutions. It firmly and consistently defends the moral order, the clear meaning of principles and an order based on lasting universal values. A religious awakening (often followed by pro-social and pro-citizen attitudes) is found in a spiritual experience of transformation effected by experiencing the *sacrum*. This is the goal of numerous activities, including those in the new media, which reach mainly the younger generation of Poles. From the reflection of the authors of the present volume an image of religiosity and spirituality of Polish society emerges. It is diverse with multiple, sometimes fragmentary, aspects which create relatively good potential for further growth. It brings hope that the roots of more than the thousand-year-old history of Christianity in Poland have not been definitively cut off, and under the right conditions life-bringing sap can stimulate the tree to still bear fruit.

CHAPTER I

RELIGION: SPIRITUALITY IN MODERNITY

LEON DYCZEWSKI

In *primaeval* societies and in European societies up to the time of the Enlightenment there was no conflict between what is religious – the sacred, and what is secular – the profane. They were domains that were complementary to each other. Religion pervaded all individual, family and social lives; it explained the mysteries of the world and of the human; it was the foundation of axiology; it regulated the relations between people, between man and the natural environment; and it gave a vision of both earthly life and the life after death. Those who cared about the sacred, about the religious life – that is priests, ‘the servants of the altar’ – constituted part of the sacred. In the Middle Ages the Church also defined itself as part of the sacred and tried to obtain the protection of the secular authorities (the concept of *brachium saeculare*). Secular authorities did protect the Church, at the same time drawing justification for their activities from religion. Shaping the life of the state and social life was based on religion. Often they used religion and the Church for their own aims that sometimes were incompatible with religion – e.g. the medieval institution of the Holy Office and the Spanish Inquisition. It was a secular institution, but a decision of a religious nature was necessary to pronounce a judgment; and the decision was made by a representative of the Church. Both sides thought that they profited from this situation, as any person who ‘thought differently’ was not welcomed by either secular or Church authorities. Similarly in ancient Israel. Priests did not have the right to pronounce a judgment on Jesus, so they made a charge against him to Pilate who represented secular authorities. The reason for making the charge was a religious one, but knowing that Pilate would not be bound by Jewish religious beliefs, they charged Jesus with the political crime: of claiming to be a king, and hence threatening the authorities that were in power. The death sentence given to Jesus was satisfactory both for the religious and secular leaders.

The attitude towards religion was different in particular periods of history, in various fields of life and in different societies. Hence every attempt to theoretically define this issue is a gross simplification. Realizing this fact I limit myself to our contemporary times and to European societies, first of all to the Polish society, but sometimes I

refer to the United States, in order to emphasize the fact that although these societies have a common cultural heritage, religion has a different position in them.

THE POSITION OF RELIGION IN IMPORTANT DOMAINS OF PUBLIC LIFE

Since the time of the Enlightenment in European societies important domains of public life have started to be liberated from the authority of the Church, from religion and to make sacred what is secular. This process is also going on today in a way that is best seen in four basic domains: ones connected with the state, the outlook on the world, artistic work and public opinion.

Liberating the Domain of the State from Religion

Along with the social development secular authorities and the state ever more clearly are becoming independent of the Church and religion. This is manifested in various ways, but in connection with our subject two phenomena seem to be important:

A Change in the View of the Sources of Authority and of the Rules of Social Life. Since the period of the Enlightenment political leaders, in order to legitimize their authority, ever more clearly have been looking for justification of the functioning of the state and for legitimization of their authority outside religion; not in God, but in man. They have been eagerly using the Aristotelian-Thomist concept concerning the social nature of man, but they have been interpreting it without reference to God, and they have accepted the view that it is not God who gives them power, but it is people who elect them and want to be obedient to them. In consequence of this view the divine law, and then the natural law have been rejected, and positive law made by people and institutions currently wielding power in the country has been accepted as the basis for social life. Rules that were based up till then on religious premises have not been altogether rejected, but the ones that have been left have been given a secular interpretation. Such a view of authority and law today has the result of liberating state life from the control of the Church as well as from religion.

Development of State Institutions and Social Organizations. In European societies up to the 20th century individuals most often joined various associations, organizations and brotherhoods under the supervision of Christian Churches, e.g. Catholic Action, Catholic Workers' Association, Knighthood of the Immaculate, Apostleship of

Prayer, Charity Brotherhood, Christian Mothers Brotherhood, Brotherhood of Good Death. Schools, hospitals and craftsmen's guilds were also bound-up with the Church. They performed social, economic or cultural tasks in close connection with religion; the sacred was present in their activities. Along with social development and development of the state, a variety of associations and institutions were formed outside the Church. Some of them have nothing to do, or even want to have nothing to do with religion. As the number of such institutions grew in a country, the more modern it is considered.

A modern country gives its citizens a lot of chances to fulfill themselves by being members of various organizations and associations. They are well organized and equipped with all the means for attaining the aims that are set, however, they lack the character of a community and they do not give a possibility of comprehensive development for the human personality. This is because their aim is first of all to respond to a person's particular needs. Max Weber, predicting the development of institutions and organizations in modern society, assessed them critically and defined them as an 'iron cage'. Indeed, it is a world that is safer, more convenient and nicer than the old one; one that facilitates a person's actions; however, in a way it limits him/her and isolates him/her from other people.

A change in the view of the sources of authority and of the rules of social life as well as the development of state institutions and social organizations that started displacing Church institutions and organizations has a great impact on working out the so-called concept of the secular state that is becoming ever more independent from the Church and religion in many different ways. The alliance of 'the throne and the altar' that was so typical of traditional society, has been broken. This is the first form of secularization, now commonly approved of, both by those who belong to the Church, and by those who stay outside it. However, this raises the question: Is there a possibility of a dialogue between the Church on the one hand, and the secular state on the other? We will come back to this question, but now it is worth noting that separation of the state from the Church had different forms in European countries and in America, Canada, or Australia. In European countries it often had a stormy or even bloody character, destroying anything that was connected with religion. The French Revolution and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the civil wars in Spain and Mexico, as well as the totalitarian systems of Nazi socialism in Germany and of Russian Communism are examples of this. In Spain in the years 1936-1939 6,832 clergymen (12% of the Spanish clergy) were murdered, 12 thousand Catholic Churches (half of all those in the country) were destroyed (Górny, 62). It was different in the United States, where from the very beginning the state was formed according to the rule of

separation from the Church. It was not a struggle against the Church and religion, but rather cooperation in forming a new society.

Liberating the Domain of the Outlook on the World from Religion

Along with the growth of knowledge and with the development of technology religious views of the world and of man were ever more precisely tested and compared with scientists and their discoveries and inventions. It was not rare that a lack of conformity between them was found (the example of Galileo) and starting with the Enlightenment period, among the intellectual and political elites agnosticism and aversion to the Church, began to dominate ever more clearly. The elites forced the view that the world has no more mysteries and everything may be explained with the help of reason and experiment. Disenchantment of the world came, as the process of change in the outlook on the world was defined by Max Weber. People stopped believing in supernatural forces, in spirits, in the afterlife; the Bible no longer was the first book that was read, or even the fundamental one; religious subjects ceased being interesting for artists and philosophers; and if so, a rather critical approach was taken. According to Daniel Bell, even in the 1970s most sociologists presented such an attitude towards religion (Bell 1983, 1378). Social elites saw the Church as an institution that could not keep pace with modern knowledge and modern technology. The Church, in this view, did not understand man and did not explain the world.

With the development of the social sciences, such as sociology, psychology, pedagogy or economy interest in the human increased. Questions like where has the world come from, and how does it develop stopped being interesting for the average man; God stopped being necessary for explaining the universe and the history of the world. Such explanations were given by scientists and researchers. Modern man, rather, needs God to shape his own personality, to relieve his tension and resolve conflicts, to return to his inner balance. Modern man, in a way, dethroned God who had been ruling and judging, and put Him in himself, in his own inside, and sees Him first of all as a father, protector, councilor, friend (Berger 1997, Luckmann 1996, Bell 1983).

Liberating Domain of Artistic Work from Religion

In the field of culture, especially the arts, since the epoch of the Enlightenment man has been becoming more and more important and it is the human that has become the main motif for artists, replacing God, good and evil spirits, the truths of the faith, the saints or religious events. It is easy to see this when one passes the rooms of great European

museums, from ones devoted to the Middle Ages to ones in which modern works of art are exhibited. Not only have their authors abandoned religious subjects, but they also have freed their works of religious and ethical norms. Esthetics and expression have become the main criteria ruling works of art; and this has resulted in art without limits that was formed in Europe in the second half of the 20th century, whose aim was to impress the audience, give them a certain experience or shock them. Art took vulgar sex, murder, disorder and sacrilege etc. as its subjects. In the so-called avant-garde, artists and audiences demand evil; even fascination with it has appeared, as the phenomenon was described by Alfred de Musset (*curiosite du mal*). ‘Murder, says Bell, is no longer Kain’s badge; it has become an act of excitation influenced by latent urges that cannot be controlled’ (Bell 1983, 1382). Through art man has started revealing his lowest drives and lusts, and in this way art has moved away from religion; perhaps, more importantly, it has started replacing religion.

Liberating Public Opinion from Religion

For many centuries public opinion in European countries was shaped first of all by clergymen, preachers, missionaries, teachers and students. Since print was invented, and especially since the mass media developed, for the press starting with the 16th century, film and radio with the beginning of the 20th century, and then television and the Internet, public opinion has been shaped first of all by lay people who usually have secular views, with a tendency to take liberal positions in many fields of life. Today’s creators of public opinion, as a rule, pass over religion and the sacred, which they often disregard or ridicule.

The above mentioned phenomena today are treated as manifestations of secularization, and of modernity. Researchers who examine social life have noticed a peculiar interdependence between them, and starting with Emil Durkheim they have been conducting intensive studies of this issue. Max Weber – to put it very simply – formulated this interdependence in the following way: the more intensive the approach of modernity, the more religion retreats. Hence religion started to be seen as a pre-scientific phenomenon and it was predicted that with the development of science, research and the development of modern thinking, religion will disappear.

Christian Churches were pronounced a factor that inhibits the process of modernization; and of the three Christian Churches most popular in the countries belonging to the European culture the Protestant Church was recognized as one that supports the cause of modernization the most, while the Orthodox Church was the one that supported it least.

Sociologists in European countries, supported by Weber's authority, zealously have studied various manifestations of secularization understood as a 'process, in which religion loses its significance both in society and in individual awareness' (Berger 2009-1010, 89). Most European sociologists gladly find that religion constantly retreats because modernity develops, and there is no room for it in modern times. Liberals of all factions see Christian Churches as an enemy of modernity and modernization of society, and hence their position should be weakened. Secularization accompanies modernization, and according to extreme views disappearance of religion is a condition for modernization.

A peculiar myth of secularization has been created by liberals of all brands and it is being popularized today. In Europe it has been accepted by all social groups. In Poland a considerable segment of liberal thinkers are convinced that it is more true even today. They happily acknowledge the research results showing a decrease in the number of young people who want to become clergymen, a decrease in the number of people participating in obligatory religious practices, or the disappearance of religious customs. The studies that find this are immediately published by all the media in Poland whereas all manifestations of the vitality of religion, e.g. an increase in the number of people who lead a closed retreat, days of reflection, etc, are ignored.

SYMPTOMS OF SECULARIZATION

Secularization is a broad term and it is manifested in a variety of phenomena. Here I discuss the following examples as typical of European societies:

A Further 'Emancipation' of the State, Law, Economy, Science, Art etc. from Religious Institutions and Norms. These spheres of life have become the so-called secular zone. Classical theories of secularization consider this process as a basic one and it was discussed above. In Poland separation of Christian Churches and other religious organizations on the one hand and the State on the other is constitutionally approved.

A Decrease in the Number of People Who Pursue Obligatory Religious Practices and in the Number of Clergymen. These phenomena are noted in all European countries, including Poland, although in Poland it is only less dramatic (Mariański 2006, 2008, 2013; Dyczewski 1985). In such countries as France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, that even a few decades ago were an example of vivid religiousness the percentage of people pursuing religious practices has lowered

significantly. Also the number of priestly and monastic vocations has declined. Moreover many baptized people leave the Church, and some Church buildings are being desacralized and sold for cultural or educational purposes or turned into such facilities.

Secular Interpretation of Religious Truths, Events, Behaviors, Figures, Places, Customs and Symbols. In the new interpretation they lose their connection with God, albeit on the outside they retain features of the sacred. There are a lot of examples showing this, like solemn ceremonies of blessing of facilities (e.g.stadiums, parliament halls, supermarkets etc.). Many people taking part in religious rituals do not understand the words, objects or behaviors used in them. The phenomenon of secularization of typical religious behavior is well illustrated by a statement of Richard Dawkins, a biologist and philosopher of science: ‘For a long time Christmas has not been a religious festival, and its very name has been deprived of religious connotations. The feast has been separated from religion....Culturally I am a Christian. In principle I am a post-Christian atheist....However, I can’t see a reason why I should avoid the term Christmas” and wish only a “Happy Holidays”. I always wish everybody a “Merry Christmas”, and not – as promoters of political correctness encourage us – a “Happy Holidays” (Dawkins 2008).¹

Secularization of Public Life, Public Space and Religious Holidays. In many parts of Europe new crucifixes, roadside shrines devoted to the Virgin Mary, statues and pictures of saints do not appear in public space any more. Obligatory work and trade have invaded religious time and religious feasts. In such Catholic countries as Hungary there are no limitations for trading on Sundays or holidays; in Italy supermarkets are only closed on the most important holidays; and it is similar in Poland. In order to emphasize its areligiousness, and first of all its non-Christian character, the European Union did not mark Christian holidays in its calendar for 2012.

Secularization of the Lifestyle by Excessive Consumption, Convenience, Being Oriented Towards Pleasure, Unlimited Attitude of Gaining Material Goods. Although consumerism, convenience, pleasure, or wealth are not forbidden by religion, all great religions require limitations in these fields. Nowadays, however, people are predisposed towards extending their consumption. The development of consumer needs blocks the development of spiritual and religious needs.

¹ Interview with Richard Dawkins, a biologist and philosopher of science. Monika Florek-Moskal. “Wprost” 21-28.12.2008.

Transition 'from Participation to Consumption' in Using Religious Services. i.e. religious institutions ever more clearly are treated as facilities, just like cultural institutions, gasworks or power stations. Not everybody uses them to the same degree – this depends on one's needs, possibilities and willingness. It happens ever more often that people without participating in fundamental religious practices and without obeying religious moral norms demand a solemn wedding or a religious funeral, because it is a nice ceremony.

Secularization of the Media. Most often the media belong to people having a liberal orientation who expect profits from them. Hence there is little religious content in them. The people running the media neglect religious issues, or even disregard and ridicule them. Believers respond to this very weakly or do not respond at all, which could also prove their peculiar secularization.

A Change in the Understanding of the Sacred, and First of All a Change in the Young Generation's Attitude towards the Sacred. An authentic attitude towards the sacred contains two phenomena that are parallel: *fascinosum* and *tremendum* (Otto 1917; 1923, Eliade 1970). For many contemporary people *tremendum* in their attitude towards the sacred does not exist, and even if it does, it is in vestigial form only. Definitely *fascinosum* dominates. If it is not there, if many young people today do not experience fascination with the supernatural world, they leave it. Another manifestation of the crisis of the sacred in the young generation is a reversal of the roles. In the past it was the sacred that dictated the conditions to man, i.e. the sacred chose the place where it revealed itself and acted, it chose the people devoted to its matters, and it also dictated the aims and the norms in life. Man was completely subjected to the sacred and saw his life as service to the sacred. Many modern people who recognize the sacred subdue it. They approach it in a utilitarian way. They do not give the sacred something of themselves, but they expect a lot from it – at least extraordinary experiences, elations, lofty moments of purification. If they do not get it, they part with the sacred they had and start looking for something new, or they remain indifferent towards the sacred. The crisis of the sacred is also manifested in the fact that the position of the Church as the institution taking care of the sacred and as the carrier of culture formed on the basis of the sacred has been shaken. It is subjected to sharp criticism like any other institution, and in many cases even sharper.

Privatization of Religion in the Field of Views and Practices. This is manifested in various ways, among others, in the fact that Christians reduce dogmas and ethical principles to those that can be rationally

understood and justified. Some Catholics do not recognize the dogma of papal infallibility, or of the Virgin Mary's Immaculate Conception; some Christians question Jesus' divinity and they are satisfied with recognizing Him as an exceptional prophet; they demand relaxation of ethical rules concerning sexual and marital life, the Church's agreement to contraception, abortion, euthanasia, homosexual marriages, in vitro fertilization etc.

A selective approach towards religion occurs, according to the rule: you choose and you join according to your own needs and possibilities. A peculiar religious bricolage functions here, as this phenomenon was called by Daniele Hervieu-Léger (2004), or a religious patchwork (Robert Wuthnow). Everyone creates a religion for himself. However, Europeans form their religion individually, whereas Americans do it in groups, as they have developed forms of team work better and they live in organizations; it can also be said that they are more public-spirited than Europeans.

Faith without Affiliation Becoming Popular. In European countries there are people who believe in God and recognize the sacred, but who do not belong to any Church. They say: God – yes, the Church – no; they even withdraw from the Church. Also the reverse phenomenon occurs, which Grace Davie defined as a vicarious religion (Davie 1994; 2000). This religion is formed by those who are not involved religiously, but want the Church to exist as an institution of society's constancy, as an institution with beautiful traditions and rituals that they themselves also take advantage of. Hence in Germany a lot more people pay the eight percent income tax for the Church than regularly pursue religious practices. They could withdraw and be *konfessionslos* (not belonging to the Church), however, they do not do it.

There are also people who do not have faith and do not belong to the Church, but declare their Christian cultural identity, value Christian customs and holidays, works of culture, and they consider religion a very important factor in the life of the society². There are many such people in France, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Great Britain, Russia. They join their national and state identity with religion. But is religion possible without God?

Noticing the above phenomena in Europe, and especially in West European countries, many observers consider them as universal and developmental, or even treat them as a peculiar norm for other countries. They think that they will spread wherever modernization occurs.

² Daniele Hervieu-Léger suggests the term "belonging without faith" for this kind of attitude; D. Hervieu-Léger, *Religion und Sozialer Zusammenhalt in Europa*, "Transit: Europäische Revue" 2004, 26 (Summer), pp. 101-119.

In the recent thirty years social phenomena have appeared that complicate and differentiate modernization and religiousness even more. They are, among others: pluralism of values, norms and patterns of behavior; individualistic vision of man and his unlimited right to self-realization becoming widespread; easy life and strong inclination for change; economism, consumerism, sensuality and expectation of “being happy” without a personal effort; a stronger desire to experience something pleasant and sublime than to understand oneself, other people and the world; privatization of life and globalization; mass migrations of populations having different cultures and religions; new communication technologies that facilitate covering spatial and temporal distances.

These phenomena form a new and favorable context for:

- learning about various religious beliefs and practices;
- shaping new and more diverse forms of religiousness;
- intensifying or a loss of religious identity;
- searching for new ways of connecting individual to institutional religiousness, of religious beliefs with a universal character to their local forms;
- maintaining the stable character and invariability of Christianity, its democratic and hierarchical character;
- adjusting the private and social life to the exacting norms of Christian ethics.

One can mention a variety of determinants favoring the processes of secularization. Perhaps the Christian Churches in European countries respond in the wrong way to the three successive great challenges:

1. Since the epoch of the Enlightenment a fast development has been occurring of empirical and particular sciences: natural and technological, social, psychological and economic ones, and the Christian Churches, some of them less, some more, still stay with to philosophy and theology as interpreted by medieval scholars. This lack of cohesion between secular sciences and ones promoted by the Church is one of the causes why many educated people left the Church and religion in the 18th and 19th century. New intellectual, economic and cultural elites ignoring religion, or even fighting it, form a secular culture, which means a culture liberated from religion.

2. Development of the working class and the bourgeoisie brought new social and economic problems, especially ones connected with ownership, fair remuneration for one’s work, participation in production and distribution of goods, responsibility for the living conditions and common good. The Christian Churches became involved in the growing social and economic problems rather late and to an insufficient degree;

they have not become a leading political force in solving them. This resulted in great masses of workers leaving the Church in France, Germany, Belgium and England at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century.

3. Mass media, the centers of mass culture, which is today called popular culture, took control of religiously indifferent people and ones with liberal views. Hence the content and the forms of media messages and of mass culture are areligious, and, fairly frequently, also anti-religious and anti-Church.

For Christians and for the Christian Churches these phenomena are a challenge, as they favor treating religion as a purely personal question, breaking off with the tradition and with religious institutions, forming a variety of religious forms, changing the religious identity. Hence, a serious problem is posed: how to maintain today the stability and constancy of Christianity, its institutional and universal character? How to adjust private and social life to Christian values and ethical norms?

VERIFICATION OF THE THESIS ABOUT DISAPPEARANCE OF RELIGIOUSNESS: THE SACRED IN THE MODERN TIMES

The thesis about the disappearance of religiousness, and about the weakening role of Christian Churches along with the development of modernity and consolidation of the state was generally accepted until the 1970s (Neuhaas 2009-2010, 81). However, when the processes going on in various fields of life, in different countries and on different continents started to be examined more closely, it was found that in reality the situation was different. It was noticed that modernization does not have to go together with secularization. In numerous modern societies religion is quite vital. Within the societies belonging to Christian culture a considerable difference was noticed between America and Europe. In America, which is a modern society, religion is vital, whereas in Europe the situation is different in different countries. In the modernizing Spain a fast pace of secularization occurs, but in Greece it is much slower. The Maltese nation combines its Catholicism with modernity. Also in Poland these two processes go on in a way that is rather favorable for religion. Albeit in recent years some symptoms of secularization have intensified, religious movements have also revived and religious awareness has grown. In the Balkans, religion played a great role in the formation of new countries. Muslims arriving in modern societies do not abandon their religion, but they combine it with the new social and economic conditions.

More detailed studies show that a breakdown of institutional forms of religion can be seen in European societies; that since the 1960s a decrease has been observed in regular participation in obligatory religious practices. However, faith in God does not disappear. For example, in Polish society, in which secularization has been popularized for more than half a century, according to the polls systematically conducted by the Center for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) invariably since the 1990s, more than 90 percent of Poles (from 93 to 97%) define themselves as believers. And among the people who state that they are non-believers only 36 percent state that they do not believe in God, and the remaining ones believe in some Supreme Power, sometimes they believe in a God, and sometimes not, or they have doubts (CBOS 2013). A great number of Europeans, even in the most secularized societies, still identify themselves with Christianity. Religion is still an important element of their identity.

Comparative studies, especially international ones, show that modernity, in the broad sense of the term, leads not so much to disappearance of religious beliefs and practices, as towards an individual and group variety. Hence we have the phenomenon of deregulation of traditional Churches in Europe, differentiation and increase in the number of religious groups, new forms of religiousness; new religious orders are established, and contemplative orders and forms of hermit life are revived.

Thus, modernity is ambiguous and assumes various forms. It does not always break away from tradition and does not make it uniform, as was initially thought (Dyczewski 2004, Eisenstadt 1973). In principle, all modern societies uphold their different traditions, they constantly add something new to them, and they do it in their own way. Such an attitude guarantees maintenance of identity despite continual modernization; and this means that modernization does not have to involve abandoning religion a given society has been connected with for centuries. According to Peter Berger the world, being modernized, “is religious in the same way as it has always been, and in some places even more than ever. This does not mean, however, that there is nothing like secularization; just this phenomenon is in no case the direct and inevitable result of modernity” (Berger 2009-2010, 91).

A map of the phenomenon of secularization, according to Berger – in the geographical and sociological approach – does not coincide with a map of modernization. This is because “in a great part of the world an extraordinarily strong increase in religious movements occurs, often with far-reaching social and political consequences” (Berger 2009-2010, 91). This is testified to by the vitality of Islam, the rise of Evangelism, the religious animation among Catholics, members of the Orthodox Church and Protestants, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and by creating new

religions. “Speaking directly, most of the world bursts with religious fervor. Where secular political and cultural elites have been introduced they are on the defensive in relation to the reviving religious movements – as for example in Turkey, Israel or India, and also in the United States” (Berger 2009-2010, 91).

Contrary to such obvious findings Weber’s thesis that is almost one hundred years old, that with modernization religion goes on the decrease, is still propagated as fact. In Peter Berger’s opinion, contrary to reality it is promoted by limited but very influential elites of intellectuals and politicians formed by people educated in the Western spirit, especially in humanities and social sciences. “They are – Berger writes – a secular International whose members can be met in every country” (Berger 2009-2010, 92). Arriving in religious Turkey, or at Harvard University, they mainly meet their likes and form particular clubs in which they confirm their views and impose them on others as obligatory. They do it through academic circles and the media, where they dominate.

Secularization still goes on in Western and Central Europe. Berger writes, “I think that this is the only part of the world, in which the old theory of secularization still remains defensible. The question why it is so, is intriguing” (Berger 2009-2010, 92). However, secularization that occurs here is not a worldwide norm, but an interesting exception. An exception that has its own dynamics, because the countries that join the secularized old Europe (France, Great Britain) receive from it a whole package including also secularization. This happened to Spain, Portugal, and Greece as well as Ireland and Poland.

However, secularization in Poland has not progress too fast, although liberal circles quote various data that are supposed to prove that the role of religion becomes weaker and weaker both in individual and social life. All sorts of liberal politicians who dominate both chambers of the Polish Parliament do not allow laws that could strengthen the role of religion in society, but they pass bills that weaken it; e.g. a general ban on trading on Sundays and holidays has not been introduced, although such a ban functions in neighboring Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. Liberals of all kinds perceive the Church as an enemy of the modern and of the modernization of Polish society.

Polish society did not undergo deep secularization as the process intensively went forward in the countries of Western Europe. At that time the socialist system still controlled in Poland and fought religion and the Catholic Church as part of its plan. The Church was the anchor of fundamental values: freedom and truth, justice and love; it was a space for creative action and it was involved in bettering human existence. Religion was then, and it has been up till now, the main

authority in the domain of morals; it shaped the principles and patterns of the good life.

The question why America is more religious than Europe, although it is not less modern than Europe, is now a lot more interesting than the question of why Europe is so secularized.

The answers vary. Most often historical conditionings are quoted. In Europe for many years the connection between the throne and the altar, that is between the political power and religion, was strong. Today there is an even stronger tendency to liberate the country from the Church as from an institution that influences social life. In many European countries the state and the Church fought for power in various fields. Victory of one side was usually connected with the defeat of the other. And since the French Revolution the state clearly has taken the lead in development and with the tendency to separate the state from the Church, religion has been passed over, neglected, or even fought. Today in many European countries mutual relations between the Church and the state are not so militant; a general tendency looks for compromise. Shaping the relations between the Church and the state in many countries of Europe happened in an atmosphere of mutual prejudice and struggle, whereas in the United States, from the very beginning separation of the Church and the state was introduced, mutual relations were formed on the basis of cooperation in building a modern society.

In Berger's opinion, an important role in shaping the relations between the Church and the state was also played by the educational system which in Europe is different from that in the United States. In European countries the state generally seized education from the primary level to the university. The teachers are a kind of emissaries of the state and they are required to teach according to the syllabi whose contents are defined by special state institutions and which as a rule are areligious, or even anti-religious and directed against the Church. Teaching according to those syllabi, the teachers, although many of them are religious people, form a 'state' attitude towards the Church and religion in the young generation. This was especially evident in the periods when Nazi Socialism ruled in Germany and the Communist regime ruled in the USSR and countries were subjected to them. On the other hand, in the United States schools are subordinated to self-government or are private, so it is people, belonging to local communities, religious organizations or monastic congregations who make decisions about employing teachers; and they are usually believers.

Richard John Neuhaus adds one more interesting justification to these conditionings that distinguish the position of religion and the Church in the United States from the countries of Europe: generally Europeans are willing to perceive religion as a problem, and Americans

as an aid in solving many problems. “In America nobody feels the need to choose between religion and modernity. On the contrary, relations between them are friendly; they even support each other” (Neuhaus 2009-2010, 82).

The role of religion in America is so important that Tocqueville did not hesitate to define it as a political institution; even the first one among others: Religion “for Americans never directly interferes with ruling the society, (and) it should be considered the first of their political institutions....I do not know if all Americans believe in their religion, for who can read a man’s heart? But they think it is indispensable for maintaining republican institutions. This view is held not by one class of citizens, not by one party, but by the whole nation; we encounter it in all the layers of society” (Tocqueville 1996, 300). Calling religion a political institution Tocqueville accepts the traditional Aristotelian-Thomist definition of politics as care for the common good. Tocqueville takes the view that democracy is favorable for religion, and religion gives the most profound motivations for democratic actions.

A more important problem than secularization today is religious pluralism, different forms of the presence of religion or the sacred in the individual, family or social life. It is these phenomena that should be the central subject of research, as they were not expected by all liberals, and they point to a revival of religiousness in the secularized societies of Europe. Looking at these phenomena on the global scale we observe an outburst of religiousness, as Berger defines it. Liberal thinkers, and Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade presented the sacred and the profane, religion and modernity, the Church and the state alternatively, and it turns out that, indeed, they can cooperate with each other and be complementary in modern society. Individuals and social groups, the Church and the state may at the same time participate in the sacred and the profane; and may realize both of aspects of life.

Also a new phenomenon appears. A lot of people are freed from dogmas and traditional religious practices widespread forms of religiousness in their society, and at the same time they look for answers to then questions: how can the problem of suffering and death be solved, how can life be understood and who is man, is there a form of afterlife, how to shape one’s personality, what is the meaning of human life, is there – apart from the *profanum* every man encounters in his everyday life – a *sacrum* and how can it be realized? Searching is intensified for something extra-material, extraordinary, mysterious, for a transcendental world. In this way a spirituality is formed that is based on the deepest human needs, but at the same time is limited to the human, without reference to an absolute perfection and holiness, to God. It is spirituality that is not connected with any functioning religion, and it is even defined as an alternative to them, although in reality it draws a lot of

inspirations from them. This choice is often based on temporary convictions and predilections, and not on searching for a cohesive whole. Spirituality of this kind, being a peculiar phenomenon in modern society, is a state shaped by the individual himself according to his personal choice of views and practices. Such a spirituality makes it easy for the individual to search for an answer to his own existential problems, to enter the sacred sphere, to establish contact with the transcendental world. Generally this social and cultural phenomenon is assessed as positive and defined as a new, extra-Church, secular spirituality, which some oppose to religious spirituality, and others treat as a parallel phenomenon. Hence, it is possible today to be a spiritual person, but not a religious one; a spiritual and religious one; but also, as Jacek Sójka remarks, it is possible to be a religious, but not spiritual person; religiousness is reduced then to religious rituals without a deeper understanding of them (Stójka 2006, 122).

Spirituality understood in this way arouses great interest among sociologists, anthropologists, theologians and philosophers. It is connected with new forms of religiousness, with para-religious phenomena that are an equivalent of religiousness, with desacralization of symbols and feasts that are typically religious, and at the same time with sacralization of psychotherapeutic practices, and of artistic, political and economic actions.

PROSPECTS FOR OPENING TO THE SACRED – RELIGION IN MODERNITY

Observing various tendencies in academic circles, in statements by politicians and intellectuals (e.g. V. Havel, J. Habermas), it seems that at the advanced stage of modernity an atmosphere more favorable than before for the sacred and religion is being shaped in the modern state. The following phenomena, among others, form it:

An Increase in the Interest in Extra-Material Values. A strong tendency for achieving high standards of living typical of the initial and middle stages of modernization of society that favors the process of secularization has weakened, as a more or less satisfying standard of living has already been achieved. We observe two new tendencies. The first is demanding moderation in amassing material goods, limiting the purchase of things that are not necessary for living, giving up excessive use of energy, water, cars, alcohol, various kinds of substances like coffee or cigarettes, etc. The other one is paying ever more attention to cultural symbols and the quality of life.

Both these tendencies are close to religion and spirituality. Bridling, limiting and moderating one's habits as well as caring for the quality of life, are features of all religions (Dyczewski 2007, 156-170).

A Change in the Catholic Church's Attitude towards Material Goods. The Protestant Church, with its ethics of high standards of living, has lost its stimulating character in economic development, and the Catholic Church after the Vatican Council II has assumed a more positive attitude towards "the earthly reality". Modern Catholic movements, like e.g. Focolari or Opus Dei, manifest a great interest in social problems and economic growth, but in connection with asceticism. Opus Dei, combining the features of capitalism and Christian asceticism, in Berger's opinion, has not transformed Spain into Fatima, but has made it a suburb of Brussels (Berger 2009-2010, 98). Observing such phenomena the President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy said: 'The faith and involvement of citizens who believe are a good thing for the nation....People devoted to contemplation are precious for our civilization'. The Christian religion values labor very highly. It treats it as a significant factor of the development of an individual's personality; it obliges its followers to work intensively and creatively, and to increase the common good (John Paul II, *Laborem exercens, Gaudium et Spes*).

A Crisis of Liberalism. Not long ago liberals gained popularity by emphasizing the significance of liberty and propagating democracy, but their lofty slogans have not brought the expected results. They perceive the essence of liberty in freedom from something, including the obligations to the individual and the society. This often leads to lawlessness and gives negative results. The present democracy, in the liberals' interpretation, is often transformed into a dictatorship of ideologies that are propagated strongly enough, and it leads to reorganizing social life, which impairs its communal character, and triggers economic crises that are frequently caused by abuses and corruption; it weakens the autonomy of man, and ultimately it enslaves him in various ways. A religious justification of democracy is more complete, more communal and pro-social. Religion does not undermine freedom but justifies it more profoundly and joins it to responsibility to another person and to the community. And in one of his last books Leszek Kołakowski argues that the Catholic Church has saved human freedom (Kołakowski 2001).

Christianity emphasizes freedom to do something, that is freedom to choose and do good – the greater good – which brings good results to society. Religion keeps supplying us with ample material for building a well functioning democratic society, it defends a man from being

engulfed by new forms of totalitarianism. Religious justification of democracy is more complete, more communal and pro-social.

Noticing the differences between the Christian and the liberal understanding of liberty and democracy, Jürgen Habermas states: “Only and exclusively Christianity is the basic foundation of freedom, conscience, human rights and democracy....We continuously draw from this source. Everything else is postmodernist babble” (Neuhaus 2009-2010, 87-88). The ex-president of France, Nicolas Sarkozy remarks: “Religions, and especially the Christian religion, with which we have been sharing a long history, are a living heritage of thoughts, not only about God, but about man and society as well. It would be madness to deprive oneself of this; it would simply be a sin against the achievements of culture and thought”. “...France – Sarkozy continues – needs Catholics with strong convictions who are not afraid to admit who they are and what they believe. France needs Catholics who are happy and who give testimony to their hope” (Sarkozy 2007).

The Enlightenment criticism of religion said that the progress in education and reason as well as the development of democratic liberties will make religion politically insignificant, but the validity of this criticism was questioned even by Tocqueville, and it is undermined by today’s reality, as religion plays a great role in politics. Without religion, without John Paul II’s charismatic personality, without his actions inspired by religious values and experiences, the totalitarian Communist system would not have broken down in Central and East Europe; and even if this had happened, the process would not have been so peaceful as, in fact, it was. Defining human rights, human dignity, has strong roots in faith, in Christianity (Mazurek 2001). Without religious motivation and justification also the black population of the USA and RSA probably would not have gained full civil and political rights.

Insufficiency of Scientism and the Scientific Method. The rapid development of empirical sciences and of technology, especially of nanotechnology, biotechnology and artificial intelligence for some time made people believe that man can do anything, that there are no boundaries for his cognition. However, we encounter a lot of problems we cannot solve. The world is in a way “enchanted” again, and a man opens himself to the mystery. The slogans that were in fashion not long ago, like “above the norm”, “above the nature”, or “above culture”, are more and more often questioned and replaced by words like “moderation”, “according to the nature”, “according to culture”.

Knowledge that has been multiplying rapidly makes man its collector. He does not control the gathered information; he does not conduct an in-depth reflection on it; he does not create a sensible whole of it, such roles are reversed. It is not man who controls the gathered

information, but the information which controls man. Without checking its reliability and without connecting pieces of information into logical wholes, in his decisions he often follows the piece of information that is useful, convenient or interesting for him at the moment.

More and more people realize and with greater clarity that the rules and criteria of empirical sciences do not lead one to God, cannot serve learning about Him, for He is not an empirical being. Religion is not a set of scientific statements, but a way of life. God Himself gives us the key for discovering His presence in the course of personal and social events.

Ever more numerous voices appeal to people to reflect, to search for a whole and a meaning in what we learn and what we experience. Ever more people take part in days of meditation, and closed retreats, as stays in monasteries, and pilgrimages (to Compostella, Lourdes, Guadalupe, Częstochowa, to John Paul II's tomb etc.) become popular. A stay in seclusion and wandering are a time of profound reflection on events and on one's life, searching for a whole in one's actions and for the meaning of life. Religion supports man in regaining his autonomy, for he is constantly enslaved by such factors that are ever more difficult to notice as a threat for his individual and social development.

Weakening of Aggressive Secularity. In European countries secularity has become almost a fashion. It is an important element of public opinion, which relegated religions – the sacred – to private life. At present we are observing the tendency to break away from these influences. Its aggressiveness is mitigated by intellectuals, and also by leading politicians, and among them by the former President of France Nicolas Sarkozy, the ex-Prime Minister of Great Britain Tony Blair or the Italian politician Rocco Buttiglione. Nicolas Sarkozy, greeting Pope Benedict XVI in Paris, formulated his view on secularity in the following way: “Nobody questions secularity. But is it true that one cannot talk about religion because of it? Does not secularity blind us so much that we cannot notice the great need of spirituality in the context of a defeat of totalitarian ideologies and disappointments brought by consumer society?...Once again I call for a positive kind of secularity, secularity that joins, conducts a dialogue, and does not exclude...positive secularity gives our consciences a possibility to talk, over beliefs and rites, about the meaning we want to give to our existence. A positive secularity, a secularity open to an invitation to dialogue, to tolerance and respect” (Sarkozy 2008).

Nicolas Sarkozy questions the French model of secularity, understood as excluding any references to religion from the public sphere and he states: “I believe that matters of religion are important in the life of our societies, perhaps today more than ever”.

Ever more often and more courageously decisions are made against an aggressive secularity and its underestimating of religion. A revisal of the act forbidding blasphemy signed on 23rd July 2009 by the President of Ireland Mary McAleese is an example of this process. Earlier the act was ratified by both chambers of the Irish Parliament and beginning in October 2009, an offence against God and religious feelings will be subject to a fine of up to 25 thousand euro.

Religion as the Foundation of Ethics. Religion is necessary for the modern world, for in the statement “God exits” a moral order is contained whose core is good, and the opposite of which is evil. God, for the reason that He is the true good, the core of good, is the most complete justification of the occurrence of good in the world. All extra-religious attempts at a rational justification of moral order, including Emanuel Kant’s moral imperative: act according to the principle that you would like to make a universal norm, seem rational; but, firstly: it is difficult to convince a modern man about this, as he does not accept universal norms or rationality; and secondly: extra-religious ethics, which was most comprehensively introduced into social life by contemporary totalitarian systems (Nazi Socialism in Germany and Communism in Russia), brought the greatest disasters to people.

Religion supplies clear and strong principles for distinct differentiation of good and evil. “If there is no God we make our own decisions about what rules should be established and whatever we do, it can always be proven that it is good” (Kołakowski 1988, 221). And this leads to relativism. Along with impairing religion also the difference between good and evil becomes blurred. Ethics without religious justification favors the development of various forms of egoism and behavior patterns that are not even compatible with common sense, like adoption of children by homosexual couples, or ruling out having children by a married couple. Hence Bronisław Wildstein is right when he says that it is difficult to imagine that in a longer perspective of civilization morality can survive without religion (Wildstein 2009).

Polish society experienced the effects of the functioning of the so-called independent ethics, that is secular ethics, when Poland was occupied by German National Socialism and during the rule of Russian Communism. As long as the painful experiences of those years remain in Polish social awareness, ethics based on religion, in this case on Christianity, will be closer to Poles than all the varieties of the so-called secular ethics. The experience of Polish society with the effects of the latter, such as approving experiments with people and of euthanasia, was too painful. Perhaps it is easier for the Dutch, Belgian, Danish or English to accept independent ethics, for they have not experienced such tragic consequences of rejecting religion as have Poles.

Freedom as the Basis for Opening a Man to the Sacred – God.

Human freedom is tied to religion; it is human freedom understood as freedom from and freedom to. Freedom from religion suggests that religion is something external in relation to man, such that one may depart from it, reject it, or live without it. Freedom to have religion indicates that a man is directed to religion, to God: the question being which religion, which God he will choose and how he will define religion and God. In his choosing and defining he is guided by cognition. Being a rational animal he chooses a religious object, and hence he is also an *animal religiosum* (Zdybicka1993). Hence a religious dimension is inscribed in man. “Deity is made present in a man when he encounters something in his life that becomes absolute for him” (Tischner 2001, 147). Every man has such a value; however, for some this absolute value is the good, truth and beauty, for another it is God in the Christian sense, and for still someone else it may be well-being, comfort, pleasure, power, fame, a political party, one’s nation.

Accepting such an assumption Max Scheller thinks that “a religious act is the basic equipment for the human mind and soul; it cannot be a question whether this or another man performs it. The law is binding: every human being believes in God or in gods” (Scheler 1995, 236-237). Kořakowski expresses a similar opinion when he writes: “A rain of gods is pouring from the sky during the funeral of a god who has already had his day” (Kořakowski 1989, 179).

People who consider themselves as religious do not have to serve only the one true God; they may serve various gods, or very mundane values. And what a man considers the highest good for himself is defined by action, for good requires to be realized. This is why religion is closely connected with action, and in this way also with ethics that formulates norms, on the basis of which this action is evaluated.

There is a great diversity of kinds of good. This demands making some kind of order among them. Here an important role is played by religion – the sacred. It introduces order in the desired and realized good, supplies contents and criteria for shaping the image of man and the world. This is especially true in so-called difficult times. George Weigel noticed this in people of the 1980s in Poland, who fought for fundamental values. “People enlightened by faith,” he writes, “were able to possess a more penetrating and universal vision of the human person and the world around us” (Weigel 1995, 260). At that time on the opposite side were those who had crossed out faith from their lives. “For us, an officer of the then Security Office writes, there were no such words as morality or ethics. We did not use these words. They did not have a meaning for us; the service used immorality, and struggled against morality. The more immoral a behavior was, the better it was for us; the easier it was to come closer to a man and to penetrate his thought.

Those who had a guilty conscience were the most important ones for us; they were the best material for agents” (Snopkiewicz 1992, 123).

The sacred-religion help a man tidy up his insides, pass from dark to light, find the true and the good. It is in this way that Jacek Kuroń assessed religion after all the intricacies of his life: “All my life I’ve been looking for the sacred, for something that transcends my life and gives a meaning to it. I discovered a long time ago that without God the sacred is frail, mutilated, and it is very difficult to find a love open to the world” (Kuroń 1990, 370).

PLURALISM IN RELIGIOSITY AND SPIRITUALITY AS A SIGN OF THE TIME

Victor Frankl added one more developmental need to the ones given by Abraham Maslov: the need for meaning. After what he experienced in the Auschwitz concentration camp built by Nazi Germans he believed that this is the most important need and he defined it as “the need of needs”. In turn, in his latest book Charles Taylor says that the most important need is the need to achieve a fullness. “...there is no escape, he writes, from a certain version of fullness; for every experienced understanding of life there has to be a side from which life looks good, as a whole, properly, as experienced in such a way as it should be” (Taylor 2007, 600). A believer experiences fullness as something given to him by God, whereas a non-believer finds fullness himself, owing to reason or some form of experiences, emotions, desires. Although this is available for everybody, it is intellectuals, artists, clergy and politicians who are most able to perceive it.

Religion – the sacred, according to Daniel Bell – helps a man to reach such a fullness, because religion is not only an “ideology or a set of rules regulating social life, although in different periods, in its institutionalized forms it functioned exactly in this way. Religion is a constitutive aspect of human experience, as it is a response to existential situations that repeatedly occur in human culture” (Bell 1983, 1386). Secularization depraves a man of those experiences, impairs his ability to work out a whole, and finally weakens his need of meaning.

Many contemporary thinkers are in favor of the existence of God – the sacred – or at least they do not try to eliminate God. They decidedly oppose disregarding religion – the sacred. They oppose secularization that includes a struggle against religion and disregarding the sacred. Such a view is presented by leading intellectuals today, among others, by Rene Girard, Jürgen Habermas, Gianni Vattimo, Ernest Geller or Leszek Kołakowski. They are convinced that religion is important in the life of our societies, maybe today more important than ever. In today’s secularized world they notice and emphasize how

valuable religion – the sacred – is, as “the human condition with all its sorrows and evil, but also with all its magnificence and greatness remains incomprehensible and devoid of meaning if it is not seen in the light of its holy history: creation, sin, redemption. If so, it seems that we are facing the following alternative: either the world is full of meaning, it is led by God, mutilated by man, and healed by the redeemer – or the world is absurd, going nowhere, ending with a void, a nonsensical toy of impersonal fate that does not give punishments or prizes and does not care about good or evil” (Kořakowski 1988, 222).

Following this way of observing modern societies Habermas abandoned the thesis about an ever developing secularization that goes on until it drives religion away, and proposes the thesis that the time of “post-secularism” is coming. Referring to Max Weber’s thesis about the disenchantment of the world Habermas says that the world is enchanted again by religion (Türk 2010, 10-19). Daniel Bell has a similar opinion when he speaks about “the revenge of the sacred”, that is, about a return of the sacred – religion (Bell 1983). And this return happens along with the crisis of modernist and postmodernist ideas that try to eradicate the sacred – religion – from public life.

Religion, the sacred, returns, but today’s religiousness is already changed: it is less rationalistic, more differentiated and individualized, strongly connected with experience, open to the extraordinary nature of events. Also, there is the threat of hybridization occurs, of a peculiar religious syncretism. Many people think that it is possible to be a Catholic and to go to an Orthodox Church for the congregation sings beautifully there, to burn incense in front of a Buddha statuette, to accept belief in incarnation from Hinduism, to visit the temples belonging to various religions and not to be rooted in any of them. Many young people choose something that suits them from various religions, however, it is not according to a definite rule or as a result of long deliberations, but according to what satisfies their personal needs at a given moment.

Research shows that religion – the sacred – does not vanish. The percentage of people believing in God, recognizing the existence of the sacred, and the supernatural world, is still high in countries that have undergone modernization. Religion – the sacred – stimulates people to develop and enrich the world through its symbols, rituals and artifacts. On the other hand, there are many different attitudes to religion and the sacred. Modernity, in the broad understanding of the term, leads less to a disappearance of religiousness and religious practices, and more to the development of a group and individual variety. Along with deregulation of beliefs we are dealing here with their differentiation. We have more and more new religious groups and movements as well as new forms and religious rituals.

Modern people are religious, but in a way that is different from the past. No religious or cultural tradition is accepted as an indisputable certainty, but all may be questioned or relativized. This is a common phenomenon, occurring not only in Europe, says Berger (Berger 2012, 24).

Pluralism of values, norms, behavior patterns, images of the past and visions of the future are seen ever more clearly. In European societies youth groups with an Eastern and postmodern cultural orientation are becoming more and more noticeable. The situation of the dominant Churches is getting more difficult and demanding. It requires respecting a great variety of religious groups having various world views, as well as cooperating with them. In this situation the role of the Catholic Church as a guardian of cultural heritage that it admirably played in recent years, has been a little weakened and now requires a more creative, more diverse and less confessional activity than previously.

As a result of various processes a differentiation has occurred in Polish believers, and at least three groups may be distinguished. The first is constituted by believers who do not follow religious observances as a rule and do not have the sense of belonging to the local community of believers. The second is made up of those believers who follow observances irregularly and have a more or less distinct sense of belonging to the local community of believers, but they do not have the sense of responsibility for this community. The third group is constituted by believers who regularly follow religious observances, who are closely bound with the local community of believers and with the whole heritage of the Catholic culture. They have a sense of responsibility for the local religious community and for the Christian cultural heritage.

In Poland at present a consolidation can be noticed of Catholics religious identity. Awareness of Christian identity in those who remain members of the Church has increased. They are characterized by:

1. Making their religious life more profound, often by active participation in a group that is religious in character;
2. Being more open to people religiously different and being ready to enter into dialog with them;
3. Conscious use of religious values, norms and behavior patterns in politics, economy, culture and mass media.

Catholics with such an identity choose integrating politics, economy, culture and media on the basis of Christian values as their goal. As a result of social development and political activity these domains of social life have recently been separated. If this tendency

intensifies and becomes more popular, a new form of Christian culture will be formed.

Politics, economy and culture was first integrated on the basis of Christian values, norms and behavior patterns several centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire. As a result of this process that lasted for many centuries a Christian medieval culture was formed that maintained its developmental dynamics until the epoch of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. After these events Christian culture started to be questioned; this process was interrupted by attempts at its revival but numerous countries of Western Europe have been departing from Christianity up to the present, because the attempts at revival were rather a defense of what existed in the past, a modification of the glorious past, and did not create something new while preserving the lasting roots. Only the Vatican Council II opened the way to create a new Christianity while maintaining all that is essential, but in new conditions and in new form. This path is consistently marked out by recent Popes. The directions for its development were sketched by John Paul II in his social encyclicals and apostolic exhortations directed to the inhabitants of particular continents (e.g. *Ecclesia in Europa*, *Ecclesia in America*). He encouraged all Christians to create a new culture. This new culture may have a better chance to develop where the Churches are young, that as in the countries of Latin America, Africa and the USA. In Europe there is also a good chance to create it in Poland, where the significance of Christianity as a living religion is still great (Dyczewski 2011, Kawecki 2008).

The development and quality of culture is closely connected with the religion that is dominant. Modernity, rejecting religion, takes over its role and bases social life on such values as: affluence, comfort, functionality, individuality, and pleasure. It realizes these through its use of such instruments as money, technology, recreative and entertainment. Culture based on such values does not favor mature and creative personalities. Attentive observers notice this, which is why a return of religion – the sacred – to the awareness and activities of many individuals and social groups.

In Poland the connections between faith, patriotism and a civic attitude exists in a considerable part of society and supports uniting Christian heritage with modernity. This will help the Polish people find their place in the European Union and in the modernizing Catholic Church.

(Translated by Tadeusz Karłowicz)

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CHAPTER II

CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUALITIES IN XXI CENTURY CATHOLIC SOCIAL DISCOURSE

KAROL KLAUZA

The understanding of spirituality in postmodern societies has undergone significant semantic changes. In the civilized western countries, specific forms of spirituality were traditionally defined in the context of Christianity as the basis for defining the organizational systems of the individual and social life institutionally. The evangelical message of the Christian Kingdom of Heaven inspired the search for concretization of the reign of God over history which resulted, among other things, in the idea of The City of God (Kornatowski 1965), in the medieval models of Europe as *Respublica christiana*¹ with specific sub-territories, *Terra Christi* and *Terra Mariana*. In the name of which, the structures of state and Church authority were created. This model was echoed in John Paul II's historical homily in Gniezno:

¹ This concept appeared in the context of Charlemagne's war with the pagan Saxons in the ninth century. Otto I used that concept in his plans for the organization of the Carolingian Empire. The legal context of the term *Respublica christiana* was developed by Petrus de Bosco (Pierre Dubois 1250-1312), an advisor to King Philip IV of France, who, in his work *De recuperatione Terrae Sanctae* (1306, edition Ch. V. Langlois, Paris 1891) treated the concept as the principle for international order in Christian Europe. In the dispute between the king and Pope Boniface VIII and the Templars, he advocated the superiority of the civil power, which, paradoxically, undermined the religious motivation behind the said term. The program for the reformation of the Church and the organization of secular education makes Pierre Dubois a precursor of national consciousness in France. See his *Supplication du peuple de France au roi contre Boniface VIII* (1308). Sources for this dispute see: T. Schmidt, *Libri rationum camerae Bonifacii papae VIII (Archivum secretum Vaticanum)*, Città del Vaticano 1984. See also: H. Kämpf, *Pierre Dubois und die geistigen Grundlagen des französischen Nationalbewusstseins um 1300*, Leipzig, Berlin, 1935. The term *respublica c(h)ristiana* was also used by: Pope Gregory VII in the Investiture Controversy, papal and monastic lawyers during the Crusades in northern Europe – see: E Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades. The Baltic and Catholic Frontier 1100-1525*, London, 1980.

Is it not Christ's will, is it not what the Holy Spirit disposes, that this Polish Pope, this Slav Pope, should at this precise moment manifest the spiritual unity of Christian Europe? We know that the Christian unity of Europe is made up of two great traditions, of the West and of the East...Pope John Paul II, a Slav, a son of the Polish nation...comes here to speak before the whole Church, before Europe and the world, of those often forgotten nations and peoples (Jan Paweł II 1991, 53-54).

This model continues to affect the Polish national consciousness in the 21st century, being, for many social communities, the basis for building a Christian national identity or even the state identity, as is the case with the Slavic understanding of national identity in Poland, Western Ukraine, Belarus.

The patriotic and religious spirituality that refers to national patriotism in the context of the Christian worldview, the evangelical hierarchy of values and the attitudes based on Christian morality, appears to be a justification for the validity of this model. It is also a form of spirituality understood as a sphere of activity of the human soul, historically rooted in native culture, but capable of touching the divine dimension. However, aside from the cultural and psychological understanding of spirituality in the fields of philosophy, theology and cultural studies, specific definitions of what it is were created. The assertion that it constitutes an important motivational factor in the process of organizing individual and social life, referring primarily to the sphere of spiritual life, dependent on reason, will and emotions, remains the collective reference for these definitions. Consequently, it also enables distinguishing in the definitions of spirituality, three constitutive operative elements – the rational, the volitional and the emotional. In accordance with them, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church – an important entity for religious identity – submitted, in documents from the 90s and from the first decade of the 31st century, a number of proposals for a pluralistic dialogue of spirituality.² The most

² The indications of the Magisterium overlap with a range of social tendencies for transnational and interreligious dialogue, such as the Eurasian dialogue inspired by the migration of the Russian intelligentsia, the dialogue globalizing ideas and values within the projects of UNESCO and the European Union. The doctrinal foundations for such a dialogue are constituted by, among other things, the documents of the Second Vatican Council, mainly the following decrees: *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* in relation to Eastern Catholic Churches, *Unitatis redintegratio* – about ecumenism, and the declaration *Nostra aetate* – about the Church's attitude towards non-Christian religions. With regard to the communities of Western Europe and the dialogue with secular

important official documents clarify the essence of Christian spirituality against the background of the pluralism of spiritual life, motivation in the societies of ideological globalization, the confrontation of worldviews, religious and aesthetic traditions, dynamically taking place in religious and secular social communication channels. Apart from cultural programs, they apply also to pastoral and formation programs in aspects of religious life.

CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTS OF THE MAGISTERIUM ON SPIRITUALITY IN THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

*International Theological Commission Faith and Inculturation (1989)*³

The basic paradigm for the analysis of contemporary spirituality seems to be its organic relationship with cultures. The pluralism of cultures in societies determines the pluralism of spirituality, because they are ambivalent towards each other. The creators of cultures influence the type and intensity of spirituality and vice versa – those formulating spirituality influence the cultural areas of social life. The document *Faith and Inculturation* by the International Theological Commission, referring to the conciliar document *Gaudium et spes* [no. 53], stresses that:

The human person is a community being who blossoms in giving and in receiving. It is thus in solidarity with others and across living social relationships that the person progresses. Also, those realities of nation, people, society, with their cultural patrimony, constitute for the development of persons a “definite, historical milieu which enfolds men of every nation and age and from which he draws the values which permit him to promote civilization [FI, I, 6].

In historical practice, the clash of cultures results in certain processes within the field of spirituality that influence its pluralism. The risk of a cultural conflict is counteracted by the idea of tolerance and

cultures, the indications of the declaration *Dignitatis humanae* on religious freedom, remain valid. Subsequent doctrinal documents, dealing with more specific problems, apply general principles to specific challenges and signs of the times, in the sphere of social life.

³ Further citations as FI according to the official text of the Holy See: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_1988_fede-inculturazione_en.html [12.10.2013].

human rights preservation, which, in the 31st century societies, favor the mechanisms of dialogue, solidarity and cooperation in the search for the common good. This mechanism is the basis of spirituality defined as “solidarity”.

Cultural pluralism cannot therefore be interpreted as the juxtaposition of a closed universe, but as participation in a union of realities all directed toward the universal values of humanity [FI I,7].

The historic political and cultural transformation carried out in the name of the Christian understanding of the virtue of solidarity, e.g., in Poland, at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, convinces us of the social effectiveness of this mechanism.⁴

The subject that creates culture – the human being – is believed by the Church to be in its nature a religious entity and religion is the source and at the same time the culmination of the cultural activity. Hence, religious spirituality plays a crucial role in understanding both the culture and the perspectives for development of a person who is naturally concerned for his development through culture.⁵ Culture based on Revelation, which, through the words and sacraments of the Church, brings closer the religious idea of becoming similar to the Son of God.

⁴ The theological and moral character of the virtue of solidarity as well as the social movement was interpreted by the Blessed John Paul II, in his magisterial social teaching, especially in the encyclicals: *Sollicitudo rei socialis* [38-40], *Laborem exercens* [8], *Centesimus annus* [49]. A rich collection of statements of John Paul II on the Solidarity trade union is documented by the recording of the authentic speeches issued on CD by Werner Music Poland in January 2005 under the editorship of Elżbieta Staniszevska from the Chief Board of Editors for Catholic Programs (Naczelna Rada Programów Katolickich) at Polish Radio.

⁵ In this case the document refers to a fundamental and theological anthropological thesis also connected to religious studies, which indicates the spiritual nature of a human that originates from the act of creation, with a characteristic of a religious reference to transcendence. The tragedy of a personality deprived of this dimension is reflected in the descriptions of existence stripped of spirituality. “Man is naturally religious being. The turning toward the absolute is inscribed in his deepest being” [FI I,8]. Counteracting such dehumanizing tendencies in the culture is done by highlighting the specificity of Christian anthropology, which involves the inclusion of the human nature – through Incarnation – the life of the Son of God. Thanks to Him the tragedy of suffering, sin and death leads to the spirituality of hope for resurrection and deification of a man. “Christianity lies in the gift that God makes of himself to humanity, facing all the aspirations, requests, conquests and achievements of nature” [FI I,9].

The corresponding religious spirituality occupies a special place among modern cultures, as by “His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man” [II, 18]. This opens up the perspective of the openness of Christianity as a religion and as a “boundary for humanistic and religious spirituality”.

After the Second Vatican Council, it became a challenge for the Catholic Church to discover Christological traces in other religions and cultures – up to the circles of nonbelievers who, nevertheless, with an honest heart, seek the common good, “who try, not without the grace of God, to lead an honest life” [LG 16], thus creating a humanistic spirituality – the spirituality of modern humans not yet believers, but under the influence of unconscious grace remaining in the spiritual dynamics of salvation. For Karl Rahner, they would be “anonymous Christians” and, for Paul Knitter (1991), Raimon Pannikara [1918-2010]⁶ and Jacques Dupuis SJ [1923-2004]⁷, people living under the spirituality of an over-institutionalized Church, who are yet animated by the salutary powers of the Spirit, in accordance with the theological principle of inclusivism – *ubi salus – ibi Ecclesia* (Wherever there is salvation, there is the Church). It becomes more and more clear that it is a challenge for the current Christian spirituality and identity to seek for traces of salvation in the world, to live a life of spiritual exploration of the marks of salvation in the world, hence, to discover the Holy Spirit operating in a salvific way in history: in cultures and through culture. In practice, this means a spirituality that responds positively to the works of the Holy Spirit, who “makes the whole of creation new and blows where it pleases” (see John. 3,8; Rev 21, 3-5). At the same time, “The Holy Spirit does not establish a subculture, but is the personal and vital principle which will vivify the new community in working in harness with its members” [FI II, 24]. In spirituality, it means an attitude of humility towards the Holy Spirit, as well as towards people, places,

⁶ The author of, among other things, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism: Towards an Ecumenical Christophany*, 1964; 1981 – convinced that, “he has set out as a Christian, discovered within himself a Buddhist and returned a Buddhist, without ceasing to be a Christian.” See his *Espiritualidad Hindu: Sanatana Dharma*, 2006.

⁷ This type of spirituality has been subjected to a doctrinal assessment in the context of the so-called Dupuis Case from 1998-1999. The theologian answered with a publication, *Christianity and the Religions*, 2003. In a way, the Dupuis Case continued with the earlier restrictive decisions of the Vatican from 1996 and 1998, in relation to the viewpoints expressed by a theologian from Sri Lanka – Tissa Balasuriya (1924-2013) and Anthony De Mello, SJ (1931-1987). This trend of inclusivism has been limited through the resolutions implemented by the *Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith*, in the instruction *Dominus Iesus* issued on August 6, 2000.

cultures, that he wished to touch with his salvific power which makes Christ present. The theological issues of the Revelation in Jesus Christ in relation to other religions were undertaken by the International Theological Commission in a document issued in 1997, entitled *Christianity and the World Religions*.⁸ The term “Christianity” has a cultural and philosophical, rather than institutional, semantics. For the Commission does not have the prerogatives of representing the viewpoints of the divided Christianity, but only refers to the essential paradigms of the evangelical message as an effect of the theology of ecumenical arrangements undertaken by the Christian Churches in the context of cooperation after the Second Vatican Council.

International Theological Commission: Christianity and the World Religions

The spirituality of interreligious dialogue, that characterizes a number of initiatives of the Christian Churches of the late twentieth century, is, in itself, a kind of spirituality that is above canonical structures (Tilley 1999). The document uncovers the doctrinal grounds for this spirituality. It is primarily the radical understanding of the universality of salvation brought by Jesus Christ that sets the premise for the Christian cooperation and dialogue. This conviction accompanied, among others, the doctrinal assumption made by Blessed John Paul II in his encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis* (1978), especially in No. 14: “every man...has been redeemed by Christ, and...with each man...Christ is in a way united, even when man is unaware of it.”⁹ The official interpretation of this belief was presented on the pages of the Vatican’s “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*”.¹⁰ It takes into consideration the personal dignity of every human, his calling for spiritual and corporeal existence, which is differentiated in respect to history and culture. Therefore, in, i.a., a joint document made by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, from 1991, it was pointed towards the providential unifying actions of the Holy Spirit through the promotion of human rights, justice and solidarity in the modern world, through

⁸ Further cited as CWR with an appropriate paragraph numeration based on the official site of the Holy See: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_1997_cristianesimo-religioni_en.html [20.11.2013].

⁹ RH No. 14.

¹⁰ The Attitude of the Church towards the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission, “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 76 (1984) pp. 816-824.

integral development, social justice, and human liberation. There is need to stand up for human rights, proclaim the demands of justice, and denounce injustice not only when their [local Churches'] own members are victimized, but independently of the religious allegiance of the victims. There is need also to join together in trying to solve the great problems facing society and the world [CWR 44].

The spirituality of the religious and social dialogue is characterized by a conviction that Churches and secular institutions participate in the process of building a future society in which Christianity (its Churches) will fulfill a unifying function through the power of the Holy Spirit, that exceeds human effectiveness when it comes to the creation of effective systems of co-existence. The question of Christology still remains the key issue for people living by the spirituality of an interreligious dialogue. The uniqueness of the Christian understanding of the mystery of Incarnation, under the doctrine formed as a result of the agreements concerning the tradition in the fourth-sixth centuries,¹¹ marks the boundaries for identity, excluding the notion that Jesus Christ was one of religious reformers or just a cultural projection of myths.¹² The belief in Jesus Christ as the true God and a true man (the Son of God and the Son of Man) calls for inculturation, through which it becomes similar to other religions, but exceeds them due to the history of God's Self-revelation in the stories of the Old and New Covenant. John Paul II recalled this principle in 1982, stating: "a faith that does not become culture is not fully accepted, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived" (Jan Paweł II 1982: 685).¹³ This statement also indicates a relation between beliefs and practiced spirituality that influences the transformation of a man's cultural space through religious faith. The said document expresses it briefly: "religion is the heart of all culture as the last court of appeal on the question of meaning and as the fundamental structuring force" [CWR26]. It retains its character even when culture tries to negate faith. Then, the so-called religious question, determines the need to replace religious spirituality with spirituality built

¹¹ Contemporary religious studies regard the following as the turning points in the history of Christological dogma: The Synod of Alexandria (year 362), The Council of Ephesus (year 431), Council of Chalcedon (year 451), The Second Council of Constantinople (year 543). In the Christology of the Second Vatican Council, the references to this theological tradition are the basis for understanding both the Christian identity and the mission in the world

¹² Compare the declarations in RH p. 20-21.

¹³ Compare also: *Address to the Italian National Congress of the Ecclesial Movement for Cultural Commitment* (16 January 1982), 2, in: Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, 5/1 (1982), p.131.

on its negation. Limiting Christology to the juxtaposition of the figure of Jesus Christ with the founders of other religions, made for the purpose of religious-studies, solely on the anthropological and historical plane,¹⁴ devoid of transcendence or reference to the sacred, becomes, among other things, an element of such a spirituality. In the spirituality of the negation of faith, individual and social attitudes are determined by the criteria of statutory law, with regard to social utility and the acceptance of personal freedom, within the limits of communal and social consensus. In such a spirituality, the elements of aesthetic sensitivity are determined by trends, fashions, and indicators of mainstream categories. Their possible rejection leads to marginalization, social exclusion and a confinement of people and communities with alternative values to cultural ghettos. In the last decades this group usually includes Christians, especially Catholics.

In secular spiritualities, resulting from the departure from the heritage of religious faith, a scientific interpretation of the world, its nature, events and interpretations, becomes significantly important. The results of discoveries from the fields of natural science and technology and, in a lesser extent, from the humanities, especially philosophy and theology, are included in the sphere of worldviews. With respect to thus-formed new authorities in the process of formation of the spirituality of modern men, Benedict XVI, in his speech to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences on November 8, 2006, said:

The complexity and greatness of contemporary science in all that it enables man to know about nature has direct repercussions for human beings. Only man can constantly expand his knowledge of truth and order it wisely for his

¹⁴ Blessed John Paul II reminded about the Christian anthropological paradigms in a speech made to the members of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences on November 8, 2004: “Through culture and creative activity, human beings have the capacity to transcend material reality and to “humanize” the world around us. Revelation teaches that men and women are created in the “image and likeness of God” (cf. Gen 1:26) and thus possess a special dignity which enables them, by the work of their hands, to reflect God’s own creative activity (cf. *Laborem Exercens*, 4). In real way, they are meant to be “co-creators” with God, using their knowledge and skill to shape a cosmos in which the divine plan constantly moves towards fulfilment (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 34). This human creativity finds privileged expression in the pursuit of knowledge and scientific research. As a spiritual reality, such creativity must be responsibly exercised; it demands respect for the natural order and, above all, for the nature of each human being, inasmuch as man is its subject and end.” Quoted after: <http://www.casinapioiv.va/content/accademia/en/magisterium/johnpaulii/8november2004.html>

good and that of his environment. In your discussions, you have sought to examine, on the one hand, the ongoing dialectic of the constant expansion of scientific research, methods and specializations and, on the other, the quest for a comprehensive vision of this universe in which human beings, endowed with intelligence and freedom, are called to understand, love, live and work. In our time the availability of powerful instruments of research and the potential for highly complicated and precise experiments have enabled the natural sciences to approach the very foundations of corporeal reality as such, even if they do not manage to understand completely its unifying structure and ultimate unity (emphasis – K.K.).¹⁵

Ultimate unity, being the goal of cognitive, communicational and existential activity, should be understood in the context of Christian eschatology, which, from the uniqueness of human nature, deciphers its purpose to form an everlasting union with God, in the novelty of creation after the Second Coming of Christ.¹⁶ The history and achievements of human existence are interpreted here as a global process of unification that includes all the evolving structures discussed by modern sciences. In practice, this means the acceptance of the assumptions of scientific and religious spirituality developed, among others, by Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), and expressed by him in, i.a., reflective writings: *La Messe sur la Monde*, *L'Union Créatrice*, and in one of the last written before his death, *Recherche, travail et adoration*. In this spirituality, the presence and the act participate in the evolution towards unity, becoming a metaphysical proprium contributed by a person to the process of preparation for the Second Coming of Christ. Therefore, each person carries in himself a vocation to fulfill the

¹⁵ Quoted after: <http://www.casinapioiv.va/content/accademia/en/magisterium/benedictxvi/8november2012.html> (20.11.2013).

¹⁶ In the tradition of the Pauline texts of the New Testament, this novelty is expressed in terms such as: “the Lord’s descend from heaven” (1 Thes. 4, 16-17), “hope in our Lord” (1 Thes. 1,3; 2,19), “meeting the Lord” (1 Thes. 4,17), “the day of the Lord” (1 Thes. 5,2-3; 2 Thes. 2,2-4). In the tradition of John’s writings, the novelty of eternal unity is included in the interpretation of terms such as: *the last day* (John 6, 39-40, 44, 54; 11, 24; 12, 48). The doctrine of the Second Coming that includes the belief in general resurrection and the assessment of individual accomplishments worthy of an eternal unity with God, is one of the main ecumenical topics and interreligious arrangements of the late XX century. See: A. L. Moore, *The Parousia in the New Testament*, Leiden 1966; T. F. Glasson, *Theophany and Parousia*, “New Testament Studies” 34 (1988) pp. 259-270.

purpose of his existence and, if he remains faithful to it, he co-creates an important axis of world history.¹⁷

Today, the vision proposed by Teilhard de Chardin, brings with itself a method for breaking the dualism of matter and reason (spirit), of the history of salvation and the evolution process of the human community, of faith and scientific evidence. He sees clearly the spheres arranged into logically qualified levels: biospheres, anthropospheres and cristospheres, that, in man and through him, take the form of a noosphere – an awareness thanks to which one sees creation as a unity (emphasis – KK) that is permeated with Christ from the beginning to the end (Klauza 2003, 7-8).

With progress in the scientific research on the matter, on psychological processes and on space exploration, the turn of the 21st century resulted in a whole range of visions of the human community and spirituality that shape the relation of an individual towards time, space, and the mysteries of the macro and the micro world.¹⁸

Benedict XVI, the Encyclical Letter Spe Salvi (2007)

Additionally, in the dialogue of the Church with other religions and institutions of the modern world, Benedict XVI shifted the hitherto dualism of reason and faith in the direction of reason and freedom. Freedom, as a sign of the times, was educed in the 20th century by John XXIII and elaborated on in the teaching of Paul VI and John Paul II, which allowed Benedict XVI to diagnose the nature of the freedom-oriented hopes of humanity.

Spirituality based on the category of freedom inspires the creation of existential models. Man, able to use the prerogatives of freedom, appears accomplished, fulfilled in his own nature. Therefore, laws and

¹⁷ Elements of this spirituality gained acceptance after the Second Vatican Council, thanks to Henri de Lubac SJ (later a Cardinal), as well as Joseph Ratzinger (*Einführung in das Christentum*, München 1968), and Cardinal Ch. Schönborn (*Creation, Evolution and a Rational Faith*, San Francisco 2007).

¹⁸ Public centers for the popularization of science (TV programs, documentary films, workshops, courses and science festivals) play a major role in the promotion of such visions and scientific projects. The contents of these initiatives really influence modifications in the rules of modern spirituality. On their margins, heterodox proposals, such as the scientological spirituality, are also born.

conventions try to guarantee at least minimum freedom for each man. This category recurs during the process of legitimization of any governmental system, even if it remains only a declarative category and not an actual one. The spirituality of freedom built on a relation with reason, rational freedom, means full respect for this category, not only as an absolute value, but as a derivative from the deciphered truth about man. The Christian paradigm “The truth will set you free” (John 8, 32) extends not only over the religious and moral sphere, but radiates on the systems of Catholic social sciences, on the perennial formation of individuals and communities, up to the recognition of the boundaries between authentic freedom and limitless liberty. In contrast to the notion of freedom understood in such a way, as proposed by the ideologists of various revolutions in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity, Benedict XVI submits a critique by Emmanuel Kant – a contemporary of the French Revolution.¹⁹ Spirituality based on the acquisition and experience of freedom must accurately determine the nature of human freedom. This cannot be done without taking into consideration the fundamental enslavement of a human, created by his own nature. The error of freeing man by changing the unjust economic structures, as in the 19th century, showed the weakness of man’s self-liberation model.²⁰ Therefore, in his encyclical letter, Benedict XVI diagnoses the ways leading out from this paradoxical dead-lock for human freedom after the anthropological revolution. Namely, he proposes the spirituality based on the recognition of total dependence of man and the world from God. He proposes the theocentric spirituality: “Let us put it very simply: man needs God, otherwise he remains without hope” (*Spe Salvi*, 23).

Pope Francis – Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium (2013)

The breakthrough in understanding what it means to lead the Church in its faith through the service of St. Peter’s successors, caused

¹⁹ “Revolutions can accelerate this transition from ecclesiastical faith to rational faith. The ‘Kingdom of God’ proclaimed by Jesus receives a new definition here and takes on a new mode of presence; a new ‘imminent expectation’, so to speak, comes into existence: the ‘Kingdom of God’ arrives where ‘ecclesiastical faith’ is vanquished and superseded by “religious faith”, that is to say, by simple rational faith” (Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 19).

²⁰ “His [Marx’s –K.K.] error lay deeper. He forgot that man always remains man. He forgot man and he forgot man’s freedom. He forgot that freedom always remains also freedom for evil. He thought that once the economy had been put right, everything would automatically be put right. His real error is materialism: man, in fact, is not merely the product of economic conditions, and it is not possible to redeem him purely from the outside by creating a favourable economic environment” (Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 21).

by the abdication of Pope Benedict XVI, was in itself a category that revealed to the world the spirituality of humbleness, the spirituality of wisdom when it comes to reading the signs of the times and the kairos of individual vocation in the Church and in the world. The Pope's act of abdication does not remove the prerogatives of his teachings in matters of faith and morals – on the contrary – it uncovers a new territory for the pope-elect. The process of increasing importance of the Latin American Church, predicted back in the 1980s, has taken a form that was unexpected for many people, in the choice of an Argentinian Jesuit, fascinated by Franciscan ideals, who, at the same time, implements a program that refers to many pastoral initiatives by the Church of the poor and the marginalized. Pope Francis's first encyclical is a kind of a commentary to his multiple manifestations of the new style of implementing the charism and the papacy. The simplicity of conduct, the radicalism of administrative arrangements, seeking contact even with those who are most enslaved by disease, by social status or by education, are the qualities characteristic of the spirituality of joyfully experiencing and preaching the Gospel. For Pope Francis, it is a process that bears testimony to the ongoing novelty of Christianity which relies, i.a.,

on the delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing...the Church which “sets out on the road” to face the challenges of the modern world, being fully aware of certain temptations that occur in the priesthood. According to Francis, the chance for success of the new evangelization is created through communal and social experiencing of the kerygma, through social inclusion of the poor, practical contributions to the common good and social peace, especially in the form of a dialogue which contributes to peace.

This essential outline to Francis's exhortation is in practice the program for spiritual living through the Gospel in a Church adapted to the challenges of modernity. It includes the following elements: actions aimed at overcoming the economy of exclusion (EG 53-54), rejection of the idolatry of money (EG 55-58), equalization of social inequalities, which by nature spawns violence (EG 59-60), rejection of the culture of appearances, which is especially present in the media culture (EG 79),²¹ living through genuine culture (EG 62-67).

²¹ Discussing such challenges, Francis refers to the teachings of John Paul II in his post-Synodal exhortations, *Ecclesia in Africa* (1995), *Ecclesia in Asia* (1999), and the encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (1987).

The inculturation of the Gospel should remain a part of this culture, in the name of the culture's identity. Each culture and social group needs purification and growth. In the case of the popular cultures of Catholic peoples, we can see deficiencies which need to be healed by the Gospel: machismo, alcoholism, domestic violence, low Mass attendance, fatalistic or superstitious notions which lead to sorcery, and the like. Popular piety itself can be the starting point for healing and liberation from these deficiencies (EG 69).

At the same time, the healing process of a specific culture must retain traits of its identity. Cultural expansions which appropriate local cultures end up in a fiasco.²² Similarly, initiatives for the inculturation of the Gospel in the culture of contemporary cities that are marked by new cultures, may also result in failure:

New cultures are constantly being born in these vast new expanses where Christians are no longer the customary

²² This diagnosis corresponds to some evaluations of the contemporary process of Americanization of the European culture. On historical grounds, analogies are made to the failure of the culture and politics of the Roman Empire. On the grounds of religious culture, Americanization confronts the Protestant traditional hierarchy of values with the Catholic and the Orthodox. This was expressed, among others, by a Bulgarian sociologist of religion, Boil Kolaro: "Back to the scheme, it is evident that in the second quarter of 20th century the 'Roman' power once more shifted from Anglo-Saxon England to Anglo-Saxon America. It is the United States that finally spread the European culture, moral values, and lifestyle throughout the world. America of Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton, spreading its influence and dominating other countries, corresponds to Roman Empire under Trajan and Hadrian, when all Mediterranean world and the Middle East were romanized and the Roman might reached its highest point. In the second half of the 20th century English became a universal language as Roman in the first century BC. The era of Western cosmopolitanism – when crowds of immigrants have flooded big Western megapolises, 'gastarbeiter' – is analogous to the first centuries of our era when Rome and other big antique cities were 'exhausted' under the big flow of slaves, brought from the East. In the same time the West is ruled by a peculiar cult of the body and a rabid competition for abundance – manifesting itself in the unseen popularity of sports and the sexual revolution of 1970s. This phenomenon is not unlike the Roman motto *Panem et circenses*, Bread and Shows (the Coliseum was built in 75), and the sexual depravity in Roman society. Obviously, Reagan's, Bush's and Clinton's era is the final stage of apogee in Western civilization." Quoted after: <http://bojilkolarov.voiceofdharma.com/spiritual.html> [12.12.2013].

interpreters or generators of meaning. Instead, they themselves take from these cultures new languages, symbols, messages and paradigms which propose new approaches to life, approaches often in contrast with the Gospel of Jesus. A completely new culture has come to life and continues to grow in the cities. The Synod noted that today the changes taking place in these great spaces and the culture which they create are a privileged locus of the new evangelization (EG 73).

They also constitute a privileged area for the new spirituality which takes into account new languages, symbols, messages and patterns recognized in terms of

a sort of permanent ambivalence because, while they offer their residents countless possibilities, they also present many people with any number of obstacles to the full development of their lives. This contrast causes painful suffering. In many parts of the world, cities are the scene of mass protests where thousands of people call for freedom, a voice in public life, justice and a variety of other demands which, if not properly understood, will not be silenced by force (EG 74).

Paradoxically, Francis sees the opportunity for people of faith in the areas affected by “desertification” of religious values in the modern world.

In the desert we rediscover the value of what is essential for living; thus in today’s world there are innumerable signs, often expressed implicitly or negatively, of the thirst for God, for the ultimate meaning of life. And in the desert people of faith are needed who, by the example of their own lives, point out the way to the Promised Land and keep hope alive (EG 86).

The conclusion of the exhortation, that defines the program of spirituality for the modern man, is the indication of theocentric dependence of the fate of man and the world:

in reality he [God] is always there first. What our intercession achieves is that his power, his love and his faithfulness are shown ever more clearly in the midst of the people (EG 283).

Therefore, there is no chance for building an authentic spirituality, effectively tailored to the present day, without the relationship to God, without the attitude of faith, without morality derived from the premises of the Decalogue, without liturgy, prayer and *communio sanctorum*, as the perpetual maturation of past, present and future humanity, for the signs of the Second Coming.

CONTEMPORARY TYPOLOGY IN THE FIELD OF SPIRITUALITY (A RESEARCH PROJECT)

The reception of indications of spirituality in the modern world is dependent on the recognition of the authority of teaching and ecclesial structures. Both categories are subjected to increasing debate. It has various degrees of radicalization, up to the point of open hostility and formal persecution. The victims of this confrontation are primarily those, who, in their lives, have made the evangelical spirituality their certificate of identity. Attacks on priests, monks, and active secular people create socially accepted stereotypes of negative assessment and communal marginalization. In the last two decades, these phenomena are also present in the pastoral ministry of the Catholic Church in Poland, yet, their growth rate is being relatively slowed down through new pastoral initiatives. Their protagonists are primarily the members of various movements and associations.

They were modified at the beginning of the 21st century in the context of social life in Poland in the direction of an anthropological revolution, desacralization of spiritual (religious) motivations, and an aesthetics of temporality (instantaneity) of cultural achievements. Christian traditions in the period of transformation of the “Solidarity” movement in the 1980s and 1990s, connected a religious perspective with historical patriotism. Practically this meant an acceptance of the pluralism of spirituality. Beside spiritual sensitivity and the focus on subjective, objective and functional perfection, defined so far in the magisterium of the Catholic Church, alternative spiritualities are also favored. Paradoxically, their acceptance proceeds effectively in the social discourse; taking possession of the world of social communication means, artistic work, which is contentious in its nature, political life and socio-moral initiatives. The measure of these changes – just as in other Western European countries – are the emptying Churches that are being converted into concert halls, restaurants, hotels and even private homes. This has a symbolic meaning which indicates the current confrontation of spiritualities with their anthropological, ethical and aesthetic offers. The counterproposals of spirituality towards the Christian spirituality

that are subjectivized in the social discourse of Poles include a vast range of spiritualities:

- religious spiritualities (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism)
- quasi-religious spiritualities (sects, cultural and esoteric associations)
- mainstream spiritualities (fashions and social trends: of celebrities, of success, of volunteerism, of cosmic expansion, of deterministic inertia)
- a-social spiritualities – ideological and revolutionary spiritualities, syngenism, narcissism, egoism, sports fanaticism, feminism, gender, but also power (white-, black-, and autochthonous: Chinese, Japanese...)
- spiritualities of psycho-existential addictions (spiritual experiences induced by drugs, sexuality, psychological projects, virtual reality, motivation of career and success).

Among such various types of contemporary spirituality, man finds his own life project in which higher values usually dominate. They are most often associated with behaviors of a religious nature (“liturgy of life”, moments of prayer and meditation, acts of altruism, the need for community). They usually evoke expressions of spiritual and aesthetic sensitivity expressed through such categories as: admiration, beauty, fascination and, sometimes, happiness. In such cases, an effective individual spirituality acquires instrumental characteristics serving as a means of achieving external purposes rather than testimony to internalized values and beliefs.

Despite this diversity, an interest in traditional schools of spirituality can be observed. Apprentices lock themselves in monasteries for spirituality trainings or temporary “charging of spiritual batteries” under the guidance of experienced supervisors of spiritual life. This is reflected in a certain renaissance of Benedictine, Dominican, Franciscan and Jesuit spiritualities. With a facilitated media contact, an intensive exchange of spiritual life values takes place among communities of different Christian denominations and major traditional religions, facilitated by ecumenical movements and religious initiatives. Culture, with its forms of expression, has become a constant inducement in this direction, discovering inspiration and creative motivation in the search for spirituality. Soulful concerts, films, light and sound performances, motivate personal exploration of consciousness, experiences and attitudes measured to the challenges of this environment. Additionally, art interprets many mechanisms of modern life through spiritual reasons, making them the material for specific local or disciplinary spirituality

(spirituality of icons, pro-ecological spirituality, the spiritual dimension of volunteerism, of political party programs, of research projects). The pluralism of the content covered by the category of spirituality encourages a return to the traditional understanding of the designatum of this term and the declarations of the Magisterium of the Church. This roots authentic spirituality in the relation to God and one's neighbor and then become meaningful. As a result, this divine-human cooperation enables a return to the sources of spiritual development, up to the point of absolute personal fulfillment.

(Translated by Natalia Misztal)

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CHAPTER III

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION OF THE POLISH SOCIETY

LEON DYCZEWSKI

After the social-economic system was changed in Poland (1989) the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1993 and 1997 (Art. 25 and 53) assured freedom of conscience and of religion to the citizens, and gave Christian Churches and other religious organizations the right to freely fulfill their religious functions and to work in the extra-religious sphere.¹ Polish society became open to all novelties, including religious ones. New ideas as well as representatives of other religions started coming to Poland. The law on guarantees of freedom of conscience and religion of 17 May 1989 is so liberal that it only requires the signatures of 100 Polish citizens who possess legal capacity in order to register a new religious organization. These three factors favor the legalization of religious associations in Polish society. Thus, in the years 1990-2008 129 new religious organizations were granted legal status (74% of all the 179 registered Churches and religious associations). They represent almost all the religions and confessions of the modern world (GUS, 12-13).

Of all the Christian Churches that possess legal capacity in Poland the Catholic Church has the most believers. According to the data from the 2011 census 87.67% of the Polish society declares adherence to the Catholic Church, and then there are: the Orthodox Church – 1.31%, Protestantism – 0.38%, Jehovah's Witnesses – 0.34%, Buddhism –

¹ Although the Constitution of Polish People's Republic secured freedom of conscience and religion (Art. 82), the so-called people's authorities exerted strict control over religious activities, and extra-religious work was forbidden for the Catholic Church. According to incomplete data gathered by the Church side in the second half of 1950s the state confiscated 91 thousand ha of land and forests, 2203 buildings including 60 schools and kindergartens, 15 hospitals and sanatoriums, 550 catechetical, parish and spiritual retreat homes, 901 dwelling houses in 19 dioceses out of the 25 ones that existed at that time; and religious orders lost: 17 thousand ha of land, 807 entire buildings that were not used as farm buildings and 381 such buildings were taken away in part, 318 other real estates, and 278 places of worship.

about 0.04%, Islam – 0.013%, neopaganism – about 0.01%, Judaism – 0.004%.

The Catholic Church does not have a privileged position compared with other Christian Churches and religious associations. The relations between the Holy See of the Catholic Church and Poland are regulated by a Concordat signed in 1993 and ratified in 1998. The Catholic Church was actively involved in the process of transformation of Polish society and found its place in it. The predictions made by various parties did not come true; namely, that along with the globalization processes and Poland's joining the European Union, with the influx of foreign culture to Poland a fast secularization of Polish society would occur, and the Church would be incapacitated in its religious and social work. Poles are still religious, and the Church is working out its social role under the new conditions.

Structural Development of the Catholic Church

In 2011 the Catholic Church in Poland had 17,533 Churches and chapels, and at present it is still building new ones. In the years 1991-2011 the number of dioceses increased from 27 to 44, the number of Bishops from 106 to 133, of cardinals from 3 to 6, of Latin parishes from 9,089 in 1993 to 10,177 in 2011 and of Greek Catholic ones from 63 to 135. The average number of the faithful in a parish decreased in that time from 3,755 to 3,273. 172 new canonized or beatified Poles were included in the Catholic calendar².

An Increase in the Number of the Clergy and a Fall in the Number of Vocations

There are more and more clergymen in Poland. The number of diocesan and monastic priests grew from 24,444 in 1993 to 30,600 in 2011. A considerable role in this increase was played by John Paul II's pontificate. The number of diocesan priests (19,931) in 1993 increased by 33% compared to 1978 (14,972). Hence the average number of faithful for one priest decreased and the ratio was one priest to 1084 faithful in Latin parishes in 2012.

Diocesan Clergy. In 2011 there were 24,875 diocesan priests; in the Tarnów Diocese there were the most – 1,523, then in the Krakow

² Statistical data quoted in the present article come from: Kościół katolicki w Polsce 1991-2011. Rocznik statystyczny. Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego SAC, Główny Urząd Statystyczny. Warszawa Zakład Wydawnictw Statystycznych 2014.

Diocese (1,173) and in the Katowice Diocese (1,069); and in the dioceses with a small, sparsely populated territory with a small number of parishes there were the least, like in the Drohiczyn Diocese (267) and in the Elbląg Diocese (273).

Polish clergymen are relatively young. In 2010 more than half of the priests (57.7%) were less than 50 years of age, and only a quarter of them were more than 60 years old. However, with the years the number of older priests will rise more quickly than the number of young ones, for there are considerably fewer priestly vocations now than there were 10 or 20 years ago.

A decided majority of priests work in chaplaincy; one third of them are parish priests and administrators, and Church rectors; 173 are professors and rectors in Seminaries; 262 – missionaries; 160 – chaplains with the Polish Army; 367 – hospital chaplains; chaplains at welfare homes or with convents of nuns.

Male Orders. In 2011 there were 59 male institutes of consecrated life, and 12,480 men lived in them (8,983 in Poland, and 3,497 abroad). Among the ones living in Poland 6,323 were priests, 1,174 – brothers who were not ordained, 1,045 – clerical students, and the remaining ones were novices or postulants. The most numerous male orders (2011) are Franciscans (OFM – 1,319), Salesians (1,092), Conventual Franciscans (OFMConv. – 988), Pallottines (676), Jesuits (667), Capuchins (582), Divine Word Missionaries (555), Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (528). In the recent two decades the number of young monks (up to 30 years of age) significantly decreased, whereas the percentage of monks who are aged 41-50 nearly tripled, and of monks aged over 50 rose by as much as about 80%.

In 2010 monks ran 661 parishes, but first of all they conducted spiritual formation of various social groups, special chaplaincy and social work, among others: 424 religious brotherhoods and associations, 304 Oases of the Living Church (Light-Life Movement), 261 Neocatechumenate groups, 131 spiritual retreat homes, 105 Catholic Actions circles, 76 Chaplaincy of Sobriety centers, 17 schools of New Evangelization, 10 pilgrimage offices, 28 camps for disabled people, 16 pharmacies, 14 hospices, 10 hostels for homeless people and 6 hospitals, 291 charity teams, 135 youth clubs for poor children and for ones from endangered families, 64 psychological-pedagogical counseling services, 54 family aid centers, 52 bookshops and wholesale companies selling religious cult objects, 49 museums, 44 publishing houses, 27 academic magazines, 13 printing houses and print shops, 10 broadcasting stations. Apart from that, as their own works they ran 505 official Internet portals and websites, 100 religious magazines, 70 sports organizations and

parish sports clubs. They organized 53 festivals of classical and organ music, 22 festivals of religious music.

Female Orders. The number of female orders and congregations increased from 1991 to 2005 by 9 and in 2005 it was 114, of which 87.7% are active congregations, and 12.3% – enclosed orders. From 1991 to 2012 the number of nuns decreased by 3,759 (24,973 – 21,214) and the number of vocations fell considerably.

Nuns are active in a variety of fields of social life. In 2011 they worked, among others, as: catechetists – 2,269; kindergarten teachers – 935; tutors in all kinds of educational institutions – 804; headmasters of schools and other educational institutions – 658; organists – 593; nurses in institutions run by their congregation – 451; accountants in Church and state institutions – 298; teachers at schools – 287; nurses in hospitals – 252; environmental nurses – 61; secretaries in Church and state institutions – 219; doctors – 33; lecturers at universities – 51; 3,070 nuns took an active part in protection and formation of children and young people in various associations, communities, organizations. Altogether they took care of the formation of 78,6 thousand people.

Priestly Vocations. In the years 1992-2011 the number of seminaries decreased from 86 to 74, and as in other European countries the number of seminarians in diocesan seminaries significantly fell, from 5,367 in 1992 to 2,959 in 2012 (a 45% decrease), and the number of monastic seminarians from 2,745 to 882 (a 67% decrease). In 2003 6,400 clerical students, and in 2011 only half of this number – 3,200, were preparing to be ordained.

The ratio between the number of clerical students and the number of Catholics in particular dioceses varies significantly. There are most clerical students, four for 100 thousand Catholics, in the Opole and Tarnów Dioceses, fewer than that – below 1.5 students – in the Archdiocese of Szczecin-Kamień and the Diocese of Koszalin-Kołobrzeg, and even fewer, 1 – in the Łódź Archdiocese.

Together with the decreasing number of clerical students also the number of priests ordained in particular years is falling (2004 being an exception). In 2010 it was smaller by 23% compared to 1992. Despite this fact since 2006 the number of ordained priests has remained at the level of a little over 500 a year.

Religious Declaration and the Attitude towards the Catholic Moral Norms

A CBOS survey of November 2011 showed that 95% of inhabitants of Poland declare themselves to be Catholics. After Malta

this is the highest percentage in Europe. There are also people who withdraw from the Church. In 2011 459 people did so.

In the recent 20 years the percentage of people declaring they are believers has decreased from 90 to 81%, but at the same time the percentage of deeply believing people has grown from 10 to 20%. The percentage of people who declare that they follow religious observances regularly has fallen from 52 to 48%, and the percentage of people who do it rarely or do not do it at all has grown from 15 to 25%.

In the years 1991-2012 the percentage of people who do not approve of behaviors distinctly incompatible with the Catholic ethics has increased, the behaviors being e.g.: sex before the Church wedding (from 21.7 to 30.9%), marital infidelity (from 72.9 to 82.5%), use of contraception (from 17.7 to 27.1%), or abortion (from 36.7 to 64.6%). At the same time the percentage grew of people who think that no marriage is necessary (2.7% to 8.8%), and ones not approving of a divorce kept at the same level (43.7-43.3%); in 2012 more than half of them did not accept euthanasia (53.7%) and one third (32.1%) in vitro fertilization.

Religious Sunday Practices and Religious Life

In the years 1992-2011 the percentage of people observing the Sunday Holy Mass (dominicantes) fell from 47% to 40 %; and of ones going to Communion increased from 14% to 16.1% in the same years. The percentage of people going to confession (paschantes) is more or less constant albeit it is subject to some fluctuation. In 1991 it was 76.2%, in 1998 – 73.8%, in 2002 – 82.1%, and in 2012 – 76.9%.

In the years 1990-2011 the number of baptisms decreased from 569 thousand to 384 thousand, of people receiving their first Communion decreased from more than 610 thousand to about 400 thousand, of sacramental matrimones from about 200 thousand to about 170 thousand. The fall in the numbers is first of all the result of the fall in the number of births. In the same years the number of baptisms received by people over seven years of age increased, which shows that receiving this sacrament is delayed. The number of people receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation was relatively stable in those years. The number of marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics increased. Also the number of applications for declaring a marriage invalid grew. At the end of 1989 there were 3,140 undecided cases of this kind in diocesan courts, and at the end of 2010 their number in courts of the first instance increased to 7868.

Various Forms of Social Activities

Educational Work. Realizing its educational mission the Church ran 162 primary schools (20 thousand pupils), 190 secondary schools (22.1 thousand pupils), 137 grammar schools (13.7 thousand pupils), 20 vocational schools (1.2 thousand pupils), 31 schools for children and youths having educational and developmental problems (0.8 thousand pupils), 69 universities (100 students), among them the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, the Bogdan Jański College, the Ignatianum. Catholic kindergartens and schools have won a wide recognition due to a high standard of teaching and their educational character. They are still too scarce compared to the interest they arouse, as well as in relation to the number of public kindergartens and schools.

Catholic Organizations. In 2008 there were over 60 thousand Catholic movements, associations and organizations with a communal character; they had more than 2,675 thousand members. Most often they have a local and environmental character, with a small number of members, and they are rooted in their parish or in a monastic community, with a strong position of the animateur/leader.

The most significant Catholic organizations and associations with a national character include: Catholic Action, Neocatechumenal Way, Home Church, Family of Families, Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Light-Life, Opus Dei, Focolare Movement, Catholic Youth Association, Catholic Journalists Association, Catholic Scouting Association Zawisza (so-called Europe's Scouts), Rev. Piotr Skarga Christian Culture Association, Family Academy.

There are also Foundations that promote Catholic values: e.g. Foundation Work of the New Millennium that has funded 2500 scholarships for school pupils who in their lives are guided by John Paul II's teachings; St Nicolas Foundation that aids, among others, family children's homes, single mothers, and deals with the situation that mothers have in their jobs.

Many initiatives are functioning that integrate the circles they work in and form the religious attitude in people. The best known ones include: The Poland-wide Youth Meeting Lednica 2000 attracting more than 50 thousand young people every year, Cavalcade of Magi – in 2012 it took place in 24 Polish cities and about 100 thousand Catholics took part in it, Jesus Station Festival – it takes place during the Woodstock Station and about 1,000 people participate in it, Weeks of Christian

Culture – organized in many Polish cities every year, or the Radio Maryja Family affiliated to Radio Maryja.

Aid and Charity Work. Parishes and monasteries do aid and charity work, most often helping numerous families and unemployed people. Caritas Polska is the best known institution run by the Catholic Church in Poland, providing short- as well as long-term aid, both non-cash and financial, to unemployed, homeless, ill or old people, to children coming from poor families, and also to immigrants and refugees. Caritas also offers humanitarian aid to victims of wars, cataclysms and natural disasters outside Poland. In 2010 to carry out its mission Caritas Polska spent 188.1 million zloty, which may be compared with the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity, the best known and publicized secular aid institution, that in the same 2010 spent 42.9 million zloty.

In 2004 the Catholic Church in Poland ran: 33 hospitals, 244 outpatients' clinics, 267 old people's homes and social welfare homes, 538 orphanages and children's homes; in 2011 it ran 203 hospices, 360 children's homes, 1,946 family counseling services, 41 centers of addicted people and 3,262 other centers having the character of aid or charity organizations.

In 2011 Catholics in Poland donated more than 1.1 million dollars for missionary projects realized through the agency of the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith. The money collected by Poles were transferred to four countries: Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Indonesia.

Media Activity. After 1989 the Catholic Church has achieved a lot in the field of the media. Today it has newspapers and magazines, publishing houses, radio stations, a television station, Internet portals.

The most important nationwide magazines are: weeklies "Gość Niedzielny" and "Niedziela", the daily "Nasz Dziennik"; monthlies: "Króluj nam Chryste" (dedicated to altar boys, with a circulation of 10 thousand), "Rycerz Niepokalanej" (about 70 thousand), "Znak", "Więź", "W Drodze", "List" (about 15 thousand); bimonthly: "Miłujcie się!" (about 220 thousand). In 2011 2049 parishes published their own magazines. Despite the many press titles the Catholic Church has only two percent of the press market in Poland.

The greatest publishing houses, according to the amount of their income from the books they sell, include: Znak, WAM, Biały Kruk, Drukarnia i Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, Dom Wydawniczy Rafael, Jedność.

Starting from 1995, every year in April, the Catholic Book Fair takes place in Warsaw. In 2012 nearly 140 exhibitors, 50 authors and 18 thousand visitors took part in it. During the fair the trade award Feniks is granted.

The weakest link in the development of the Catholic press and publications is the distribution and the underdevelopment of the need to read, especially in the young generation, for which books have been replaced by electronic media.

After 1989 in nearly all the dioceses radio stations have been set up. There are also a few radio stations run by religious orders. However, not too many people listen to them. They rarely exceed 2-3%. Most diocesan stations are part of one of the two nation-wide radio stations: VOX FM (it includes eight diocesan stations) or Radio Plus Polska Zachód (10 stations). The nation-wide Radio Maryja has the strongest position among religious broadcasting stations and it has the most listeners of all the Catholic stations.

Catholic television is weaker than the radio. Since 15 February 2013 TV TRWAM has been broadcasting via MUX-1, and since 15 October 2007 Religia.tv has existed, a theme channel with a religious profile belonging to Grupa ITI; there is also a special religious program on the public television.

The Church has its own Catholic portals, the most important ones being: Deon.pl; Fronda.pl; Katolicka Agencja Informacyjna (established in 1993, and at present the third largest religious agency in Europe); Opoka.org.pl; Rebelya.pl; Wiara.pl; pch24.pl; Przeznaczeni.pl – a portal for Catholics looking for friends (the ultimate aim being a spouse) sharing the same values. In the service 300 thousand people have registered, and thanks to the service over 1000 marriages have been contracted. In 2011 40% parishes had its web page.

Pilgrimage Centers. Pilgrimage centers and animated pilgrimage movement is a specific feature of the Polish Church. A special form of pilgrimage pastorate has been formed. It is connected with a new growing phenomenon, that is with religious tourism. Old pilgrimage sanctuaries are ever more lively, and new ones come into being (Licheń, Sokółka), mostly devoted to the Virgin Mary. The Way of St. James to Santiago de Compostela is being revived.

The sanctuaries important for the Polish Catholicism, and at the same time pilgrimage centers, are: Jasna Góra (Częstochowa), Licheń, Święta Lipka, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Ludźmierz, the Divine Mercy Sanctuary in Krakow-Łagiewniki, Niepokalanów. Jasna Góra is annually visited by 4.5 million people; it is one of the greatest pilgrimage sites in the world; traditionally it is a national sanctuary. It is

estimated that in 2012 altogether 103 thousand people took part in 169 walking pilgrimages to Jasna Góra.

The Catholic Pressure Group. Both lay Catholics and the clergy join social and political activities as a lobby. They put forward their suggestions and appeals to their local authorities, to the Members of Parliament and to the Government, demanding that Christian values and Polish cultural heritage be taken into consideration when deciding current issues as well as when enacting laws and regulations, e.g. concerning the question of the civil union, same-sex unions, in vitro fertilization, euthanasia, abortion, family policies, the contents of school textbooks. As a result of such actions Family Planning, Human Embryo Protection and Conditions of Permissibility of Abortion Act of 7 January 1993 generally forbids pregnancy termination, and allows it only in three cases: – when the pregnancy poses a threat to the life or health of the pregnant woman; – prenatal examinations or other medical conditions indicate that there is a high probability of a severe and irreversible fetal defect or incurable illness that threatens the fetus's life; – there are reasons to suspect that the pregnancy is a result of an unlawful act. Then, the Broadcasting Act of 29 December 1992 includes the regulation about respecting the system of Christian values. Concordat of 1993 provides for subsidizing Catholic universities by the State and for teaching religion at school as well as organizing spiritual retreats. Owing to actions of the Catholic pressure group the feast of Epiphany was restored as a holiday. Clergymen are present at State ceremonies as well as in the Armed Forces and the Health Service as chaplains. In the schools, hospitals, offices and in the Sejm there are crucifixes, and sometimes a portrait of St John Paul II.

Conclusion

The Poles' religiousness is lively, open to the new and at the same time rooted in the tradition; it varies with regions and cultures. In the Northern and Western territories, in central Poland and in the Dąbrowa Basin indices of religiousness are lower than in South and Eastern Poland; they are the highest in the Tarnów, Rzeszów and Przemyśl Dioceses. The Catholic Church in Poland is still a universal and socially important institution. In the process of manifold transformations of the recent 20 years it has found its place in society, despite the growing criticism and the anticlericalism of extreme secular circles.

Religiousness and the Catholic Church in Poland compared to other countries, including the traditionally Catholic ones, in many respects are more lively, which is proven, e.g. by such measures as:

greater percentages of dominicantes and communicantes, a greater number of priests, the ever developing parish network, presence of religious symbols in public places, Catholic being involved in social, cultural, charity, economic and political activities.

A justification for this state of things can be found in the often statistically indefinable phenomena of religiousness, such as: a rich cultural heritage closely connected with Christianity; experience gathered at the time of Partitions; of the German occupation and of the totalitarianism of the Russian socialism; when the Catholic Church was the foundation of the unity and permanence of Polish society as well as a space for freedom; folk religiousness; St John Paul II's heritage; testimony on the Christian life of numerous groups of new religious formation.

(Translated by Tadeusz Karłowicz)

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CHAPTER IV

TRANSFORMATION OF MORALITY IN POLAND

MACIEJ HUŁAS

To describe the transformation process of the moral condition that reflects significant changes in the morality of a given group or a wider community requires, in large measure, the depiction of changes that come about within the confines of *values*, *rules*, *norms* and *criteria* typical of that community. They compose altogether an axiological “landscape” and a hierarchy of priorities that translate into people’s actual desires, aspirations, and strivings. The images of happiness created in human minds are mirror images of what in the given moment is being considered valuable. *Rules*, as indicators of proper individual actions, mould individual moral attitudes and determine the quality of their reciprocal relations. *Norms*, a means of conveying of—what is commonly accepted in the social realm, define modes of behavior within the confines of the societal realm, and in doing so they build up the ethos of the community. *Criteria* are the basis for making crucial decisions that impinge on the condition of a given community. They come into being out of a combination of factual knowledge about a particular realm of social actions (e.g. economy, state) and moral convictions as to the ends of human strivings and aspirations, as well as their meaning and fulfillment (Anzenbacher 1998, 13).

It seems legitimate to make reference to values, norms, and criteria and to the role they play in the transformation of morality because they are concerned directly with morality. Furthermore, it becomes clearer to perceive the influence they have on the formation of the historical circumstances and the factual knowledge that at times is being deliberately misinterpreted to match the ideological ends of the ruling parties. This inexorably results in a blatant misuse and distortion of knowledge. An obvious instance of such a deformation was the centrally planned economy in socialist countries whose exponents had managed to colonize economic narratives and imposed them on the people to justify their purely ideological goals. There are countless examples thereof. Hannah Arendt in her *Roots of Totalitarianism* makes a remarkable comment on the Soviet economy in which she asserts that the Stalinist economy did not give priority to increasing the efficiency of production, but rather its only goal was to strengthen political power.

This misinterpretation of the essential ends of the economic system failed to understand the fundamental purpose of the economy which, as a system of culture, creates conditions for fulfillment of all existential needs to which the human being may be subject (Arendt 2012: 589f). The Stalinist economy had reached the stage where disturbance of two separate systems: economic and political occurred causing numerous deprivations such as the starvations of Ukrainians in the 1930s.

This brings to mind another question concerning the impact that historical conditions may have on the way people perceive their moral choices. These conditions have an effect on the adopted criteria. Such a *quasi* Marxist view in which historical circumstances are being perceived as the main factors responsible for the condition of morality may seem reductive and one-sided in a sense. That kind of perspective leaves no space for consciousness, or as Krzysztof Kiciński puts it, there is no more room for the psychological soul which can serve as the lodestar indicating the proper way of one's life (2008). Questions about the reasons which brings about changes in moral orientations must not be confined alone to historical processes. Nevertheless, the political changes which Polish society was subject to within the space of the last few decades make up an important point of reference for many political debates and the ordinary people's consciousness. The political transformation of the 1989's marks the Rubicon that separates two ideologically opposing periods of Polish history in the 20th century. After twenty five years, by now the attitude towards the political transition in Poland that people manifest – conformist or revisionist – became a significant point for perception and evaluation of those occurrences that came about in Poland. The demarcation line in the Polish political arena, as well as in public feelings at present, coincide not so much with the traditional left-right ideological spectrum (Colhun 2012, 61ff) as with the aforementioned stances on political transformation along with new conditions that arose in Poland within the time since the changes had begun (Hulas 2012, 49).

Morality is a cluster of norms and tenets that regulate the individual actions of people. It examines individual conducts and qualifies them as either morally good or evil. Such a decisive qualification as “good and evil” can be applied only to individuals whose actions come about as the outcome of their autonomous will.¹ In

¹ The autonomy of will, as Kant put it, makes it possible to specify the action objectives, as well as to select the measures for the realization thereof. While morality turns out to be the proper means to assess individual behavior, it cannot be applied for the same reason to institutional realm, as institutions are the fields of highly intensified and condensed interactions; agglomerates of a complex and opaque structure, in which individual morality disappears as being

this paper morality will be scrutinized from the individual vantage point – individual imaginaries, decisions, and actions.

Even though individual imaginaries, decisions, and actions come out within the confines of individual morality, they are in large measure conditioned or simply enforced by institutions, having an impact on the way these institutions operate. Socialist misconceptions about the foundations of the economy in the People's Republic of Poland (PRL),² its inefficiency, its irregularities and its rationed access to consumer goods produced altogether conditions under which one's occupational unreliability generally perceived as improper was no longer subject to moral qualification and became the commonly accepted form of behavior. This kind of abuse must have eventually affected the conditions of enterprise. The snub that ordinary people demonstrate towards many official arrangements imposed on them by the socialist state led to a common increase in collective tolerance for "immoral" behaviors by citizens. The immoral character of those behaviors was unquestionable in its own right. What might to some degree have justified them in ordinary people's eyes was that they were meant as a form of discontent that expressed opposition to the state authorities devoid of public legitimization. No matter how the immoral practices of the PRL period would be motivated, they must have had negative impacts on the general condition of institutions of that time.

This present analysis strives to delineate the evolution of moral attitudes in Poland against a background of social change that came about in the course of the political transition in 1989. For this purpose, I shall look at selected areas of morality in the period before and after the political transformation and compare them by paying attention to the prevailing perception of morality, as well as normative motivations responsible for moral choices. I shall focus on the six fundamental areas of moral activity, which altogether more or less comprehensively reflect the moral condition of any given society. They involve: *truthfulness*; attitudes towards: *life*; *property*; *sexual conduct*; *family* and *friends*; and last but not least, attitudes toward *institutions* of various kinds.

The sources used to compose this paper consist chiefly of (1) opinion polls carried out by CBOS as well as (2) selected sociological surveys on morality of Poles that go back to the time preceding and

included into the system of wider institutional processes and dependencies. I. Kant, *Uzasadnienie metafizyki moralności* (translated by M. Wartenberg, Warszawa: PWN 1953, p. 68 (433); M. Szymański, *Die heilende Dimension des Sakramentes der Versöhnung. Zum Verständnis und zur Pastoral des Bussakramentes*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang 2005, p. 159f.

² The People's Republic of Poland was the official name of Poland from 1952 to 1989.

following the political transition in 1989. The opinion polls generally reflect moral attitudes manifested by the respondents and their approach to particular aspects of morality. However, they must not be taken as detailed expertise; being merely empirical data they do not include in-depth interpretation of the acquired results. By contrast, the sociological surveys strive to give deeper insight into the matter of the analyzed fields; nevertheless, caution should be exercised when using them. Prudence is required particularly when dealing with the research on religion and the Catholic Church completed in the 1970s, taking into account the socialist government's unfavorable attitude towards Catholicism. Authors of the surveys had published their research findings in the conditions of an oppressive state which did not hesitate to use censorship to control scientific expertise. In addition, the authors often represented academic institutions of diverse ideological pedigree, and so their outlook on crucial issues regarding religion and morality might have been biased at the starting point. Stefan Nowak, for instance, portrays in parts the complex and multifarious reality of Polish Catholicism by means of oversimplified conclusions in which he puts emphasis on its tenuous sides and passes over the more favorable. Leon Dyczewski and Janusz Mariański, as Catholic sociologists on the other hand, manifest a positive approach towards family condition as well as youth morality, i.e. they assume aprioristically that religion and the Catholic Church had played a positive role in molding the moral condition of Polish society.

TRUTHFULNESS

Living conditions in socialist Poland had created *double standards*. This kind of a split morality can be assumed to be a reaction against the ideological model of politics, economy and the pattern of "proper" ideas imposed on people by an authoritarian state. Political legitimacy in communist Poland was based on the general will of the national front represented by its leading political force The Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), supported by the satellite parties, the conformist trade unions, various groups, and by the so-called "social movements" such as the Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth (PRON). The Political monopoly did not make any room for competitive political programs. The public sphere as an open and uncontrolled realm in which people could freely utter their opinions concerning public issues did not exist in the PRL. There were no incentives for grassroots initiatives either. Parliamentary opposition did not exist, and the word "opposition" alone triggered off unequivocally pejorative associations of antipatriotic affront contrary to the common interest of the people.

In socialist Poland truthfulness was generally disappearing from the public arena controlled by the state. The reason for that was moral stigmatization along with various forms of repression directed against people who dared to share political views that diverged from those officially approved. As Stefan Nowak put it, the people in the PRL had functioned in two-dimensional realms composed of two realities of which one was official and institutional with its formally declared pattern of views and stands, and the other was private and non-institutional in nature, based on informal relationships such as family, friendship, and acquaintance. Declaring bogus allegiance to beliefs which one in fact might not have shared was not viewed as immoral. It was rather perceived as actions enforced by a case of absolute necessity and therefore entirely justified. Being a member of an administrative board, taking part in “official meetings”, or holding a position in the state administration – all these situations ranked among cases of absolute necessity and absolved people from the public unfolding of true convictions (Nowak 1979, 169f).

The problem of truthfulness as a moral attitude was gaining in importance only when it referred to informal declarations and private interactions between individuals not in institutional relation. This meant that the area in which morality was implemented was only the private realm of informal encounters. In ordinary people’s perception the institutional sphere controlled by the socialist state was perceived as a field in which the rule of identification with the declared beliefs did not apply. Discrepancies between declared attitudes and their consequences – which, as Craig Calhoun put it, are fundamental for social morality and indispensable for creating social trust and development – did not find application within the institutional realm (2011, 9-27). While the people generally manifested a high degree of tolerance towards double standards in regard to the truthfulness of the declared views on the informal level, they did not accept analogous attitudes in the media viewed as tools of states’ indoctrination. The specific conditions of double morality in socialist Poland reduced the significance of truthfulness as a personality trait, but its nonexistence had not been attributed to the sense of dignity (Nowak 1979, 169).

A survey carried out in 2010 shows that among all values viewed as vital in everyday life, truthfulness had been ranked ninth, compared with: honesty – 76 percent; family love – 72 percent; diligence – 61 percent; respect towards others – 53 percent; tolerance – 34 percent; religiosity – 24 percent; marital fidelity – 25 percent; and compliance with the law – 23 percent. Approximately 22 percent of the respondents had pointed to truthfulness as a guiding principle, and only one percent of the respondents had considered it to be the most significant of all values. In the ranking, truthfulness occupied the same position together

with: cunning, entertainment and patriotism. This lowly position of truthfulness may be explained in that those who considered it as an important feature pointed to honesty as more general (CBOS 2010a, 9-11).

Another survey conducted in 2012 pointed to a relatively large number of those admitting to have mistrust in others. In the 2000s this group was oscillating between 72 and 81 percent. The Poles generally trust family members – 97 percent; acquaintances – 90 percent; co-workers – 84 percent; and neighbors – 75 percent. Among the respondents, 64 percent admitted to having trust in the local parish priest (CBOS 2012a, 7). There is a relatively high quota of those having confidence in charities (80 percent). The Catholic Church had been cited as a trustworthy organization by 69 percent of the respondents; television by 44 percent; the press by 34 percent; parliament by 29 percent and political parties by 20 percent (CBOS 2012a, 13f). In the years between 1992 and 2003 the Polish population became more aware of an unmitigated evil of corruption which had been qualified as a severe social concern (CBOS 2004a, 2).

Kiciński believes that the moral decision one makes may be considered as a merit only if made by a person free from any “outer authorities” (2008, 380). Therefore, the confidence in charities that comes up as grassroots initiatives and operates within the Third Sector and the opposition to corruption consisting of free and vile individual actions may be interpreted as an abandonment of morality viewed as tantamount to submissiveness towards state authorities. The rejection of that old model typical of the period before transformation makes it clear that nowadays morality in Poland tends to be interiorized and channeled within the sphere of an individual decision that correlates with individual sensitivity freed from state propaganda influence.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE

An issue regarding the value of life can be illustrated by quoting two examples, namely, the death penalty and abortion, as these two forms of direct interference in human life were established in the official legislation by the PRL (Podemski 2001, 20f). The death penalty had been handed down and carried out until the middle of the 1980s. Abortion became a prevailing way to avoid unplanned pregnancy and obviate moral predicaments that occurred as a result of illegitimate conception. Stefan Nowak pointed out that Polish society in the 1970s displayed a tendency for a high rate of rigor and punitiveness that might have been an outcome of frustration caused by economic factors (Nowak 1979, 168). Low standards of living conditions and omnipresent discontent found an outlet in categorical attitudes towards others.

The death penalty was the highest punishment in socialist Poland. It had been carried out both on Nazi murderers responsible for genocide, on those found guilty of crimes with extreme cruelty; and on patriots considered to be political dissentients, many of whom were exonerated after 1989. The Penal Code of 1969 contained a list of the most severe crimes that fell under a capital sentence.³ These included: participation in the activities of a foreign country or persons who violated the territorial and political integrity of the PRL (article 122-123); encroachment on the life of a state functionary (article 126, 1); activities that severely violated the functioning of institutions, facilities and state-owned enterprises (article 127, 2); converting state property of great value (article 134, 2); and killing a person (article 148, 1). In one case the capital sentence was performed on a person accused of economic crimes. When it comes to the latter case, the death penalty was used to emphasize the socialist authority as the sole depository of public order and the only agent entitled to take actions in the public interest. Sentencing to death was to create in the social awareness (particularly in those uncritically submissive to Communist ideology) an image of dissidents as persons posing a threat to political order and socially dangerous criminals. The show trials of persons regarded as enemies were intended to provide an outlet for social discontent focusing it on “scapegoats”. This was to turn attention from the malfunctioning state. Since the end of World War II and until 1956 approximately 3.5 thousand people had been sentenced to death and executed.⁴ The last death sentence in the PRL was performed in 1988; then, under the Prime Minister’s moratorium all death sentences were commuted to prison terms.

There is no capital sentence in the current Polish Penal Code. However, the survey conducted by the Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) in 1999 revealed that 77 percent of the respondents supported the use of the death penalty for the most serious crimes; 18 percent were against; and five percent had no opinion on this issue (CBOS 1999a). Similar survey findings from 2011 pointed out that, supporters of capital punishment in Poland make up 61 percent of the total population against 34 percent of opponents. As a major reason for capital punishment, supporters had mostly mentioned safety of the general public (CBOS 2011a, 6). Therefore, the arguments in support of the death penalty were preventive in nature. They did not aim at retribution or revenge for the crimes committed, but tended to eliminate perpetrators from society and so to prevent circumstances in which ordinary people could be exposed

³ Dz.U. 1969 nr 13 poz. 94 Ustawa z dnia 19 kwietnia 1969 r. Kodeks karny.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

to the potential danger of associating with persons already sentenced for murder. Nowadays, proclivity towards punitiveness is discernible in social attitudes of many Poles, too. This time, however, it is dictated by fear of a real delinquency risk (Ziółkowski 2002, 34).

Abortion, legalized after the post-Stalin-thaw, might have been perceived by part of society as an element of a wider social policy realized in Poland at the time. In fact, it was a part of the ideological policy of the USSR regarding demography of the Eastern Bloc. The system of social policy imposed by the socialist regime could raise internal objections like the entire regime itself; nevertheless, the availability of legal abortion on request and in the absence of free access to contraception might have been regarded as a way out of unwanted pregnancy. The law mentioned three cases that sanctioned abortion: a physician recommendation; difficult living conditions of a pregnant woman; and a situation where pregnancy was a result of a crime.⁵ The Abortion Admissibility Law of 1959 left the assessment of the difficult conditions of life to the discretion of the physician who on the basis of a consultation with the pregnant woman was permitted to give a certificate allowing abortion.⁶

In the legal formula of communist Poland, abortion was presented as a typical medical treatment accompanied by a number of procedural steps. It ignored, however, other important factors of moral, anthropological and social character, as it did not contain reference to the demographic nor to the mental and personal aftermaths caused by abortion. In addition, the omnipresent rough, materialistic narratives of communism were unable to find out any *modus operandi* by means of which subjectivity and human dignity could have gained their proper articulation, let alone to create favorable conditions for debate on subjectivity that might contribute to the enhancement of its status and proper reflection on its very meaning. Catholic educational institutions were an exception. The message of the Church on the issue of abortion, even if not expressed in the form of official documents, had been clearly articulated in everyday pastoral teaching. The Catholic Church held a clear position against abortion; nevertheless, the relatively considerable tolerance toward that issue can be explained by the fact that the Church's opposition against abortion at the time might have faded away in the continuous stream of criticism directed on many occasions by the Catholic hierarchy at the socialist regime. It could conceivably be true that having got used to the Church's critical stance on the communist

⁵ Art. 1.1. Dz.U. 1956 nr 12 poz 61. Ustawa z dnia 27 kwietnia 1956 r. o warunkach dopuszczalności przerywania ciąży.

⁶ Dz.U. 1960 nr 2 poz. 15. Rozporządzenie Ministra Zdrowia z dnia 19 grudnia 1959 r. w sprawie przerywania ciąży.

state manifested unremittingly on numerous occasions, ordinary people in general might have lost the sense of abortion's unique moral aspect, in the sense that it was not *just any* moral offense, but a severe action terminating human existence in a prenatal stage. The peoples' indifference to abortion in socialist Poland could arise from the fact that this problem was signaled so often that it had grown stale.

Since 1993 Poland has had a law that permits abortion only if: pregnancy endangers the life of the mother; the fetus is seriously and irreversibly damaged; and in the case when the pregnancy is a result of a rape (CBOS 2010b). After 1989 the public awareness concerning abortion had increased and the previous tolerance had diminished. It was the Catholic Church that contributed chiefly to creating the new social perception by virtue of its unequivocal position on this issue, articulated by the Polish Bishops Conference (KEP). CBOS surveys indicate that the determined opponents of abortion are people with a strong identification with religion and its practice (CBOS 2010b, 2,6). In 2006 the number of opponents of abortion for the first time exceeded the number of its advocates. In the subsequent years the numbers of those in favor and those against were distributed rather evenly (CBOS 2010b, 2).

Although the people's awareness concerning abortion has shifted from a liberal stance towards a more conservative one, there was no substantial change between 1992 and 2012 when it comes to conferring about the right to abort the fetus on the woman, if proved that pregnancy might have put her life and health at risk or if the conception was a result of a sex offense. The tolerance of abortion dropped slightly in cases when the fetus had been found damaged. It decreased significantly, however, in cases when abortion was claimed on the basis of a difficult financial or personal situation of a pregnant woman (CBOS 1999b, 2; CBOS 2010b, 2-4; CBOS 2012b, 4). CBOS surveys from 2010 also indicated a decrease of abortion's acceptance as a free choice of a woman. Pro-choice advocates admitted sympathizing with leftist views, while opponents were chiefly conservatives (CBOS 1999b, 4; CBOS 2010b, 7). In the collective awareness of Poles there is not one agent accountable for the moral guilt of abortion, but the responsibility goes back to different groups: women undergoing abortion, physicians performing them, and politicians and others who stand for abortion. When it comes to penalizing those directly engaged in abortion in 1992, 69 percent of the respondents were opposed to any kind of penalization against 16 percent of those in favor (CBOS 1992, 9).

Euthanasia. In the 1990s the number increased of those who advocated for administering a lethal substance by physicians on demand by a patient in cases of a terminal illness which causes suffering. This trend is getting stronger depending on whether the question asked will

include the term “euthanasia” or will describe the dramatic situation of a patient using a broader narrative that emphasizes the element of suffering (CBOS 1999c, 16; CBOS 2001a, 4-6; CBOS 2001b, 12f). As the study conducted in 2013 shows, 48 percent supported the project of withdrawing life-sustaining treatment of terminally ill patients when prolongation of life might cause additional suffering with no chance of recovery, whereas 43 percent explicitly endorsed euthanasia. Those advocating for the cessation of life-sustaining treatment and euthanasia declared themselves to be non-religious with a leftist outlook on life (CBOS 2013, 12f).

Transplant. Generally, a high percentage of the Polish population (96 percent) demonstrates a favorable stance on harvesting organs for a transplant carried out on the deceased. Of all respondents 89 percent had agreed with the readiness to donate one kidney to a family member; 52 percent would donate it to a distant relative; and 28 percent to an unknown person (CBOS 2011b, 2,9). The survey conducted in 2010 demonstrated an unequivocally negative attitude of Poles to smoking cigarettes. Of all respondents, 70 percent declared themselves to be non-smokers, and 74 percent stood for the ban on smoking in public places (CBOS 2010c, 3f).

PROPERTY AND WORK

Property has been considered to be one of the principal values in any social and legal system, regardless of time, geographical situation and ideological justification. Such a remarkable position of property has been dictated by its direct reference to human existence. The Communist system was no exception on the issue, except for creating in the mid 1940s a peculiar collectivist way of dealing with property that did not have any precedent in Poland until that time. The property confiscated from their owners had been nationalized and euphemistically called common property that along with other state arrangements was to serve the prosperity of the working people of the towns and villages.⁷

The expropriation of those who owned means of production; unequal access to consumer commodities; the ban on ownership of capital goods in the form of shares, land and hard currency resulted in the emergence of a double market commodity exchange and caused new social divisions. The gloomy symbol of this phenomenon was the functioning of Pewex, which was a spectacular evidence for the ideological failure of the PRL and made people feel morally dispensed

⁷ Dz.U. nr 33, poz. 232. Konstytucja Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej Uchwalona przez Sejm Ustawodawczy w dniu 22 lipca 1952 r.

from the obligation of giving respect to the inviolability of state's property.

As Nowak put it, people in the PRL clearly understood the difference between two terms: "stealing" and "taking". The first, in accordance with its proper meaning, signified the unjust occupation of someone else's property; it was explicitly considered to be a violation of moral order and fell under social stigmatization. The second term "taking", however, was associated with the action in which an ordinary person appropriated commodities, mostly items or materials, to being in the possession of the state enterprise or another state institution. Although "taking" was immoral in itself and under free market circumstances would be qualified as "stealing", it was commonly tolerated by the people in socialist Poland (Nowak 1979, 169). This kind of leniency, however, involved exclusively subordinate employees as there was no tolerance for "taking" by those occupying high-ranking positions. In that case "taking" would be qualified as stealing. The survey conducted on students in the 1970s showed a relatively high tolerance for bribery in order to facilitate receiving public housing allocations. Whereas bribing was not necessarily considered an immoral action, "taking", on the other hand, had been qualified as such (Nowak 1979, 169). "Taking" generally was not associated with theft but viewed as a sign of resourcefulness and entrepreneurship and treated as a means for solving the problems of everyday life and fulfilling the needs of immediate consumption. Property in the PRL was perceived in terms of commodities destined for immediate consumption rather than capital investment. Such a reductive status of property resulted from the absence of a free market and the lack of investment opportunities, and also from the state whose control policy and protectiveness generally inhibited any kind of grassroots initiatives. There are many indications that the financial prestige in the PRL depended not on free access to luxury goods or commodities generally qualified as "wants", but rather on the access to basic goods of immediate consumption identified with "needs".

The research conducted in 2009 demonstrates that 89 percent of Poles consider corruption to be a serious problem in Poland, and many agreed that the problem constantly intensifies. The most corrupt areas were cited: politics, national health system, judiciary, prosecutor's office, self-governmental institutions as well as the central government (CBOS 2009a). Of all respondents 82 percent considered a bribe to be immoral, regardless of intentions or circumstances; 77 percent disapproved of both giving and taking a bribe as a practice badly affecting the overall living condition; 56 percent believed that a bribe in any form should be the subject of severe punishment; and 26 percent

considered taking bribes to be a way of receiving equitable remuneration and a bonus on top of a regular salary (CBOS 2009a, 7).

Generally speaking, the economic system and the organized process of labor in the PRL were not conducive to building occupational ethos as a field in which self-realization and personal fulfillment could occur. The professional as well as occupational career was treated purely instrumentally as a means to provide income, and the income determined the social recognition of a given occupation or profession. According to J. Koralewicz-Zębik's findings, what determined social status in the PRL was the kind of job actually held. Consequently, the social status based on qualifications replaced the one based on merits handed over by heredity (Koralewicz-Zębik, 179).

After the political transition, work was qualified by 72 percent as a means of self-fulfillment and a way to achieve higher values, such as the aforementioned self-fulfillment. In 2004, 24 percent of all respondents qualified work as being nothing more than the institutional way to accumulate goods necessary for existence (CBOS 2004b, 2). The survey conducted in 2009 demonstrates that of all professional groups in Poland, the most prestigious are jobs related to the medical sector – 27 percent, and those requiring polytechnic qualifications – 21 percent. Politicians make up a professional group with the lowest public recognition (CBOS 2009b, 2f). Overall, the majority of respondents admitted to be content with the actually exercised work. Among the most satisfied are physicians, engineers, managers, miners and teachers. The least satisfied are hired farm workers. In general, those with higher education and those receiving higher salaries are most likely to admit to being satisfied with their occupations (CBOS 2008a, 4).

The survey conducted in 2009 showed that the contemporary Polish society manifests an ambiguous attitude towards nepotism, which can be interpreted as a disguised tolerance for this practice (CBOS 2009c, 3f). Gaining privileges or positions depends on the professional competencies of those competing, and the decision about who is to win the competition is being made by someone who is a relative of one of those persons competing and often bound with her/him by common financial obligations. Then justified fear may come out whether the person who makes the decision about promotion will be guided by no other factors other than those officially set. Regarding family members with favor when distributing goods and privileges may result from the sense of strong identification with the family as an extended personality that goes back to the PRL time.

SEXUALITY

Nowak asserts that in the PRL moral norms regarding sexual

conduct differed vastly depending on whether they referred to men or to women. Nevertheless, he does not specify which group enjoyed greater tolerance in sexual life. However, considering the paternalistic and masculine line-up in Polish society, e.g. the number of women in key political institutions and the overall male-related arbitrary nature of the relationships, it can be assumed that tolerance towards women's sexual conduct was lower than for men. People of the PRL had generally condemned adultery, but at the same time demonstrated greater tolerance towards premarital sex (Nowak 1979, 170).

The difference in approach towards sexuality between the people in the PRL period and the modern-day Poles stems from the revision and redefinition of certain sexual attitudes. Homosexuality, abortion, and divorce, traditionally considered to be signs of moral disorder sounding like a sex scandal, are currently viewed as individual preferences of which moral qualification is being blurred and becomes more and more disputable (Mariański 2008, 356).

As Janusz Mariański points out in his current research, Catholic teaching on sexual morality tends to be viewed by the young people more and more as a mere rhetorical form. The sphere of sex inclines not to be perceived as a subject within the norms of Catholic morality but is considered to be ruled by different principles. As Mariański puts it, sex became rather the subject for the criterion of pleasure or the lack thereof than continue to be the issue of Christian morality (2008, 364). However, statements like that cannot be regarded as a conclusive argument reflecting the whole moral condition of youth in Poland. It strives rather to depict the clash of traditional morality with prevailing permissive trends of today, which in part affect the former.

Polish society generally exhibits a high degree of rigor against persons committing the crime of pedophilia. More than 95 percent of respondents believe that the person convicted on a charge of pedophilia should be excluded from working with children, and school principals and all responsible for educational institutions for minors should be able to check the criminal record of all job applicants to ensure that the person had not been convicted of a charge of pedophilia. A little less, about 68-85 percent believe that people inhabiting a neighborhood should be informed that in their vicinity resides a person convicted of a sexual crime against minors (CBOS 2004c, 5).

One quarter of the respondents owned up to sexual activity with persons who remained in stable relationships while committing infidelity. The group involved mostly young men of weak identification with religion; sharing leftist convictions; professionals with higher education; high earners; and city dwellers. These relationships were mostly transient and did not contribute directly to the relationship's breakdown. When asked about the circumstances under which these love

affairs were established, the vast majority mentioned the work place and social gatherings. Infidelity had not generally met with opposition from others (CBOS 2011c, 5-13); however, 72 percent manifested disapproval of casual romances in which one partner was still in a relationship.

For the most part, farmers and small entrepreneurs, running their own businesses, make up the group that usually declared disapproval of marital infidelity. This can be explained by the stationary way of life and work, self-discipline and “life realism” that are indispensable conditions for carrying out business activity with one’s own responsibility and at one’s own expense (CBOS 2011d, 5). Predilections for a fling can be interpreted as a chimerical state of mind of those with unpredictable emotional states that vastly contrast with both entrepreneurial discipline and realism in assessment of the situation.

Poles generally disapprove of publicly manifested homosexual conduct where the number of opponents oscillated between 78 percent in 2005 and 64 percent in 2010. While homosexual relationships in the private sphere are tolerated by the majority of the population, there is no tolerance for the official marriage between persons of the same sex and for children adoption by homosexual couples either (CBOS 2010d, 3,12). Especially the lack of consent to the adoption of children by homosexual couples is particularly strong. In 2001, 69 percent did not accept gay marriages; this number increased to 78 percent in 2008 (CBOS 2008b, 5). Poles generally maintain the opinion that homosexuality is a deviation from the norm – such an opinion had been expressed between 2001 and 2008 by about 85 percent of all respondents. However, the perception of homosexuality within this group changes in favor of a homosexual lifestyle (CBOS 2008b, 8).

J. Mariański points to a steady increase in the acceptance of flings and non-marital sex among young people. In recent years the percentage of those advocating premarital sex and casual romances increased (2008, 363). The tolerance for informal relationships may result from a permissive lifestyle in which emotional relationships are portrayed not as constant ties based on and cemented by the institution of marriage, but as temporary and accidental partnerships. Ziółkowski, however, does not seem to share the above view. He draws attention to the growing public disapproval of “alternative” sexual practices, despite many campaigns to promote sexual tolerance in Poland (Ziółkowski 2002, 35).

The survey on sexual harassment in 2007 shows an overall low rate of this practice in Poland. The most common form of sexual harassment, about 22 percent, are comments and jokes of colleagues and co-workers. Other forms are gestures, unwilling nearness and embracing – seven percent; using the superior position at work and university to allow gestures of sexual character – four percent; yet another form of

harassment is promotion at work and university in exchange for sexual relations with superiors – two percent (CBOS 2007, 3).

FAMILY AND FRIENDS *VERSUS* INSTITUTION

As S. Nowak and J. Koralewicz-Zębik assert, the family in socialist Poland was considered to be the most important of all values apart from the person itself. The family was viewed as a kind of extended personality and was treated as a value in itself. Besides other factors, the individual's focus on family as a relatively stable area for implementation of values and aspirations might have resulted from a general disillusionment with socialism (Nowak 1979, 156; Koralewicz-Zębik, 180). Apart from family, people manifest a wide recognition to those considered as "decent men".

A commonplace dislike people manifest for the state institutions and the aversion to the required codes of conduct imposed by the regime created altogether the belief that the ideal of a "decent man" was not to be associated with the roles, attitudes and responsibilities one was obliged to carry out within the institutional realm. The ideal of a "decent man" was rather to be implemented in the private sphere of family and friends. In fact, a "decent man" might have been a worthless employee, disloyal to the state-enterprise he was working for. As a "decent man", however, one was not supposed to be indifferent towards obligations of complying with the everyday rules of life, social patterns, altruism and general sensitivity. Moral standards have to be maintained in the case of moderate alcohol consumption, be manifested in clement temperament; suitability, not a provocative way of dressing; and proper fulfillment of the role in the family as husband, wife, father and mother. The status of a "decent man" in the PRL included constant readiness to help the family, friends, acquaintances and others in case of an emergency (Nowak 1979, 168f). It involved such attitudes as helpfulness, kindness, ability to an agreeable coexistence with others and the like (Koralewicz-Zębik, 180f).

In the PRL family and friends played another significant role which consisted of the affirmation or disapproval of somebody's actions that might be qualified as morally correct or incorrect. In the absence of confidence in the state institutions, gaining recognition of those considered to be important was of great significance for the ethos of a "decent man" (Nowak 1979, 170). Friendship was viewed as a value in itself, unlike a variety of work and state related "connections" "cliques" and "acquaintances" based on self-interest and calculation. Within the confines of "connections," loyalty was feigned, instrumental and had not been associated with moral obligations (Nowak 1979, 160). Koralewicz-Zębik writes openly about intimidation caused by these kinds of

enforced “connections”, as well as how these informal relations had an effect on gaining privileges within an official institutionalized sphere based on rules officially determined (Koralewicz-Zębik, 182).

As Leon Dyczewski indicates, a representative sample of family in the PRL was the rural farm family and the urban worker family. There was neither bourgeois nor landowning families at the time (Dyczewski 1975, 314-317). Despite industrialization, the prevailing family model in the PRL was a three-generational family that consisted of parents, children, and grandchildren. Notwithstanding inconveniences caused by living under one roof or by peculiar roles (such as grandmother bringing up grandchildren), these families were made up in general environments of persons bound by the atmosphere of warmth, dedication and mutual selfless aid, where the assistance was generally addressed to the younger generation (Dyczewski 1975, 319, 323). An important factor common to families in the PRL was the care that the younger generation was taking of the older. The research on families carried out at the time does not signal any cases in which the younger generations would declare indifference towards the e.g. infirm parents (Dyczewski, 1975, 321).

In contemporary Polish society family happiness is mentioned as the most important value by 81 percent; the next mentioned in 2005 was good health (69 percent), and career (23 percent) (CBOS 2005). Family as a fundamental frame of reference took the central position in the entire axiological system of modern-day Poles. Divorce is viewed as a failure rather than an opportunity or the way of getting out of one's uncomfortable situation. Moral consciousness of young people regarding marriage and family is rather relative, i.e. there is a decrease of stringency in matters relating to sexuality. Many young people tend to consider themselves producers rather than addressees of moral norms. On the one hand, young people appreciate the value of love, having children, marital fidelity and relationship stability; on the other hand, however, they approve contraception, divorce, and abortion (Mariański 2008, 364-282).

The status of the family as one of the fundamental values did not change after the political transition. In 1999, 99.6 percent of Poles considered the family to be a very important value (Mariański 2008, 331). Hence, the family is now perceived as one of the most appreciated values, and a happy family life is mentioned as a condition for a successful life (CBOS 2008c).

In the PRL people had generally manifested an unfavorable approach towards institutions viewed as bad, unreliable, and unfriendly. The reason for that lack of confidence in institutions came out of the commonly shared conviction that ordinary people were excluded from having influence on the organization and functioning thereof. Institutions were viewed as a bureaucratic hindrance to the realization of

life goals. Institutions became the areas of social division in which participants made up two antagonistic groups: “we” and “they”. The term “they” had explicitly pejorative connotations referring to the group of those in leading positions to whom responsibility was attributed for the malfunction of institutions. The way ordinary people perceived institutions had usually been changing in favor of the institutions if the group considered as the “they” consisted of people bound with the opposite group “we” by friendship or other informal and direct relationships. These informal interactions had usually diminished the critical approach of people towards institutions (Nowak 1979, 161f).

The survey conducted in 2009 had shown a relatively high degree (74 percent) of confidence in the institutions of the European Union (EU). The enthusiasm diminishes, however, when people were asked about the functioning of particular institutions, such as the European Parliament and the European Commission. About half of the respondents assessed their functioning as correct, whereas 48 percent was of a different opinion, reproaching the EU officials for having first of all their own interests in mind (CBOS 2009d).

In general, Polish people maintain a detachment from institutions. However, they think highly of natural communities such as the family and bonds based on direct relationships. Institutions are complex structures, and the encounters which occur within them assume the form of condensed and intensified procedures. Their structural and procedural character overwhelms individual activities as well as individual responsibility. Institutions particularly in the PRL time were viewed as areas of alienation and parts of one big, political and economic agglomerate. Family, friendship and other informal relationships, on the other hand, were perceived as veritable antithesis of these impersonal institutional formations.

SOURCES OF MORALITY: RELIGION

In the PRL the prevailing religion was traditional Catholicism in which emphasis had been placed on rituals rather than on inner religious experiences or charity. Charity was effectively restricted by the state authorities, so there was not much room neither for the charitable nor for the social activity of the Church. Religion, on the one hand, was treated as a significant factor of self-determination of man; however, its influence on individual moral attitudes in the public domain and civic obligations was limited, if only because the proper public sphere did not exist in the PRL. Religion, as Nowak underlines, had a real impact on the autonomous sphere of sexual ethics, in which it played the role of a fundamental imperative (Nowak 1979, 170f).

Of all respondents 94 percent declared to have been keeping the Ten Commandments in everyday life, and 81 percent admitted to holding views influenced primarily by their own reflections, by the pope's teaching and to a lesser extent by their parents' Catholic faith (CBOS 2005, 4). In modern-day Poland 96 percent declared themselves to be Catholic. Religion makes up a significant part of everyday existence. The vast majority – 77 percent perceives religion as vital in their personal life, whereas 12 percent admitted that religion plays no significant role in their lives. Appreciated much higher than religious faith are: health, honesty, work, being held in high esteem by others, and a peaceful life. Under the current condition in Poland the secularization thesis – that modernization of life and a general increase in the quality of existence leads to a gradual weakening or disappearance of religion in personal life, family and the public sphere – does not prove correct. In his studies in 2002 Ziółkowski pointed to the absence of secularist tendencies which would substantially alter the condition of Polish Catholicism in comparison to the 80s (2002, 35f). Poles are generally convinced of the vital role of religion in both the private and public realm (CBOS 2006a). As to the question about the rightness of Catholic principles, 93 percent were in favor of their equity. In this group 31 percent consider Catholic morality to be entirely proper and sufficient for one's good life; 21 percent assert that new life conditions enforce its revision, whereas the group of 36 percent accepts without reservation all Catholic moral tenets, although it does not achieve all of them (CBOS 2006b, 3).

The survey conducted in 2009 showed a low rate of 18 percent in recognition of divine law as an immutable source of moral norms, while 59 percent assert that moral norms are a private matter of each one (CBOS 2009e, 4). Almost 90 percent of the people in Poland believe that helping others is important. The vast majority of 84 percent appreciate diligence and honesty, and 78 percent share the view that it pays to be a good person. Taking the above into account, it seems unsubstantiated to assert that by loosening its religious justification the morality in Poland shifts towards rational calculation and activity for the sake of private interests (CBOS 2009e, 13f). As to the presence of religion in the educational system, 65 percent advocate maintaining religion lessons in state schools; nevertheless, they consider that within the confines of religion class students should learn about various religions rather than be confined to one prevailing denomination (CBOS 2008d, 1,8).

Mariański considers moral permissiveness to be more typical for the modern-day Poles than vaunted relativism. Relativism does accept historical, cultural and environmental dissimilarity of moral settings, tolerance for the diversity of standing points and moral qualifications, as

well as contextual dissimilarity of moral codes. Therefore, relativism is more cognitive than practical in nature. Permissiveness, in contrast, is of a practical character due to the widespread tolerance for breaking the moral norms, their meaning and realization. Since the mid-90s young people in Poland manifest a lower acceptance of Catholic doctrine viewed as a consistent whole, however, there are increases in the number of those declaring general support for Catholic moral doctrine with certain exceptions (Mariański 2008, 321). Mariański states that negative changes in institutional religiosity pertain primarily to the marital, family and sexual ethics. The last one is not only practically ignored but also theoretically questioned (2008, 356-363). The problem of a selective approach to the Church's moral norms concerning family, sexuality and work ethics had been signaled by Ziółkowski as well (2002, 36).

PRL – MORALITY OF THE “IDEOLOGICAL MELTING POT”

The juxtaposition presented above, which strives to portray changes in morality of Poles prior to the political transition and afterwards, may be interpreted as a shift from “unnatural” collective morality emerging in the context of the authoritative state towards individual morality, or “moral autonomy” as K. Kiciński puts it. Of course, an interpretation like that is not the only correct one. Therefore it does not aspire to be regarded as faultless either. It is rather an attempt to organize and interpret empirical data by means of an uncomplicated diagram which, despite its simplicity, signals certain general trends and as usual in such cases may have many exceptions. In order to interpret correctly the quoted data in view of their relation to morality transformation, one shall underline those factors which are responsible for the general condition of the people in Poland prior and after the transition.

The mode of life in the PRL was coarse and unnaturally official. Limited access to basic needs had generated in people a collective inferiority complex that resulted in the diminished self-confidence and incapacity for independent critical thought. On the one hand, people regarded state institutions with mistrust; on the other hand, there was no political system to be trusted apart from the socialist one.

As Nowak puts it, people in Poland during the real-socialism era had displayed moderation on the question of orientations and their situations in life. As a rule, miscellaneous groups and communities shared similar values. In the PRL there were no collective axiological systems that would be opposite to each other and clash with each other; there were correspondingly no consequent concise moral and life orientations. Nowak writes explicitly about a “homogeneous”

axiological pattern having emerged from the reshuffle in an antebellum societal stratification which perforce brought about an artificial mixture of various axiological viewpoints. Despite many attempts, the socialist regime in Poland after 1945 did not succeed in a complete eradication of the then axiological structures and in instilling new ones either, as it occurred in considerable degree in East Germany or in Czechoslovakia (Nowak 1979, 172f). In a sense, there is an analogy between the nation making indoctrination in the PRL and national identity formation in the 19th century, in which the language unification,⁸ the dissemination of literacy and higher culture (Anderson 2006), and the development of capitalism had played a considerable role.

Undoubtedly, the socialist government was about to create a “new higher culture” able to mobilize people around socialist ideas, and so to generate a new classless social morphology with a corresponding collective unconscious reasons that may explain the failure. One of them was the Catholic religion, which besides its purely cultic function, at the time played a significant social role as being a symbol of opposition to ideological indoctrination. As José Casanova asserts, this sort of a far-beyond-the-cult societal role of religion consolidates it as a vital indicator of axiological orientation, particularly under the circumstances of an oppressive state (1992, 17-57; 2001, 415-441; 2010, 265-282).

Another reason why socialism had failed in Poland was the loss of societal confidence in state institutions whose overall malfunction contributed to frequent worker protests, martial law and a lasting crisis in the 1980s. Limited access to basic consumer commodities; tolerance for “taking”, bribery and “cliques”; the nonexistence of work ethos; the abandonment of socialist ideas of equality through disproportion in the standards of living between those being in power and others; degrading ordinary people to a twofold turnover of goods purchased, one in domestic and the other in convertible currency – all this turned into an ideological, economic, political and cultural fiasco of socialism. People in Poland were smothered by a system that had given away chances for a decent standard of living and killed the sense of sanctity of life. Perhaps, this may explain in part the high degree of punitiveness and the easy consent to *capital punishment*.

The case of *abortion* signals that for a long time Polish society in general was misinformed about the moral and psychological aftermaths

⁸ Calhoun points to two key factors – 17th century religious wars and the development of national languages along with the national tradition – that stimulated the formation process of the nation-state, collective consciousness, ethnic disparity and political autonomy. C. Calhoun, *Nations Matter Culture, History, and the Cosmopolitan Dream*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London-New York 2007, pp. 11-26.

of abortion. The narration regarding death in the PRL was ever-present in educational TV programs, teenage movies and even in children's playing. Thus, the problem of terminating life in an antenatal stage faded out of sight in the ocean of ubiquitous death pushed on by the then pop-culture. To perceive in the fetus an integral human being required a high level of awareness and sensibility, which in the PRL had been generally neglected. However, numerous discussions on the dignity of the human fetus were organized by rare independent intellectual circles and academic institutions. After 1989 abortion became the topic of the public campaign, particularly the Catholic *pro-life* groups, and this provoked reflection on the subjectivity of the human fetus. An important role in this campaign had been played by academic intellectuals from the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL). Numerous studies and scientific sessions on devastating aftermaths of abortion published and organized at the university exemplify it with all clarity. Teaching about universal human dignity by emphasizing the integrality of human life and its sanctity was part and parcel of its moral mission as the only independent university in the Eastern Bloc. Once the 1990 legislation of abortion had become an issue of the public debate, ethicists affiliated to KUL could engage intellectual potential generated by the decades to protect life, specifically in its beginning stages (Styczeń 1991).

Tolerance for abortion in the case when the life of the mother is threatened by pregnancy or the fetus' serious defect must not necessarily be tantamount to the lack of respect for life as such. It certainly signals a problem with the recognition of the legal personality of a human being in the prenatal stage. This also proves that life is viewed as an individual value, the quality of which depends on the good overall condition. The situation is similar when it comes to support for *euthanasia*, which indicates that many people would prefer to decide on their own about the end of their life. Individualizing the right to dying is *inter alia*, a manifestation of a consumerist lifestyle striving to eliminate any possible form of suffering in which old age and infirmity are viewed as pathological rather than as normal conditions of human life. For the majority of modern-day Poles life seems to lose its worth when it becomes arduous. A considerable support for organ transplantation, on the other hand, and the constantly decreasing tolerance for smoking cigarettes on the other, appears to confirm the belief that life is regarded chiefly as an individual value. Work and property were, and still remain, methods of self-fulfillment and raising the social status. While in the PRL labor was treated instrumentally as a means of raising one's material status, nowadays it becomes a value in itself. One of the satisfactory symptoms that signals a considerable shift in morality is the currently growing sensitivity of people to the pathologies of corruption. In modern-day Poland corruption may be viewed as a gloomy hangover

from the communist system. Strong opposition to corruption in general is dictated by the raising of public awareness that it undermines principles of living in a civilized society and ruins fair competition between individuals, both in the labor market as well as in other areas relating to personal career, promotion, social advance, and overall development.

Everyday life in the PRL was marked by a relatively high standard of collective morality that was related to the status of “a decent man”. Sexual behavior, which contradicted this standard, might have resulted in the loss of such status. In modern-day Poland the issue of sex tends to be perceived and assessed according to the criterion of satisfaction, or the lack thereof. Sexual behavior becomes the subject of individual assessment that does not entail public stigmatization. This is evidenced by the growing tolerance for intimate contacts and marital infidelity. Currently in Poland one deals with privatization of sexuality. The absolute lack of tolerance for pedophilia draws attention to the area of individual morality, and it can be interpreted as a sign of concern about it. It is because recognition of pedophilia as a criminal offense seeks, on the one hand, to protect minors; on the other hand, collective stigmatization of this crime may act as a deterrent to potential perpetrators.

An instance of respect for burgeoning moral autonomy may be the tolerance for homosexuality as a lifestyle practiced in private, along with the lack of acceptance of homosexual marriage. This can be interpreted as a mark of appreciation of individual freedom, without a simultaneous consent for the creation of a legal framework that might have undesirably impinged on the culturally established institution of marriage.

The family was and still remains a central value. This also seems to confirm the thesis of the trends towards individual morality. Basically, the family in the PRL made up an uncontrolled area. Due to its private and intimate character, the family makes up the area of implementation of “purely human” relations (Habermas 2007, 131), i.e. those that help developing humanity as prior and independent of any political conditions. Familial intimacy had always been a contrast to the outer world molded by the coarse patterns of socialism. At present, with increased chances of pursuing a personal career and the increased mobility of people in Poland, the family still remains an essential value, a biographical prerequisite for understanding one’s own identity.

According to the typical view, Polish Catholicism was chiefly traditional and ritualistic wherein forms of worship and manifestations of faith were dictated by cultural factors rather than by personal choice. However, religion in socialist Poland played, besides its purely cultic role, also a social one, although to a limited extent. The instance of

religion's social function might be giving shelter to political dissidents by ecclesiastical circles. Under specific conditions of limited access to civic entitlements and the permanent scarcity of commodities, there was no chance for the Church in the PRL to develop a social commitment and charitable activities, as it was in the Western countries. Poor implementation of moral obligations of charity and social morality reduced morality chiefly to the areas of sexual behavior, as this sphere was unforced, freed from the control of the state, and activity within it was based entirely on free decisions.

Why had other areas of life fallen outside any categorization of morality? They were either enforced by the political regime or rechanneled in a broader spectrum of feeling resentment towards the state authorities. In the PRL many immoral attitudes, such as the "taking" of state property, had been justified by the lack of social legitimacy of the state; therefore "taking" was viewed as one of the many forms of rebelliousness against the undemocratic state. In modern-day Poland people begin to understand that it is worth being moral for morality's own sake, as morality based on universal tenets is a proven structural foundation of a successful life. This proves that morality is treated as a general basis of daily behaviors and choices; however, individual behavior is determined by individual preferences and often by permissiveness and selectivity.

These conclusions largely seem to provide arguments for a positive verification of the assumption that the transformation of the morality of Poles, whose turning point was the political transition in 1989, created a new moral awareness that is marked by the shift from a constrained socialist morality to a moral autonomy based on individual orientation.

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CHAPTER V

THE *SACRUM* IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

LEON DYCZEWSKI

In the public arena utilitarian buildings and spaces are the dominant feature. They immediately serve by satisfying people's basic needs, often in the simplest form. They are similar to one another in different cities and countries – nearly identical in Moscow, Warsaw, Madrid, London and New York. They have features of mass and trivial objects. They grow fast, and they are often subject to alterations and to demolition. At the end of the 20th century one fourth of all the town buildings in Tokyo were built in just five years [1986-1991] (Bognar 1997, 281). This type of buildings and spaces do not arouse special interest in the public; we do not look at them with guidebooks in our hands, as looking at them we know nearly everything about them.

In addition there are buildings and spaces with a symbolic character, that is, ones that have a meaning, through which their architects wanted to say something, and which indeed say something by themselves. A Church or temple belongs to these remarkably symbolic buildings. It is food for thought for those who look at and enter it. It stands for the human spirit, something important and holy, everlasting and imperishable. It represents the supernatural in which its architects believe and with which they associate their terrestrial life. It is excluded from objects of daily use and is not supposed to satisfy any biological needs. Great care is taken of them and people protect them from destruction. And even though some get destroyed, there is usually somebody ready to rebuild them. Churches last for ages. They are a part of cultural heritage of a specific religious community, a village, city or nation. They are important elements of a people's identity and individual character.

In Poland we have temples of many religions and creeds, that are usually closely connected with particular ethnic groups. And so, Poles most often built and are still building Catholic Churches in the style of Western culture, or Orthodox Churches; Ukrainians built Greek-Catholic Churches; Byelorussians and Russians – Orthodox Churches; Germans – Protestant Churches; Jews – synagogues; and Tatars – mosques. In the territory of Poland there have been and there still are mostly Christian

temples in the Western Orthodox style. I will devote most space to the Christian Churches (Dyczewski 1993, 251-257).

THE TEMPLE AS A SYMBOL OF GOD AND HIS LAWS

In ancient and medieval times the temple was located in the middle of a town or village. Quite often it would even initiate the settlement. Not rarely was its beginning accompanied by some supernatural circumstances through which God showed that it was His wish to meet His believers in one particular place on earth, not another. So in fact, it was Him, not the people, who chose the spot. It was God Himself who invited the faithful.

The temple would usually stand on a hill, in a charming place, right in the center. Beside the Church, or opposite it, there stood the king's or duke's castle, or the town hall. These two were the heart of the town, a point of reference.

In the past the market of a town had its own symbolic meaning. It was the pivot of the town. There the worldly and heavenly spheres would meet, the human and the divine, *sacrum* and *profanum*. The life of the town was planned and organized around it. The market was the center of intensive religious, social, administrative, artistic and trade activity. It was there that the temple and the town or castle would clearly distinguish themselves. Their importance was emphasized by the central location, size and splendor. No other building could be as high as they were. The postulate that the temple should rise above the rest of edifices was accepted by the Christians and Jews, as well as other religions of the Orient. The Talmud says: "Misery to the town where houses stand higher than synagogues". The temple with its glamor, beauty of interior and height of the tower (towers) as well the roof directed the citizens towards the supernatural. It explicitly stated that the only Master of the town and its inhabitants is God. The towers of the temple were generally higher than those of the town hall or the castle, which symbolized subordination of the king, the duke, the town council and the citizens to God, who supervises all the powers, and to His laws. The temple generated the rhythm of city life. Its bells would wake people up in the morning, announce lunch time and encourage the community to say evening prayers.

The architecture of the temple and its space strongly emphasize the line between what is divine and holy, and what is worldly and secular. Architectural devices created the atmosphere that evoked respect for what was sacred and limited the influence of the aggressive *profanum* upon the *sacrum*. Being a holy place and a symbol, the temple was separated from the rest of the world in many different ways.

Open space or, quite frequently, a wall, surrounded the temple symbolizing the border between *sacrum* and *profanum*. Whoever entered the temple space would do his best to control his behavior and opinions and would avoid anything that could offend the *sacrum*. In the space of the *sacrum* one considered himself safe. It guaranteed him immunity. It protected him even from the royal or municipal power. It created the possibility for parity and solidarity. The poor and the rich, ones wielding powerful and those who did not have a say in society stood side by side there.

The division into the divine world and the human world, into the sacred and non-sacred world, was also reflected in the interior of the temple. Spaces more and less holy were clearly distinguished. The entrance part of the temple (the vestibule) was given the character of the border between the holy and the lay. There, those who had no right to participate in the mysteries of the faith because of lack of baptism or atonement for a deadly sin would stop. The symbolic meaning of the vestibule decreased with time. Today it functions as a place where one gets ready to enter the Church and as something that stimulates inner concentration. The second part of the temple, the nave, stood for the higher level of holiness. The nave was accessible to everybody who was allowed to participate in the mysteries of faith. The third part of the temple, the most holy one, was the chancel. In the past, only those who were engaged in the Church services could enter it. Its separation from the rest of the temple is marked by a special architectural form – most often a dome, arches or columns. In the architecture of Western temples the distinction was additionally reinforced by the balustrade – an ornamental partition between the chancel and the nave. In the Orthodox Church it is called the Tsar's (or Emperor's) Gate.

This symbolism of the temple in ancient society can be easily seen in the so-called old towns in Krakow, Warsaw, Vienna or Paris.

THE TEMPLE AS A SYMBOL OF UNITY

In the modern society of Vatican Council II the temple does not always occupy the central place in a town or a village and it is not always such a magnificent building as it used to be. It often happens that a green belt does not separate it from other buildings, let alone a wall, which was typical of temples in the past. We can see temples squeezed in between the houses; they are often buildings that are not distinguished by anything special. Unless it is a necessity, such a location for a temple is justified in the theological orientation which appeared in the period of the Vatican Council II. New theological trends that got intensified during the Vatican Council II and soon after it, break up with the opposition between the holy and the worldly – the unholy. It is believed

that such an attitude was a remainder of the Old Testament theological consciousness and, at the same time, one of the reasons for the progressive secularization, since a holiness so sharply isolated from reality has no effect on it. Modern theologians point out that the salvation mission of Jesus Christ brought those two worlds closer to each other. God reconciled and sanctified the whole world and not only its definite regions or spheres. The Holy Spirit crosses all borders and “I should not call any man common or unclean” (Acts 10,28). Nothing that is common has been excluded from God’s activity. Jesus Christ used ordinary bread and wine to realize the holiest mysteries. Therefore, everything should be opened to God’s act, and temples, which are the places of God’s special presence and man’s meeting with Him, should not be isolated from the place of living, work, education, entertainment; on the contrary, God should be linked to these environments since man lives in them and man is the goal of Jesus Christ’s salvation mission.

In accordance with such premises, clergymen and architects situate Churches between houses, close to places of work and even on their premises (in Linz a Church was built within the area of a steel works), in places of recreation and entertainment, in shopping centers (e.g. in Katowice), in the area of airports, close to highways and crossroads, not separating them from the environment and taking care about simplicity of the interior design. They rearrange the whole interior: it is at the same time divine and human. Ordinary believers gather close to the altar, which is not separated by means of any constructions from the rest of the space. New materials and techniques are applied to build and design temples, which is in accordance with modern architecture and art. The temple acquires the properties of a symbol of unity between the divine and human worlds; it links the holy with what is to be sanctified. The temple becomes a symbol of joining particular elements and fragments of human life and a symbol of uniting everything that man is able to discover and invent.

THE TEMPLE AS A SYMBOL OF MEETING OF PERSONS

In the 1970s, and even more clearly in the 1980s, clergymen and architects began to move away from the concept of a hidden temple undistinguishable from other buildings and space. They exposed it, looking for the central place in a housing estate or a town or the most charming site, with a simultaneous strong desire to maintain its close connections with the surroundings, and first of all with people. Two ideas guide this concept:

1. a temple is to be a sort of *imago mundi* for the inhabitants of towns and villages;

2. a temple is to be a place of a meeting of persons, the centre of the urban or rural community. This concept has the following justification.

Man in a modern society satisfies his various needs in a selective manner, in the places arranged especially for a specific domain of life, for example a school, place of work, shopping centre, club, park, cinema, sports field or a swimming pool. There, he fulfils himself only in a fragmentary form, in definite dimensions of his life, which brings the danger of personality disintegration and the feeling of being lost. He needs a place where he could look at himself in an overall manner, which would help him unite the fragments of his life into a sensible whole. The temple is such a place. Experiencing his meeting with God there, and in Him and through Him a meeting with other people, experiencing the community, man of today finds the proper direction for developing his personality. In this way he gets an axis for its integration, the axis being vertical and directed towards the supernatural world. It is in this sense that the temple is an *imago mundi*, the principle of life, especially for the inhabitants of a modern city. The temple gives man's life a cosmic dimension, which means that it binds him with other people, with the whole creation, with God.

Uniting people into a community takes place in the temple, which should constitute the centre of the community life of a town, a housing estate or a village. Therefore, it should be surrounded by numerous places that make a platform of communication between people. According to such assumptions a centre was built in the 1980s in Lublin not far from the former concentration camp of Majdanek. It consists of the following: a Church, a vestry, priests' apartments, offices, a parish room, rooms for the youth and a school. The centre symbolizes the unity between religious, moral and cognitive values.

To make the temple an *imago mundi*, the place of communication between persons and the centre of the community of a housing estate, a number of postulates have to be taken into consideration. Here are some of these:

1. the temple and the space around it should be linked with the environment and suit it;

2. objects should be allowed to speak, which refers especially to natural materials such as stone, wood, brick, which have their own strong expression. They appeal even more powerfully if the builders, put more of their spirit into building them. "It is the spirit that builds from stone, not the other way round. Where spirit does not build, the stones remain dumb" (Ratzinger, Quoted after: "Znak" 1999, 3);

3. the architecture of the temple and its surroundings should encourage people to enter it;
4. the temple should unite the inner and the outer worlds in a skilful way through the use of proper symbolic signs and windows;
5. the arrangement of the interior should have a welcoming effect so that no one will want to stay at the entrance;
6. the interior of the temple should create an open space, where a man would feel free;
7. the interior of the temple should have some degree of incompleteness. Its completion should constitute a creative task for anybody who finds himself inside;
8. the temple, together with its surroundings, should create an atmosphere of peace and security (Rombold, Steffann 1983, 22-26; Rosiny 1983, 11-17).¹

The temple seen in such a way symbolizes the fact that a man finds his place inside himself, in the community and in God. A man is seen here as a creator. The community symbolism of the temple is already emphasized in the very name of a temple centre. The former name, for example, the Church and parish of St. Francis, is nowadays replaced by the name: a community centre or a community of St. Francis.

Regardless of the motives for which a temple is built nowadays and where it is situated, how its space is divided and how it is arranged, it always carries a symbolic meaning out of its very nature; due to its architecture it is an important reference point in a town or a village, while due to its various functions it is a very important factor breaking the anonymity of the inhabitants. It simply unites.

In a modern society the symbolic meaning of a temple has acquired new accents. In the past, it symbolized almost exclusively the supernatural world, God Himself. With its slim form shooting up to the sky (Gothic and neo-Gothic temples) it pointed at heaven as man's aim; through its richness and harmony (baroque and classical temples) it pointed to the happiness that heaven can give to man. Besides these values, the temple of a modern city also symbolizes man himself, his life, his way to God in community with others and in unity with the whole creation. A Christian temple symbolizes the community of God in three persons and the community of man in many persons.

The basis of the existence of any temple is the awareness of the existence of God and life after life; at the same time the temple reminds

¹ The whole issue "Kunst und Kirche" no. 2/1981 – devoted to building new Churches.

people of God and another life, it raises man's thoughts and desires above everyday life and temporality, it directs man's activity towards the good, it joins people closed in their houses and scattered all over the world. According to Abraham J. Heschel, "The awareness of what is transcendent is the heart of culture and the very essence of humanity. Civilization, which is devoted exclusively to what is useful, is not different from barbarity in its basis. The world keeps going thanks to unearthliness" (Catholic Churches in Poland, 38). These are the basic reasons why the *sacrum*, and especially the temple, is so much cared for and protected so solicitously from destruction; and even if it is destroyed, generally it is carefully rebuilt.

THE EXPELLED *SACRUM* RETURNS

In the processes of secularization of Europe the *sacrum* started to feel unsafe in the public space. Aggressive secularity drives it away. Here and there a temple is turned into an exhibition house, a museum, gallery, or even into a place where trade is carried on or meals are eaten. This happens especially in old quarters of western European cities. According to estimations one third of 110 thousand sacred buildings in Germany are being demolished or are undergoing a change in order for it to serve ("Rzeczpospolita"). This is happening not so much because the *sacrum* has had its day, that people are no longer religious and they do not need temples, but most often it is because the quarters where there are a lot of temples have become depopulated. There are simply too many temples, and their maintenance is expensive; the inhabitants of those quarters are usually poor and a significant proportion of them are religiously indifferent. Inhabitants of old quarters of big cities move to the outskirts of the city, and the *sacrum* follows them there, as it is closely connected with people: it does not function without them. Hence it goes where there are people. That is why new temples are built in new areas.

The *sacrum* is not so easy to remove from the public space, as many people think. It follows people to new places or it returns to old ones in a little different form. In recent years architecture and sacred art arouse interest both in artists and in tourists. To find out about this fact it is enough to enter any temple in a city visited by many tourists. Everybody going to Rome visits lots of temples there, starting with the Vatican basilica; in Barcelona they see Antony Gaudi's Sagrada Família, in Krakow – the cathedral in Wawel or the Franciscan Church with Stanisław Wyspiański's stained glass windows. Many outstanding architects dream of designing a temple as a peculiar crowning of their work. Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris) had such a dream and he designed the Notre Dame de Haut Chapel in Ronchamp (France).

Franz Koenig, the Archbishop of Vienna gave such an opportunity to Fritz Wotruba, entrusting him with designing the Church in Mauer, a part of Vienna. The Holy Trinity Church built there (1974-1976) according to Wotruba's design is a significant place in the capital of Austria. Stanisław Niemczyk and Jerzy Nowosielski used their novel architectonic solutions and artistic iconography in the Holy Spirit Church in Tychy.

Temples are still being built in the public space. After the beatification (1971) and canonization (1982) of St Maksymilian Kolbe, up to October 2011, 170 Churches were dedicated to him (Mróz, Mróz 2011, 140). In a few months, between John Paul II's beatification on May 1, 2011 and October of the same year at least 70 Churches and public chapels dedicated to him were being built in Poland. In 2012 in 27 dioceses a few hundred new Catholic Churches were built in Poland: in the Warsaw-Praga Diocese – 34, in the Krakow Diocese – 21, in the Warsaw Diocese – 15, in the Poznań Diocese – 15, in the Lublin Diocese – 12, in the Wrocław Diocese – seven, and in the Łódź Diocese – five (Pawłowska 2014). Most often parish communities affiliated to these Churches are small, from two to five thousand believers. Also great sacred centers are built at the national scale, like the Temple of Divine Providence in Warsaw, the Polonia in Tertio Millennio Center in Toruń, the John Paul II Center in Krakow.

Sacred buildings are especially important for new housing estates. Their inhabitants are integrated on their basis and they settle in their new environment. The temple they build is a symbol of the same *sacrum* with which they have been bound until now. It is an important link for them between what is past, what they have left, and what they have come to. It is in the temple that they consolidate their cultural capital, that is the memory of the past, their knowledge, beliefs, values and norms, aspirations and conceptions, events and significant persons. At the temple they make new friends, strengthen the already existing bonds and form new ones, strengthen mutual trust in one another. They create the temple and the temple shapes their personalities.

New sacred centers, like the old ones, connect what is divine with what is human; what is eternal with what is temporal; but in its interior décor they take into consideration a man's needs and predilections. If in the architecture of the Gothic Church God's magnitude, magnificence and mysteriousness dominate and a man feels small and imperfect in it, the architecture of a modern temple forms a favorable atmosphere for a dialog between a man and God, with oneself and with other people.

A temple brings inhabitants of cities and areas a spirit different from that which surrounds them. Whoever enters it, calms down, in a way enters a different world – an invisible world that cannot be measured in any way; the atmosphere prevailing in the temple makes

one reflect on the question whether he spends his money meaningfully, whether he does not buy unnecessary things, whether he behaves well towards his neighbors, what he is going to do tomorrow, in a week's time, in a year's time or in ten years' time; whether he fulfils his professional duties and his duties atanna home; whether there is something apart from the worldly life, if there is a supernatural world, if God exists, for Whom the temple has been erected. The *sacrum* is demanding. A temple is a sign of the existence of an eternal Truth, a complete Good and the most magnificent Beauty. It also arouses hope that people will always crave for these values and they will always realize them anew

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CHAPTER VI

CHRISTIAN HOLIDAYS AND THE FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

ANNA SUGIER-SZEREGA

More and more religion is becoming a matter of individual choice and not a continuation of religious convictions, family traditions or cultural memory (Assmann 2008). Is it possible that religious holidays can still shape and deepen religious identity, despite the fact that our culture is now predominantly a “culture of excess,” of ostentatious consumption, and political correctness. This, often, demands a renunciation of explicitly religious Christian symbolism and values in the name of tolerance. Religious holidays become a colorful tradition celebrated annually, that defines the time for buying presents, for rest and play. Problems with identity in the religious dimension do not interfere with the socio-cultural celebration of holidays indigenously related to Christianity. References to celebrations and holidays are present in advertising, in shopping malls, in street decorations, in the influential press and glossy magazines. However, there is a clear tendency to disregard the Christian roots of Christmas and Easter, the most important Christian holidays, in order to make celebrations a common element of the consumer culture, detached from religious traditions.

THE NATURE OF A HOLIDAY

Holidays are one of the most distinct and fixed elements conducive to deepening and strengthening religious identity. They refer to values and principles given by God and, thus, encourage reflection and the spiritual transformation of people. It is no coincidence that, in the Polish language, the meaning of the term *holiday* is connected to the adoption of Christianity in Poland and the word *sanctus*, derived from the Latin word *sacer* – holy, sacred (Brükner 1996, 536). Therefore, a holiday is semantically associated with the *sacred*, with experiencing spiritual values that trigger in people the need to focus on the relationship with God.

All holidays, not only the Christian ones, have some characteristics that make them a fixed element of culture in historical, as well as geographical, perspective. Among them are: repeatability, a reference to the *sacrum* or other source of celebration, a significant period of preparations, a sacrifice or a gift, community with others, ceremonial rituals. Thanks to the first of these characteristics – the repeatability – the holidays are never identical, even though they refer to the same truths. Through its cyclical nature, holiday time encourages various activities. Hence, holiday elements and symbols can be interpreted anew every now and then, and, depending on the situation, experienced in different ways.

Monotheistic religions have, among their traditions, such events which remind us of their origins and the history of God's relation to man, enclosed in various cultural customs and habits. Therefore, on the basis of religious traditions, holidays are associated with the worship of one God and the commemoration of important events written down in sacred books. In Judaism, these are: the Jewish New Year – Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Atonement – Yom Kippur, the Feast of Tabernacles – Sukkot, Hanukkah, Purim. In the Christian world, the main celebrations are: Christmas, the Epiphany (colloquially known as the Three Kings' Day), Easter, Corpus Christi, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. In Islam, these are, among others, Ramadan (the month of fasting) and the Feast of Breaking the Fast – Eid al-Fitr, the Feast of the Sacrifice – Eid al-Adha, the Night of Power (the Night of Destiny) – Laylat al-Qadr.

Sunday is also a Christian holiday, pertaining to a paramount event – the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It distinguishes Christians from other religions. The specified holidays are celebrated in many parts of the world and have a religious background. Some of the customs and traditions associated with them have roots in pagan practices, which, under the influence of the Christian doctrine, have been modified and adapted (in Poland thanks to a strong presence of folk-culture tradition).

Celebrating individual Christian holidays in such a diverse way, that is influenced by the local cultural context, is a manifestation of the long process of Europe's evangelization, talked about by John Paul II: "The spread of faith on the continent contributed to the formation of individual European nations, planting in them cultural seeds of various features, but connected through a common heritage of values rooted in the Gospel" (John Paul II 2005, 96). Currently, laicism and secularism are spreading across the countries of Western European (France, Holland, the Czech Republic) and religion is appointed a place in the individual and private sphere of life, limited to the house and the temple. The objection to the reference to God in the preamble to the European Union's Constitutional Treaty came from laic circles (Mariański 2013,

198). Secularist tendencies are observable in the rejection of Christian values as constitutive for the development of social law and order, in eliminating God and moral values from the public life, in accepting customary changes that are contradictory to human nature, in redefining the concept of marriage and family. Indirectly, this fact also affects the ways of celebrating Christian holidays, because, in many communities and groups, they lose their religious character and become hardly anything more than days of rest, recreation, family and social gatherings.

Holidays tend to revolve around values, events and characters which, in the past, played a significant role in establishing and strengthening the identity of an individual or a group. In the case of Christian holidays, the central figure around which the periodic celebrations are organized, is Jesus Christ, whose teachings revolutionized the approach to God, to fellowman, to life and death. Christians, sharing belief in the divinity of Jesus, his sacrifice and Resurrection, celebrate certain days, designated by the tradition of the Church, and believe them to be the central points in the calendar year. They usually do this through participation in institutional, and at the same time communal, celebrations of the holiday (the Eucharist in Catholicism and the Orthodox Church and the Bible in Protestant Churches). In this case, a holiday is closely connected to the sphere of the *sacred* and should encourage the participant to reflect upon his own life in the context of drawing from the source – that is the Bible. Inside, there are records pertaining to the events crucial to the celebrations (the birth of Jesus, his death and the Resurrection), which have significant cognitive value (knowledge of the reasons behind the celebrations). Apart from knowledge about the past and the historical roots of the holidays, there is also another element equally, if not more, important – the faith in the teachings of the Bible, the deeply personal dimension of the faith, which makes the experience of holidays a special time of inner transformation. In accordance with theological thought, faith is grace and a motivation to do good. Yet, in the sociological dimension, it is an important component of the religious identity of an individual. It becomes a way of giving new perspective to human experience: “Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction” (Benedykt XVI 2005). If the key experience of communing with the Absolute, of feeling the presence of God in everyday life, is missing, the celebration is limited to the cultivation of a family or regional traditions and customs. However, if it forms a foundation for personal and family life, the holiday has a deeper meaning and is considered in terms of a renewal, a conversion, an encounter with God and other people.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A HOLIDAY FOR THE RELIGIOUS IDENTITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL

The willingness to celebrate “spiritually”, which is also expressed through the need to organize a holiday with loved ones and for loved ones, results from an internal attitude and the experience of faith. Thus, the experience of a personal relationship with God is translated into the joy of celebrating a holiday in a community: a family, a parish, a neighborhood. Below I will present the consequences of a conscious participation in a religious holiday which can strengthen the religious identity of an individual. As the Roman-Catholic creed is predominant in Poland, further reflections will focus on religiousness and celebrations in Catholicism.

The Call for Inner Transformation and Faith Strengthening

In the personal dimension, a Christian holiday is an opportunity to reflect on one’s own life, its dullness, transience, emptiness, and, at the same time, it is also a call for a renewal of faith, and the hope that one will become closer to God. This complex internal process that often involves “quarrelling with God” and seeking ways of building a personal relation with Him, is difficult. It requires a relation with the Word of God, support from other believers, participation in spiritual retreats, meditation and silence. In this dimension, the preparation for a holiday involves making a reckoning of conscience, that is, recognizing imperfections in oneself, which can be erased through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Penance in the Catholic tradition. The conscience, a key element in building a relationship with God and other people, is shaped by the efforts of the believer, who is preparing for a renewal. Thus, a Christian holiday expresses the truth about God and His power to restore meaning and order in a man’s life. It is an opportunity to start a new phase in a given time and place. In the Catholic Church, the periods prior to the main holidays – Advent before Christmas and Lent before Easter – are connected with waiting for the holiday, to which believers are expected to prepare spiritually. They usually participate in special spiritual retreats organized in parishes and receive the Sacraments.

However, spiritual retreats on the Internet are becoming increasingly popular. They are led by priests who, with the use of online tools (Facebook, video-blogs, webpages of parishes) encourage people, especially the young, to seek self-development. It is worth mentioning the innovative projects carried out during Advent of 2013 in Poland, such as the spiritual retreats of Andrzej Szostak and Robert Friedrich, entitled *Wilki 2 (Wolves 2)*, that were distributed by e-mail. The films,

that lasted for several minutes and combined two elements: the teaching of a priest with a reference to chosen biblical events and a testimony of a secular leader of a major rock group of rock, gathered 50 000 participants. Links containing films and spiritual assignments appointed for the following days were sent three times a week to those who were interested in them. The Evangelical message of hope was directed to listeners of different ages, life situations, social statuses. The crucial point was a call for conversion through participation in the sacrament of penance in the nearest Church. Pages or portals where you can listen to a spiritual retreat and make contact with priests, also prove to be an effective tool of pre-evangelization. Certainly, such initiatives cannot replace the participation in the Sacraments, but they are an impulse to reflect on the meaning of the upcoming holidays and one's own spiritual condition. Their strength lies in the use of communication tools that are popular among young people, who, in many cases, are less attached to the institutional Church and who treat holidays primarily as an occasion for a family gathering and not a religious experience (Mariański 2007, 40). In such cases, traditional methods of evangelization fail – there are fewer and fewer young people in Church. They are, however, present in social networks and are looking for various support groups on web forums and websites dedicated to religion and spirituality. The initiatives made by famous people who bear witness and speak publicly about their conversion and return to the Church (or the attempts), are an important method and, also, a tool of evangelization, especially in the pre-holiday periods when electronic media and the press cannot ignore religious topics that are closely connected to Polish culture and customs.

Preserving Knowledge about a Holiday

Leon Dyczewski claims that, in general, “participants in a holiday are aware of why they are celebrating” (Dyczewski 2012, 9), although this awareness may not be complete. The deeper the commitment to faith and, knowledge about the holiday, its symbols and customs, the greater the involvement in the preparation of a holiday and the satisfaction from experiencing it (Dyczewski, Wadowski 1998). Formerly, knowledge and faith were passed down from generation to generation through oral tradition and testimony. The participation in holidays was essential for the stability of a group and gave a sense of belonging and of faith in shared beliefs. Knowledge of events important for a religious group, the fate of their characters, written down in symbolic, repetitive rituals, was spread and consolidated thanks to celebrations. Therefore, a holiday had not only a religious function – worshipping God – but it also became an opportunity to learn about the sources of the celebration. In the first centuries of Christianity, it was

difficult to distinguish what was “a memory and what a consciousness of the present” (Halbwachs 2008, 284), because of the temporal proximity of the events that took place in the first century of our era. Even if small communities did not have a possibility to verify their beliefs, the “Christian memory was discovering all around, even outside the religious group, many items that constantly aroused and enlivened memories” (Halbwachs 2008, 284-285) and thus, they built knowledge and a canon for the content preached by Christ. The content of the Gospels, probably shaped by the first half of the second century, remained a faithful record of events for Christians, because it was drawn up by eye-witnesses. During the holidays, this record becomes the main point of reference, a story about the history of the salvation of man. A poor knowledge of Holy Scripture is a problem for modern-day Christians (especially Catholics). Apart from religious communities, in which the text of the Gospels is read, interpreted and elaborated on in small groups (the so called *Lectio Divina*), little emphasis is put on the individual reading of the Bible. The preservation of and meditation on the word of God are a repetitive element of a holiday, which builds a memory of the past, but refers to the current situation of the listener, becoming an impulse for change in the future. Not without reason, Pope John Paul II, while analyzing the situation of Christianity at the turn of the millennium, entitled his speech *Memory and Identity*, and Pope Francis emphasizes that “the believer is essentially one who remembers” (Gaudium Evangelia 2013, 4). Hence, the deepening of religious identity requires a constant return to the sources of the Gospel, which brings with itself a message of a living faith, hope and love, directed to every man. A Christian holiday is used for a renewal of these values, but, in many cases, the faithful receive no indication on how to live according to these values on an everyday basis. The recurring problem of the inadequacy of pre-holiday teaching during spiritual retreats, both in the content and form coupled with such problems as the weak catechization of schoolchildren; learning based on the enforcement of knowledge without the awakening of faith and trust in God; and cases of negative behavior of priests in confessionals, all deter the faithful from the Church and the Sacraments, and hence, from spiritual celebration.

In order to be effective, contemporary pre-evangelization must be based on a discrete testimony from oneself or from others. Thanks to them, the story of Jesus, his disciples, and the situations they found themselves in, becomes clearer and parallel to the situation of modern Christians. Knowledge of the reasons behind the celebration and its traditions, preceded by the experience of faith, awakens it, triggers happiness and a desire for a communal celebration. The festive homily or sermon is often the first and last opportunity in a year to pass on the Good News. And, although it is extremely difficult, this statement

should refer to the fact that only Christ can change a human life, just as he changed the depressing death on the Cross to the Resurrection that was, beyond all rational belief.

Celebration as a Sign of Belonging to a Religious Group

In the psychosocial dimension, the religious identity of an individual is expressed through those characteristics which closely identify it with a particular community. In the modern world, Christians are one of the few groups opposing the destructive elements of culture that are present in the Western civilization. Without doubt, Christianity stands firm behind those who are the weakest, defending life from the moment of conception to natural death, and opposes the controversial social changes (such as the legalization of homosexual relationships, the gender revolution, pornography, pedophilia) or biogenetic experiments that violate the nature and dignity of man. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis diagnoses the problems of the modern world, permeated, on one hand, with the cult of money, and on the other, with spiritual emptiness, or the acceptance of “spirituality” without God. The Pope opposes the vision of the development of rich societies based on the exploitation of the poorer countries that are weaker and with less resources, and, at the same time, also on the almost idolatrous worship of material and hedonistic values, fulfilled as whims of the habitants of the ‘spiritual desert’. Pope Francis says: “No to the economy of exclusion, No to the new idolatry of money, No to a financial system which rules rather than serves, No to the inequality which spawns violence” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 2013, 8). Thus, he outlines the contemporary context for evangelization. He reminds, both the believers and the non-believers, of the spirit of Christianity that, in the early centuries, was also a sign of protest against the barbarism, and the rich, but idolatrous, culture of Rome. Christianity, which spread thanks to the journeys and teachings proclaimed by Jesus’ disciples, was taking its final shape in small communities which used specific communication codes. The situation of modern Christians in many secularized countries is similar – sociologists observe a spiritual revival in communities and religious movements (especially the charismatic ones), which, at the same time, work as support groups in everyday life and also promote citizen activity. In the tradition of the Catholic Church, which is centuries old, the history of religious communities dates back to pagan times, when small groups of Christians supported each other due to numerous persecutions. At that time, sharing life in a small group, which remained in a relation of openness and trust, was a significant element in building religious identity. The ties between the first Christians were close – they had common goals, and faith in Jesus and his teachings,

translated into a specific attitude towards one's neighbor, was becoming the basis for the development of personality and allowed the members of the group to define themselves as "we". The current tendency to organize the believers (laity and priests) into communities of faith, whose members serve others, often those excluded, is a protest against the omnipresent culture of hedonism, comfort and materialism. Most often, it is the communities and associations who acknowledge the evangelical values that are the initiators and participants of festive celebrations in parishes and families. They also, potentially, promote Christian culture by taking external initiatives, not only within the parish.

A good example of this is the organization of the Cavalcade of Magi on January 6, which, since 2008, annually gathers from a few thousand to tens of thousands of participants in many cities in Poland (the logistically difficult organization of the project is dealt with by the Cavalcade of Magi foundation). It was initiated and founded by a group of parents affiliated in the *Sternik Association* which promotes the education of children based on the Christian idea of man. These actions show society, and the Christians themselves, that they can interact, celebrate publicly and remind people of the evangelical content in an unconventional but spectacular way. The reports from the Cavalcade often appear in the main editions of television news, on web portals, on regional television. Here, the intergenerational and intercultural preparations are an incredibly valuable experience, because there are various guests participating in the celebration, for example from Asia or Africa (as the Three Kings). There are also young people and children, acting out the scenes alluding to the events from the Gospel, as well as parents and grandparents singing carols. One event builds up the atmosphere of joyful celebration beyond boundaries – the Cavalcade is organized with the patronage of local Bishops, regional authorities, non-governmental organizations, sponsors.

A Holiday as the Way of Establishing Relations with Others

The shaping of religious identity is possible mainly thanks to the communal dimension of the holiday, which is crucial for establishing an elevating relation with others. A holiday is inseparably associated with a meeting and sharing joy with the loved ones. A solitary celebration of a holiday is a rare situation, resulting from life necessities rather than one's beliefs as celebration requires the presence of another person and his kindness.

In practice, this fact does not denote an optimistic approach to religious holidays. In many cases, the aversion to experiencing holidays together is the result of environmental conditions: complex personal

relations, weak family ties, insecurity, and, when it comes to religious holidays, a fuzzy and inconsistent, fragmentary religious identity. Commemorating an event in which meaning one does not believe becomes an unpleasant duty and takes away the joy of celebration from the other participants. The disintegration of close relations may also translate into a reluctant attitude towards celebrations, due to the painful memories of religious practices held together before the separation of the parents. Young people who, in their adolescence, are particularly sensitive to inconsistency in the behavior of adult parents, often associate the factor of the breaking of ties between the parents with the decline of religious practices and a reluctance towards celebrations. Thus, while a vast majority of specific cultural traditions is kept, an active participation in the services at the Church is becoming less frequent. In a majority of Polish homes, Christmas Eve is celebrated very solemnly, so that it is treated as “a valuable asset for the Polish family and culture” (Dyczewski 2003, 108). However, it is accompanied by symbolic objects and behaviors that do not necessarily have a religious character. These include: the Christmas tree, the Christmas wafer and the breaking of it, well-wishing, Christmas carols, eating traditional Christmas dishes, keeping lent on Christmas Eve, giving presents, leaving an empty plate on the table. Despite the concerns about the presence of “a marketing dimension” of Christmas in the media, the aforementioned elements of Christmas Eve are still important, as manifested by the 2013 CBOS survey (CBOS 2013,:1), and have formed a permanent canon of Christmas traditions since many years. For 51 % of adult Poles, the most important aspect of Christmas is the family factor. The religious aspect is important for slightly more than a quarter of adult Poles (29%), and 16% consider the fact that it is a holiday of people associated with the Christian tradition as the most important (CBOS 2011, 1). Participating in religious services, remembering the birth of Jesus Christ, experiencing spiritual renewal, are indicated by believing respondents as the key elements of the holiday, which also bond together the family. The religious and the secular way of experiencing holidays are complementary and make the Polish Christmas specific.

During holidays, there is a verification of a strong and mature religious attitude which requires openness and friendliness even towards people with different religious or irreligious attitudes. The communality of celebrations seems to be a basic feature that makes a holiday. This feature should be learned in the process of maturation and constant creation of religious identity (Mielicka 2006, 25). A holiday and its celebration require preparation and a proper setting (therefore, the time preceding a holiday is also a gift, a sacrifice connected to selflessness). The resignation from an active participation signifies liberation from a

constraint, but also breaking of the unity in a group to which one belongs. Then, the holiday and the way in which it is celebrated becomes the cause of a division, for example, between the generations. Every generation has a different vision of the celebration, which causes inevitable conflicts in the pre-Christmas periods.

Holiday Religious Practices as an Important Element of Identity

In Poland, as in many European countries, one can observe a decline in the interest in religious practices, such as the customary participation in the Midnight Mass at Christmas or in the Resurrection Mass at Easter, but they are gradual. In 2006, 65% of the adult Poles declared participation in the Easter Triduum, which is most important for Christians, and in 2010 it was 60%. A similar number, 66% of the respondents, said in 2006 that they wanted to participate in the Resurrection Mass, and in 2010 it was 57% (CBOS 2010). The most common custom, that is cultivated by most Poles, is the Easter custom of keeping lent on Good Friday – it is kept by 86 % of adult Poles. There are other religious practices present during that time. One of them is going to the Easter confession – proclaimed by almost three-quarters of the respondents (74 %, five points less than in 2006). Three-fifths of the respondents declare participation in the rite of placing ash on the heads of the believers on Ash Wednesday (61%, 10 points lower in comparison with 2006), as well as participation in spiritual retreats during Lent (60%, a decline of seven points when compared to 2006). Half of the respondents declare participation in religious services during Lent, such as the Stations of the Cross or the Lamentations (CBOS 2010).

The downward trends visible in the holiday religious practices, especially those characteristic for Easter, indicate a gradual, but not drastic, decline in the awareness of the religious nature of the most important Christian holiday. For several years, the continuation of the customs and traditions characteristic of these holidays has remained at the same level. The most popular behavior includes: participating in the blessing of the foods on Holy Saturday (96% of the respondents) and sharing blessed eggs with loved ones (95%). These traditions belong to the core of the Easter customs and are maintained even by those, who normally show no interest in the Church community (CBOS 2010).

FACTORS WHICH MAKE CELEBRATIONS IN THE RELIGIOUS SPIRIT MORE DIFFICULT

Are there any other factors, besides the weakening of religious attitudes, which make spiritual preparations for celebrations more

difficult? Marketization and commercialization of holidays are disturbing tendencies in contemporary culture, visible in marketing, advertising and commercial activities, and so is the selective media coverage which ridicules Christian traditions and the Catholic Church in Poland. The distinct boundaries marking the periods of preparations for holidays, which were highlighted in the liturgical calendar (Advent, Lent, All Saints' Day – which in some communities functions as the Anglo-Saxon tradition of Halloween), have faded away, because the consumer and commercial perspective of holidays as a period of increased trade have been super imposed. Festive decorations and gadgets appear in stores much earlier than is indicated by the liturgical calendar. Surveys show that for a significant number of Poles those practices are annoying. In 2005, 51% of respondents claimed that because of the early promotions and festive decorations, "holidays are for people just an opportunity for shopping and not a spiritual experience – they spoil the festive mood". In 2013, it was already 72% of the respondents and 65% felt that this atmosphere is maintained for too long, which weakens the uniqueness of the festive time (CBOS 2013). The commercialization of holidays, the appropriation of the Christian symbols by advertising, and the emphasis on a culture oriented towards buying gifts and benefiting from promotional actions, results in weariness even before the actual holiday.

Paradoxically, this irritation stimulates various activities which contrast to these trends. There are initiatives which crystalize the attitudes of Christians: less food and less shopping, more time spent with the children while making handmade toys for the Christmas tree (sic), actions for the benefit of others (campaigns such as the Noble Package in 2013 brought together 617,000 people in Poland).

Some projects aim at restoring the memory of Christian sources of the symbols or characters that were used for commercial purposes and, in the popular imagination, function as secular (i.e. Coca Cola's Santa Claus). There are several examples of such activities. One of them, is the construction of the monument in the center of Rabka Zdroj, which represents St. Nicholas, the Bishop of Mirra, surrounded by children from different parts of the world. The monument resembles the prototype of the character known from the Christian apocrypha. Another example, is the organization of the All Saints' Ball in place of the Anglo-Saxon Halloween.

Media coverage is also significant for the consolidation of knowledge about the most important religious holidays. In the periods before holidays, there are a lot of press releases and audiovisuals that refer to this subject, as in Poland most people celebrate at the same time. Here are some examples: in 2010, during the Holy Week that precedes Easter, the motifs connected to the upcoming holiday appeared 114

times in the press releases of major daily and weekly newspapers and they were presented in a variety of ways. The emphasis was put on information and reports from the events connected to the celebration of Easter, especially in the local communities. This encouraged readers' reflections and the maintenance of chosen traditions, such as the participation in the Way of the Cross, in the Easter Triduum, the blessing of palms on Palm Sunday or the foods on Holy Saturday. The leading subjects were the Way of the Cross, the crucifixion, the symbolism of the cross, and, less frequently, the Resurrection.

The press's interest in Good Friday and in the Way of the Cross should be connected to the fifth anniversary of the death of the Polish Pope, commemorated in 2010, who, through television, took part in this service in the Coliseum on March 23, 2005. On this fifth death anniversary, which befell during the Holy Week, this unusual last Way of the Cross of John Paul II was often recalled, hence, the presence of this topic in the daily press. The greatest interest in Easter, beside the Catholic newspaper "Gość Niedzielny", was manifested by "Newsweek" and "Polityka". However, the material featured in "Newsweek" focused on elements that referred to the holiday and were supposed to surprise the reader. Journalists wondered how to transform Easter into a profitable brand (as was done with Christmas, which is highly commercialized). In order to do this, a visual presentation was made, presenting Easter as a beautiful, seductive and naked girl, with bunnies and young men at her feet. There were also reflections on the purposefulness of Jesus' descent into hell or issues regarding the menu at the Last Supper ("Newsweek" 2010/14). "Polityka" referred to the holiday in a balanced, versatile and almost scientific way, publishing an article entitled "Tajemnica płótna" (The Mystery of the Cloth), related to the Shroud of Turin (Sugier-Szerega 2012, 109). In this way, the readers were encouraged to reflect on one of the more important mysteries of Christianity – the Resurrection.

This shows that the topics relevant to holidays are valid for the influential press, which, in principle, addresses the more demanding and educated readers. Influential weeklies engage their readers in a game, based on testing the boundaries that can be broken by publishing sensational or scandalous material pertaining to Christianity and its key figures. Even the holidays which seem, due to the established order, a rather unattractive subject, may be ridiculed, written into the consumerist narrative or conformed to the ideologies of advertising and marketing. For the believers, such publications are no obstacle for deepening their religious identity. They derive their knowledge and creed from biblical sources, the Eucharist or from discussions with priests and members of the communities. The tendency of some influential magazines to imitate tabloids is however worrisome. They

are focused around strongly secularized communities and use their columns to ridicule the values important to Christians. They do this through reference to the ideas of tolerance, equality, ultimately accusing those ridiculed as lacking a sense of humor. This strongly critical attitude towards Christians (especially Catholics) and destructive pseudo-journalistic trend in journalism makes pastoral work more difficult, especially among young people, which, joining this trend, get discouraged about the Church despite its being an institution and community which, in recent decades, has played a key role in the proclamation of the idea of freedom, truth, and man and his salvation.

CONCLUSION

Taking into account the reflections on the meaning of Christian holidays in shaping religious identity of an individual, one can make the following statements.

In the Socio-cultural Dimension

1. The downward tendency in participation in festive religious practices will be exacerbated, even if due only to the aging process of the population. Because of the familiar character of Christmas, Easter or All Saints' Day in Poland, the rich traditions and festive customs continue and live on also in the younger generations. However, their cultivation is connected more with familiar and national culture than with religious identity and the attachment to Church as a community.

2. Main holidays are seen as opportunities to meet with family and renew family ties. Therefore, the leading and positive role of the family in creating social order should be emphasized and the Christian vision of marriage and family, whole and lasting at the same time, should be promoted.

3. It is in families that the first phase of religious socialization takes place. It should be based on knowledge and religious experience, passed on in everyday life, and not solely on practices of external "piety". In critical statements by many young people, this "attitude of false piety" among the older generation seems irritating, as it is not backed up by a mutual friendly relation within the family. Without an atmosphere of love and respect, it is hard to celebrate the love of God (although not impossible). Mutual relations in a family often affect the quality of the festive time spent together. Christian holidays, often are the only opportunity to forgive and forget family animosities. Positive solutions to complex situations are possible, but those need a wider perspective than just the merely human along with festive time to search for such solutions.

4. Media, especially audiovisual, and employing Christians, may play a significant role in broadening religious identity. They should promote positive models of celebrating families, which, by preparing for the holidays together (especially spiritually) gain: a renewal of ties, happiness, forgiveness, and the prospect of hope.

5. In the sphere of culture and media, there is an annoying presence of advertising, holiday gadgets, decorations, and glossy magazines with interviews given by celebrities, during the pre-holiday periods. Diminishing of the commercial hustle and bustle can be done through various enterprises undertaken by associations and non-governmental organizations, which encourage moderation in external preparations, limitation of time, participation in spiritual retreats, and engagement in acts of charity actions and initiatives that help others.

In the Pastoral Dimension

1. In the spiritual perspective, Christian celebrations should be based on the difficult but elevating Sacrament of Penance, which, as emphasized by Pope Francis, must not be tortured for the confessor and the penitent, and on the Eucharist. The challenge is to prepare priests who would have knowledge of the context of a contemporary family life, especially when it comes to young people, and who would find time and patience, and a suitable language of dialogue and empathy. The forms of pre-evangelization aimed at young people should be reinforced through various means and tools (a catechesis attractive in content and form, webpages for evangelization, Facebook fan-pages, films touching upon the problems of young people, testimonies of famous people), because young people usually focus only on the familiar and not the religious dimension of celebrations.

2. Sociologists of religion indicate two main, yet contradictory, phenomena, that are characteristic for the Christian world: the secularization, that is liberation of various fields of social life from the control of religious organizations, and *desecularization*, the reversal of secular trends, manifested in the variety and incredible liveliness of new religious movements (Marianański 2013, 67,117). These currents are also visible in the rich holiday customs, which are a lasting element of Polish culture. Religiousness on the macro-structural level, which is becoming weaker due to various factors for many zealous Christians, becomes an excuse for public demonstration of their commitment to Christian values, precisely at holiday times (Cavalcade of the Magi). The growing awareness among Christians, who themselves want a spiritual, tranquil, but joyful community celebration, runs contrary to the overemphasis on advertising and marketing, especially the appropriation of Christian symbols in order to maintain sales figures. More and more often, in the

pre-festive shopping frenzy, one can hear the following question: *How much celebration is there in the holidays?* To this question, a Christian responds: *As much as there is of God in me.*

(Translated by Natalia Misztal)

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CHAPTER VII

PLURALISM OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE URBAN SOCIAL SPACE: WARSAW AND LUBLIN

MALGORZATA SŁAWEK CZOCHRA

Regardless of how we will define the term ‘spirituality’ either broadly in the sense of all beliefs, or narrowly in terms of religious belief it is undeniable that man has been creating everyday items, with spiritual implications: buildings and artistic objects lasting for ages. Many of them are institutional, some are connected with the sacred sphere, others with the profane.

Each group, according to Florian Znaniecki, aims to have “its own, specific social space that reflects its values, preferences and aspirations, whereas the same physical space may have different values for different social groups” (1938, 89-119). Social space, referred to in this article, is created as a result of actions taken by individuals and groups; the purpose of such actions is to satisfy people’s needs, help them follow their values and achieve aspirations both in daily life and during special holidays.

I analyse herein the changes that have occurred in this area in Poland over the last few decades. Due to the limited length of this article, it is not an in-depth study of the subject, but only an outline of a extensive topic; I narrowed down my analysis to selected spheres within two cities: Warsaw, the metropolis with the fast pace of life (1,715,517 inhabitants, 517 km²), and a smaller, quieter Lublin (347,678 inhabitants, 147 km²).¹

BURIAL PLACES

One of the fundamental questions that a man asks himself refers to his later fate after death; this is why graveyards have always been a place of devotion with significant space treated in a special way. This is shown in their location, spatial arrangements, the type and nature of

¹ http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/l_powierzchnia_i_ludnosc_prze_kroj_terytorialny_2013.pdf.

buildings erected therein. In Poland, there are two types of burial places: Churchyards (which are typically consecrated according to one denomination and are attached directly to a single place of worship) and municipal cemeteries; this differentiation influences their atmosphere and appearance.

Accumulation of symbols, sculptures and epitaphs corresponding to a given era of burials allows researchers to treat a cemetery as a cultural text to be read. Although Poles have always visited cemeteries willingly, the number of people visiting burial places has increased in the past 20 years. A cemetery tourism phenomenon is said to have been discovered recently. The centre of gravity shifts from pious visits to the deceased grave to observing them and walking between them.

In many cities with old burial plots, visitors may use a service of a guide who will show them around the cemetery, indicate burial places of distinguished residents of the city and discuss the symbolism and styles of grave art. Such a cemetery is usually put down on the list of monuments, is protected by law and becomes a place of scientific inquiry; it may even be converted into a museum branch as in the case of Jewish cemetery at ul. Ślężna in Wrocław, which is a branch of the City Museum of Wrocław.

The most famous cemeteries of this type include Powązki Cemetery (also known as the Old Powązki) in Warsaw and a cemetery at ul. Lipowa in Lublin. Teachers from many schools from these cities bring their students as part of the city history class (usually in the period preceding All Saints' Day). Some novelty in the cemetery in Lublin are columbaria built not so long ago, which clearly differ from old, historic gravestones.

Under Polish law, a human corpse may be buried by entombing it in an excavation that forms graves or vaults, in catacombs, or by burial at the sea (The Act of 31 January 1959 on cemeteries and burials). If the body was cremated, an urn with the deceased's ashes should be entombed in a grave or columbarium. There are two active crematoria in Warsaw and one in Pruszków, near Warsaw. In Lublin, despite the efforts of the funeral parlour Styx, no crematorium has been opened yet due to the proximity of the Nazi concentration camp established on the outskirts of the city (this proximity led the camp to be named *Majdanek* because it was adjacent to the city's district of Majdan Tatarski). Cremation, however, is offered by each funeral parlour in the city. There is also the Cremation Supporters' Association operating, which provides professional care for the body before and after cremation until entombing the ashes in a columbarium or grave.

Interest in cremation in Poland is growing. According to the Board of Municipal Cemeteries, urn burials accounted for about 30% of all burials in 2009 in Warsaw, 36% in 2011 and 38% in 2013. In Lublin,

the tendency is rising as well. In 2009, there were 49 urn burials. Two years later this number increased to 100, and in 2013 up to 107 (Data obtained from the Boards of Municipal Cemeteries in Warsaw and Lublin). Each active crematorium in Poland allows the family to pick up the urn with ashes, which might give people an opportunity for abuse (At present, there are 16 crematoria and several more are under construction). There have been cases when close relatives of the deceased buried some ashes in cemetery, as provided by law, but scattered the rest, for example, in the mountains or over water (lake, river, sea). It also happens that people bury the urn in home gardens to keep it at home.

According to the survey conducted in 2012 by Geminus company, as many as 70% of Poles claimed that people should have the right to keep the ashes of their loved ones at home, or scatter them at sea or in their garden. Only 22% of respondents were against it and 8% had no opinion (Markiewicz, Król 2011). The ashes of loved ones are sometimes sent to Finland, Switzerland or the United States, where in specialized laboratories they are turned into synthetic diamonds. It is possible to order cremation diamonds from several funeral undertakers in Poland. Memorial Diamonds are on offer of Orszak and Exitus funeral parlours from Warsaw, but in Lublin no funeral homes sells them.

Low prices, starting from PLN 3,000 may be the reason why cremation diamonds will become more and more popular in Poland. Making diamond from loved ones' ashes allows people to migrate in all conscience, because for some people leaving the grave without care is unthinkable. There are no accurate statistics yet, but the chairman of the Warsaw company, One Diamond, says that they take orders for 10 diamonds per month, mostly from capital city residents.

The remains of the deceased closed in Memorial Diamond become indestructible, eternal, portable, beautiful and require no maintenance. The Diamonds are a kind of fetish and talisman that protects, supports and gives energy to those who carry them. Furthermore, by actual proximity, they allow the intimate contact with the departed, hence the vows like: 'till death do us part' or 'forever yours' gain new meaning (Domańska 2003). They are also advertised as family heirlooms passed from generation to generation.

In 2012, the whole of Poland heard about cremation diamonds when Krzysztof Gospodarek, the son of Violetta Villas, ordered them from the One Diamond company. He ordered two gems, one of which was to remain a family heirloom, while the other was to be sold at the auction and the money was to go into the monument fund. The news was immediately picked up by TVN reporters as well as journalists for "Gazeta Wyborcza" and tabloids such as "Fakt" and "Super Express".

Another problem regarding increasing popularity of cremation in Poland pertains to urn shape. Coffins, although sometimes sumptuously equipped, retain their simple, dignified shape, but urn shapes tend to be various. They resemble golf bags, television sets, motorcycle tanks, laptops, cowboy boots, balls. Family and friends of the deceased may choose it in accordance with his interests. Furthermore, some funeral homes offer the so-called reliquary, that is a pendant with the departed ashes designed to be worn on a chain. They are made of silver, titanium and polished stainless steel, usually in the shape of a cross or heart, although some shapes on offer are difficult to distinguish from an ordinary pendant. The desire to keep even a small particle of someone we loved is sometimes so strong that the ashes are worn as relics around the neck.

CROSSES, SHRINES AND STATUES OF THE SAINTS

The existence of small-scale Church architecture on the territory of Poland has always been a visual testimony of its inhabitants' faith and affiliation to the Catholic Church. Wiktor Zin called them 'lofty prayers of the landscape' and noted that such multitude of shrines and statues as in Poland can be found only in Nepal and India (Zin 2004).

The reasons why they were erected were various, usually votive or propitiatory; they also served the purpose of protection and marked the boundaries of an area inhabited by people putting their trust in God.

They are primarily located in rural landscapes but a number of them have been absorbed by expanding cities. It seems that their time has past. One could think that no one stops at them, no one pays any attention to them. However, the figures are often decorated with flowers, the plaster is fresh and the grass is trimmed, thereby showing signs of somebody's care. People bring candles, plastic flowers and figurines of saints taken from home. The setting around such shrines is often surreal, sometimes even grotesque.

An interesting example of urban shrines is located in Praga, a historical borough of Warsaw that withstood the war. They were erected in tenement courtyards and were Church substitutes for residents as most Churches were destroyed by occupying forces during World War II. They protected the tenants, thereby becoming a natural place of worship. To this day, the residents believe that statues of saints guarantee them safety because, as they say, no one can be beaten or robbed in front of the Virgin Mary or Jesus (Smak-Wójcicka 2011, 152). They are particularly important for elderly people because they can still commune with the saints when for some reason they cannot go to Church. It is interesting that these shrines organize social life of the residents and integrate them (people make common effort to take care of the shrines'

appearance). Therefore, images of Mary often have blue eye shadow and brightly painted nails, just like young women living in tenements, and there are halos made of energy-saving bulbs shining around their heads' (Smak-Wójcicka 2011, 153). Junior high school students from Praga, interested in the history of the borough divided the statutes into three categories: exclusive (renovated), Mexican (coloured with lights and various trinkets) and junk (placed behind dumpsters so that they could not be seen from the doorway). The Praga Commune Mayor, seeing a growing interest in folklore, has decided to develop a tourist trail following the shrines, thereby increasing attractiveness of the borough which has a bad reputation (Smak-Wójcicka 2011, 153).

Sometimes old shrines receive new badges to commemorate a contemporary event. A shrine at ul. Ogródkowa in Lublin might be an example. It was built to commemorate the creation of the Army of Knights of the Heart of Jesus in the interwar period and in 1979 it was given a new badge related to the pilgrimage of John Paul II to his Homeland.

A real boom for monuments connected with the Pope took place in Poland after his death. Many cities and towns wanted to honour John Paul II by erecting a monument or naming a street after him. The most famous Polish sculptor Czesław Dźwigaj, specializing mainly in monuments of the Pope, has sculpted about 70 of them so far. Those with a hostile attitude to his work criticize the mass-produced nature of his sculptures, with identical design or the use of prefabricated elements.

There were other, no less interesting, ideas to honour the memory of the Polish Pope, for example planting the so-called papal oaks. The history of papal oaks began on 28 April 2004, during one of the Polish foresters' pilgrimages to the Vatican, when John Paul II blessed 2.5 kg of seeds of the 'Chrobry' oak, the oldest *quercus robur* in Poland, commonly known as the English oak or pedunculate oak or French oak. Seeds and samplings were then distributed among schools, seminaries and parishes directly related to the Holy Father, for example at the Holy Family Church in Lublin. In Warsaw, the papal oak was initially planted at ul. Darwina next to one of residential blocks. People began to organize prayer meetings under the tree, newly-weds were bringing wedding bouquets there, and scouts were on guard. This caused discontent of some residents of the estate and with the help of the city authorities, the tree was transplanted to the Haller's Square, where to this day people meet and pray, for example, on the occasion of each anniversary of John Paul II's beatification or canonization.

Putting post-accident crosses by the roads out of town and in-town is a new phenomenon in Polish social space. By placing them near the accident scene families mark their close relationship with the deceased. Forms of commemoration are very different: from a simple

wooden cross, often the victim's photograph, date of accident and epitaph, to small marble monuments. Sometimes family members leave there car pieces, a motorcycle helmet or any other thing belonging to the deceased. Candles, Christmas trees and Easter palms continually update the memory of a person who died tragically in a car accident and show a close bond between him and his family. These activities are sacral, but their therapeutic and eschatological dimension is no less important (Kraczoń 2012, 138-147). A cross standing at a street named after John Paul II in Lublin, where a driver killed a child as he stepped onto the crossing on his way to school in the morning, well depicts this phenomenon. The parents found consolation in sacralisation of the accident scene. For Christians, a cross is a sign of hope for the victory of life over death, of good over evil. It reminds them of the irreversibility of death of our loved ones and of justice administered to a person responsible for the accident, either by humans or God.

Post-accident crosses are usually placed without permission from authorities and arouse controversy. Warsaw authorities act against this tendency by removing crosses at night-time and imposing a tax. Local authorities of the Tricity, an area which is much smaller than Warsaw, conducted a survey in November 2011 on the www.trojmiasto.pl website; the residents were asked to take a stand on post-accident crosses. During one week 3,790 opinions were collected this way (Moritz 2011). According to 52% of Internet users, crosses should be left where they are as a warning because they are more efficient than speed cameras, whereas 48% of Internet users believe that they should be removed as they were put illegally and dangerously close to the road. The respondents paid attention to the fact that roadside crosses are often splattered with mud, which is an affront to such an important religious symbol. They also emphasized that it is an inappropriate way to commemorate the deceased, whose place is at the cemetery.

RELIGIOUS MOTIFS IN STREET ART

The term 'street art', although commonly used, is not clearly defined. For the purposes of this article, I assume that street art means various forms of artistic activities performed or presented on the streets of many cities and towns. These forms will, therefore, include graffiti, installations, street theatre performances such as the Three Kings' parades.

Graffiti is usually considered to be an expression of subculture or vandalism, therefore seeking the signs of religiousness in graffiti writing or drawings might seem pointless. Young people scribbling, scratching, or spraying street graffiti are part of Polish society and often come from

Catholic families, which has an impact on the subject of their work. Therefore, quite often graffiti has religious-like motifs.

According to Karol Klauza, religious motifs used in contemporary graffiti might be divided into: trinitarian, christological, mariological, hagiographic and other religious symbolism (Klauza 2009, 54).

A small stencil graffiti showing the face of Blessed Father Jerzy Popiełuszko is an example of hagiographic motif that we might see on the streets of Warsaw. Father Popiełuszko, a priest, a martyr for justice and truth, is presented frontally, and his face exudes calm. He has half-closed eyes and seems lost in thought. His half-open mouth suggests he wants to say something. It also symbolizes his tragic martyr's death, whose Żoliborz sermons attracted crowds of faithful yearning for freedom and justice.

I was personally enchanted by a small stencil graffiti placed near the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin at ul. Radziszewskiego in Lublin. In a minor corner between cinema Bajka and a military unit, amid café tables, there is an image of a Mother hugging her Child tightly painted on the wall. She is looking at guests, not imposing herself and making them fall into a reverie.

In 2008, as part of the first edition of the Lublin Graffiti Festival, graffiti artists created a painting on the wall opposite the Cultural Centre in Lublin inspired by frescoes from the Chapel of the Holy Trinity located in Lublin Castle. Therefore, angels settled in the corner surrounded by park and playgrounds. The creed painted on one of Lublin walls is an example of different religious motifs used by graffiti artists.

A few days after the death of Pope Saint John Paul II in 2005, the so-called papal graffiti appeared on the streets of Polish cities and towns. In Lublin, there were two such projects: one at ul. Głębocka, on the building belonging to the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University complex, and the other on the administrative building at ul. Różana. Their creators, when asked about their motives, said they wanted to commemorate the Holy Father, honour him and say goodbye to him (Sławek-Czochra 2008, 360). Painting street portraits in the convention typical of memorials was some kind of catharsis for them, a response to the need coming straight from the heart. The faithful reaction was instant: people immediately started bringing flowers and candles, someone added a prayer under the drawing. A thread of communication was established between graffiti artists and the faithful. The sacred entered the area typical of the profane.

In 2007, on 28th anniversary of Warsaw's first homily of John Paul II, when he said the famous words: "Lord, send out your Spirit..." young people painted graffiti inspired by the teachings of John Paul II, emphasizing references to freedom.

Apart from graffiti, the works of professional artists inspired by religious motifs can be found on the streets of Warsaw and Lublin as well. In the very centre of Lublin, on the promenade, there is a figure of symbolic saint cut in metal. The sculpture by Bohdan Ruciński is entitled *Transition* and is a remnant of the Open City festival, which took place in Lublin in 2010. This is a rectangular sheet of metal, in which a silhouette of a man with a halo around his head was cut out; the figure size allows even an adult to go through it as if through some kind of sanctifying gate. Out of 13 projects presented at the festival, there are two more that referred to religion. One of the most controversial festival works was the *Holy Machine* installation by Kamila Szejnoch: it was an ATM-like box that recorded 'confession' with the use of a touch screen, and then issued a receipt proving the service rendered. It was available at any time of the day, did not expect either a problem that could not be solved or a sin of which a man could not be absolved (Hejno 2014). The other art installation (by Jarosław Lustych) was called *Identities* and is comprised of three boxes fixed to the wall at ul. Rybna; the first one was marked with the Star of David, the second with the cross and the third one with the crescent. Each of the visitors could open the box, which he considered his own and come to the conclusion that religion does not only divide people, but also brings them together, because for each of us, regardless of our faith or beliefs, religion constitutes a point of reference.

Prominent contemporary Polish artists more and more often reach for religious motifs as well. Paweł Althamer who lives in Warsaw decided to do a sculpture-garden in Bródnowski Park. It is entitled *Paradise* and is dedicated to the artist's neighbours. The green corner grows every year, thereby changing its shape. A picture with local residents was taken in *Paradise* and then given to the nearby Christ the King parish as a 'holy picture' celebrating heavenly element of life in a housing estate made of concrete. *Paradise* has become an inherent part of the cityscape and is etched on the minds of residents inasmuch that couples in love and newly-weds often take occasional pictures on its threshold. People also use the garden as background for first communion and other events photo sessions, which means that *Paradise* has become a somewhat familiar space, a meeting place for the community. It is also a perfect example of successful social sculpture.

Althamer noted that European culture pushes the elderly on to the sidelines, depriving them of authority. In 2013, he offered to perform an installation representing the figure of Christ on one of the blocks; he was hoping that religious seniors would engage in the action and get younger residents of the estate involved, too (Karpiuk 2013). The idea was talked-about on Internet portals and ultimately came to nothing for

several reasons, including the installation influence on housing prices in the area.

Colourful processions guided by the three wise men undoubtedly constitute another novelty on Polish streets. They first appeared in 2009. Although this custom is not only Polish (in Spain such processions have been organized since 1885), and nowhere in the world did they find so many followers. Every year, more and more new places join this initiative. In 2013, the procession was held in 93 Polish towns, and in 2014 in as many as 177. Furthermore, 10 cities from the USA, the UK, Germany, Rwanda, Italy and Ukraine, where the Three Kings parade took place this year, are registered on the organizers' website as procession host cities. One of them is Chicago, with as many as approx. one million people claiming Polish ancestry. The procession popularity gained due to the fact that in 2011, after more than a half-century, the Epiphany was restored in Poland as a public holiday, and Poles were looking for new ways of celebrating it. The Procession of Three Kings was combined with other typical Polish and local traditions related to the Epiphany, such as blessing the myrrh, frankincense and gold, handing out special cookies, one of which contains almond, and giving gifts to carol singers.

The interest in participation in the Procession of the Three Kings continues to grow. According to a foundation organizing and coordinating parades in Poland, in 2009 the first procession organized in Warsaw was attended by about 5,000 individuals; in 2013 about 200,000 faithful took part in processions organized in 93 towns, and in 2014 they were held in 177 cities and towns in Poland and 10 towns abroad, attracting more than 700,000 people.²

The first Polish Procession of the Three Kings, which passed through the streets of Warsaw in 2009, originated from a nativity play performed at the 'Żagle' Primary School under the wing of the 'Sternik' Association located in Międzylesie near Warsaw. Piotr Giertych, one of the school teachers, was its originator. He joined forces with Jerzy Stokłosa, the director of the Buffo Theatre, and Piotr Podgórski, the Association director, and moved the nativity play to the streets, thus renewing an old Christian tradition. During preparations, one of the

² Orszak trzech króli w 24 miastach Polski. Największe Jasełka w Europie – czym jest Orszak Trzech Króli? Retrieved from: http://www.se.pl/wydarzenia/kraj/orszak-trzech-kroli-w-24-miastach-polski-najwieksze-jaselka-w-europie-czym-jest-orszak-trzech-kroli_221067.html; Orszak Trzech Króli przejdzie ulicami Warszawy on 4 March 2014. Retrieved from: http://warszawa.gazeta.pl/warszawa/1,34862,15214161,Orszak_Trzech_Kroli_przejdzie_ulicami_Warszawy.html; <http://orszak.org/blog/orszak-trzech-kroli-2014-przemierzyl-ponad-230-kilometrow>.

parents of children attending the school, Dariusz Karłowicz, proposed that the script be based on the story of the Three Kings. Piotr Giertych was the author of the march name (the Procession of the Three Kings) and the first script. Saint Nicholas Foundation and the Centre of John Paul II's Thought joined the public celebration of the procession. Currently, the Foundation cooperates with the 'Dzieło Nowego Tysiąclecia' Foundation.³

Typically, the procession route passes through the city centre: from the Warsaw' Castle Square to the Piłsudski Square. At the front of the procession someone carries the Star of Bethlehem, and the Three Kings, that is Caspar, Balthazar and Melchior, lead the procession. The participants of the procession dress up in costumes that are easy to make by oneself, only colours (red, green and blue) assigned to the continents, from which the Wise Men come, are important. Every year the Procession organizers prepare stage productions referring to the life of the Holy Family but the number of performances and the scenes alone are different. For example, the street procession AD 2014 begun with reading out the edict of Caesar Augustus. Next scenes were presented in various settings, including the shepherds' hut, Herod's court, the inn, which were built specifically for this purpose. The eternal battle between good and evil was staged, too. At the end of the Procession, the participants went through a symbolic gate to heaven, and got to the stable. The faithful were praying, and Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz said the Angelus. Based on the words of two Popes, John Paul II and Francis,⁴ the Three Kings were marching in search of truth, goodness and beauty

³ Jarosław Kłaput designed the Procession logo and symbols. He also designed the project of the Warsaw Rising Museum and the Museum of John Paul II in Wadowice. Retrieved from: <http://www.fra3.pl/Orszak-Trzech-Kroli--nowa-polska-inne-rodzime-zwyczaje,a,22892> on 4 February 2014.

⁴ The words of the Holy Father John Paul II from Christmas Address (1988): "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Isaiah 52.7). How beautiful Christmas is!...The eyes of Bethlehem shepherds saw this beauty....So did the eyes of the wise men coming from the East. This beauty is the revelation of the Mystery of the Newborn. The revelation of the Truth and Goodness, and Beauty, which are in Him. He is the Truth and Goodness and Beauty! This beauty of Christ birth goes through generations. It shows itself to people and nations: the faithful take it in far and wide....Artists: painters, poets, musicians look for human expression for this beauty, the saints commune with it", and the words of the Holy Father Francis: "As believers, we also feel close to those who do not consider themselves part of any religious tradition, yet sincerely seek the truth, goodness and beauty which we believe have their highest expression and source in God." The Holy Father Francis. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. On the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo M 2014 kpt 257.

to finally understand that Baby Jesus represents all of these values. An urban game called 'Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar' was organized for the second time; both young people and small children could take part in the game this year. *The Dzieło Nowego Tysiąclecia Foundation* collected funds (for the first time) for the Philippine people affected by a natural calamity.

The Procession of the Three Kings has been organized in Lublin since 2012, and its main organizer is Father Ryszard Podpora, Director of the Chaplaincy Department of the Metropolitan Curia in Lublin. The first Procession set off from the Litewski Square to the Metropolitan Cathedral. Today, its route begins at Castle Square. The Lublin Metropolitan Archbishop Stanisław Budzik announces the beginning of the Procession. The script, next to stage adaptations, includes symbolic elements as well (such as a sceptre, a gift from one of Ukrainian Bishops for Stanisław Budzik; its use was a sign of unity with Ukrainian people who fight for sovereignty). Schools, organizations and institutions operating in Lublin are also engaged in the Procession preparations. In 2014, the Cyprian Kamil Norwid Art School Complex, the Pallottine School of the New Evangelization and Radio Lublin contributed to the Procession organization. Teachers and students from Lublin art school prepared a 20-meter installation showing the figure of the fourth king, and one of the students made the Bethlehem Star carried at the front of the Procession. The Pallottine School of the New Evangelization choir sang carols and Ewa Dados, Lublin journalist, who has been involved in this event since the beginning, read the Bible excerpt about the Wise Men from the East.

Both in Warsaw and Lublin march participants are given songbooks to be able to actively rejoice over the birth of Jesus. Furthermore, in Warsaw the faithful also get a map with stage installations marked and information about the event, whereas in Lublin paper crowns are handed out.

The Procession of the Three Kings in Spain is getting less and less Catholic as the Three Kings do not make their way towards the stable with Baby Jesus, but towards a square where a dance fiesta takes place. In Poland, the procession is primarily an opportunity to manifest one's faith and spend time with the community. It is also an occasion to show one's talents and use them for the benefit of Christian culture.

CONCLUSION

The contemporary city is very diverse in terms of manifestations of spirituality. Its institutionalized forms merge with bottom-up initiatives created by residents themselves. Sublime art is mixed with kitsch and trash, cultures and religions interpenetrate.

Polish Catholicism, although very traditional, has opened to many novelties. The changes occur much faster than in Warsaw than in Lublin, where cremation diamonds are not on offer yet, post-accident crosses are not removed, and cremation is not as popular as it is in Warsaw.

The Bishops issued a pastoral letter to the faithful in November 2011, in which they were trying to convince them about the necessity to respect the deceased body and were clearly implying the primacy of traditional burial over cremation in Catholic rite, but the faithful keep choosing the latter nonetheless. Considerably lower costs of funeral and urn maintenance as well as the lack of space in cemeteries are not insignificant, either. In some cases, the shapes of urns resemble more the products of popular than Christian culture. Reliquaries for ashes that have just appeared on Polish market may reveal the influence of other religions. In Buddhism, these body parts of a deceased human being which were not incinerated during cremation, are placed in reliquaries, yet Buddhists do not wear them around their necks but leave them in a temple.

Young street artists willingly engage in projects commemorating Saint John Paul II. However, their art shows that they identify more with John Paul II as a person, a great Pole, than with the Church. The prayer written out under papal graffiti after the death of Karol Wojtyła is a sign of faith of people saying goodbye to him. Although most graffiti artists claim to believe in God (even if they pray only occasionally) (Sławek-Czochra 2013, 90), their works show their interest in John Paul II's teaching and the meaning of values he promoted. This duality of motives becomes even more evident in the case of graffiti depicting Blessed Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, because in the mind of Poles he is closely associated with the struggle for sovereignty. A circle of people is closely linked to Father Jerzy and the Church, in Warsaw. They organize vigils, common prayers, exhibitions and bear testimony to the truth throughout Poland. The same may pertain to mariological and christological graffiti, the authors of which feel the need to identify with the Church and its teachings. In this case, religion is associated with patriotism, thereby contributing to the development of Christian culture in Poland.

Although papal oaks were planted to commemorate the pontificate of the great Pole, prayer meetings organized under some of them are religious in nature. They are a good example of the separation of Church and State, because residents who do not approve of the presence of the sacred in the public space, ask the authorities to intervene and find understanding in them. A similar mechanism is seen in the case of post-accident crosses in Warsaw.

In the 1990s, the so-called critical art trend developed in Polish art, the interest of which centred around the human body, authority and

religion. The cultural climate favoured the interest in religion so artists deconstructed religious motifs. The point was to criticize the social role of religion, not to glorify it. In many cases, it resulted in trials for offence against religious feelings, the best example of which is *the Passion* by Dorota Nieznalska. Court proceedings took 10 years, eventually ending with the artist's acquittal. On the one hand, her trial exposed the ignorance of the faithful and their tendency to identify each image and symbol with God or a saint, while on the other, it stopped free development of art, which was critical almost exclusively of the Catholic faith. It is also clear that Polish Catholics have trouble understanding the language of this art, which broke away from sacral codes long ago and is no longer ancillary to religion. As a result, Poles have negative attitude towards (1) the use of religious motifs in modern art and (2) the latter presence in sacral space, which probably stems from the desire to defend the sacred.

There are, however, positive examples of this trend, such as *Paradise* by Althamer already mentioned, or *Oxygenator* by Joanna Rajkowska, that is a pond with benches to sit on, completed in 2007 in the capital centre near the Grzybowski Square. Although these projects are not the signs of artists' religiousness, and only a pretext to influence society, they produce positive results for the community and reveal that people are searching for the truth and are interested in the relationship between a man and God.

As far as the Procession of the Three Kings is concerned, the situation is different. The idea alone is undoubtedly of religious character. Yet, it is difficult to explicitly answer the question regarding the faithful's motives underlying their decision to take part in this event. For some people participation in the procession might be simple a way of spending their free time, while for others it is a profound experience connected with the birth of Jesus. Undoubtedly, the procession may also be an educational event, an interesting form of showing children the history of the Holy Family.

The sacred merges with the profane on the streets of Polish towns and cities. Such manifestations of religiousness as congregational prayer, religious symbols or small Church architecture that blends in with the secular public sphere may show that the processes of secularization are slower in Poland than elsewhere. New forms, such as the Procession of the Three Kings or the creation of communities thanks to artists involved in social sculpting, may indicate the quest for the truth and the return of the sacred.

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CHAPTER VIII

RELIGIOUS MEDIA EVENTS AS A PRESENCE OF RELIGION IN MODERN CULTURE

AGNIESZKA ZDUNIAK

Due to the development of new technologies, formal organizational structures are becoming less and less important in present-day society, whereas the significance of communication structures is growing. The media are increasingly developing into a source of knowledge about the world, being a substitute for real experience. In the life of a present-day human, and above all young people, interpersonal communication, socialization within the family, and relations with the social environment are playing a less and less important role. Even some of the knowledge gained through direct interactions comes not from the authentic experience of the people who are the source of information, but from media sources. Reality reaches the awareness of a present-day human in the form of media representation. Media are increasingly the source of knowledge about religion, faith, and transcendent reality.

In the sphere of religion, communication is of particular importance, as it involves facts and phenomena which cannot be experienced empirically. Religion is a form of communicating supernatural content, yet this communication has to take place in an immanent reality and uses methods which belong to “this world”. Since the religious content can be transmitted and explained by the way of communication, it is crucially important that it should be understandable for the recipients, and tailored to their needs and ability to comprehend. J. Malik perceives communicating as the very essence of religion: “Religion is communication: the communication of people with a transcendent deity, communication between people in rituals, pastoral work, and a religious group” (Malik 2007, 9).

Over the centuries the Church successfully participated in the communications process, skillfully employing the media available then and there, as well as contributing to the creation of new ones. The proclamation of Christianity, which in the beginning was done only orally, through the sermons and parables of Jesus and then the apostles,

was soon supplemented with written texts sent to individual Christian communities, allowing the faith to be transmitted in an unchanged form to subsequent generations of followers. Crowds of the faithful who regularly attended holy masses and services in Churches and chapels throughout the world in order to pray and listen to the Word of God were an audience which even the most influential lay rulers could not match.

The Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication *Communio et progressio*, issued by the Pope Paul VI in the early 1970s, points out the role the modern media can serve in the process of communication of religious content, as well as the content which is not directly perceived as religious but contributes to the realization of Christian values in social practice. It stresses that the mass media constitute a forum where people can exchange views and discuss matters which are the most important from the point of view of social life. It also draws attention to the particular characteristic of the media as striving to “hold the wandering attention of a harried and hurried public by vivid reporting” (40). Catholics should cooperate with the mass media, as by doing so they may fulfill their Christian mission in the world, protect human dignity, and create the sense of community and fraternity of all people. The media offer the possibility of showing current religious events in a way which manifests their religious dimension, and not just the purely human one. Therefore both the Churchmen and lay believers should be present in media communication, since such activities can gain broad social recognition and be remarkably successful. It is necessary, however, that those who decide to speak on behalf of the Church through the media should have “a sound knowledge of their work, of their impact and of the best way to use them” (106); this requires sufficient and thorough training. The media provide very significant assistance in announcing the Word of God to present-day people, and using them is essential for exerting the apostolic influence in a modern society: “Since the media are often the only channels of information that exist between the Church and the world, a failure to use them amounts to ‘burying the talent given by God’” (123).

Two decades later, John Paul II remarks in his encyclical *Redemptoris missio* that many representatives of the Church do not pay media communication the attention it deserves. The transmission of religious content is carried out, to a large extent, through traditional methods of preaching the faith, which do not adequately reflect the needs and expectations of modern people. Meanwhile, the world of mass media has become the modern “areopagus”, which makes it possible to transmit information, form attitudes and world views, and which also provides the models of both individual and social behavior. Including the Church in the process of mass communication should aim not only at

reaching the broadest possible public with religious content but also at something more: infusing the modern culture with religious content. Too much contrast between the modern culture and religious content will hamper the process and limit its effectiveness. The Church must therefore adapt to the situation in which “there exist new ways of communicating, with new languages, new techniques and a new psychology” (37).

Nevertheless, the postulate of the presence of Christianity in the mass media raises some controversy. For instance, a question arises whether religion, which in itself is focused on transcendent reality, and “not of this world”, can be communicated using the present-day means of mass communication, which are essentially focused on immanent content. It is pointed out that the content of religious nature is not information which can be treated on a par with other information transmitted by the media and, what is more, it should not compete for the attention of mass audience with a range of other, usually much more banal content. However, since the modern forms of media communication are a permanent component of present-day social reality, it seems that one should rather reflect on how the individual spheres of social reality should function within it. All those who want religion to also find its own place in the social discourse realized that the media face a similar question.

According to Beck, the media impact on religion is a part of the process of religious individualization, characteristic of present-day societies. To a large extent, religious institutions and the representatives of religion affect the recipients through the media. This effect, due to the range of media communication, is extraterritorial and transcends the limits of cultural areas and the religious traditions associated with them. This means that world religions, once historically and territorially separated, must now enter the same area of religious and philosophical social discourse, where in addition they have to compete with other religions, world views, ideologies, and other proposed ways of understanding the world and the meaning of existence. Therefore, the presence of Christianity in the mass media appears to be necessary. Questions arise, however: to what extent it is possible to reconcile the media attractiveness of communication with its content? Is the adaptation of religious information to the principles of media communication not going to distort its content?

Religious media events are the opportunity for religion to gain a foothold in the (secular) mass media and reach the mass recipient with religious messages. They meet both the requirements of mass communication (attractiveness, and a spectacular and dynamic message) and of religious communication (conveying religious content in as much undistorted a form as possible). They constitute a social situation with an

increased density for media communication, in which, using various performative means, the attention of viewers is focused on a particular subject matter or event. It is characteristic of a media event to employ various means of influencing the recipient in relation to the same situation, as the recipients or audience is characterized by great diversity and dispersion in space (Hepp, Krönert 2009, 35). Religious events such as the mourning after the death of the Pope John Paul II, the conclave, Papal travels, or World Youth Days meet the criteria of media events. Simultaneously, they are so-called agoral gatherings as “voluntary public gatherings on a mass scale, inspired by some higher moral or social values, e.g. human dignity, truth, freedom, justice” (Biela 2006, 84).

Religious media events manifest the phenomenon of the mutual penetration of the sacred and the profane in modern culture (Knoblauch 2009, 210f). Religion, represented by the Church, enters in cooperation with media circles. This is beneficial to both parties; the media need events which are able to raise the interest of the recipients: in events which are one of a kind, important, of historical significance if possible, and which bears values that evoke people’s emotions; and the Church needs a communication platform to reach as broad a circle of recipients as possible and ensure the positive social reception of not only the values it represents, but also the Church organization itself. This cooperation requires both parties to adapt to some extent, and even to make concessions of sorts. So the media which generally is critical of the institutional Church and willing to show it as a kind of a cultural relic, a conservative institution inadequate for the needs of the modern human, must cover religious media events with excitement and respect, adopting rather the internal viewpoint of the Church, than the perspective of an external, distanced observer. Journalists commenting on the event speak in a ceremonial tone, underline the significance of the event, and quote Scripture, Church documents, and statements of the Popes, which is a rather unusual situation on secular television. The Church, in turn, adapts to some extent to the peculiar forms of media communication. The attractiveness of media representations of religious events lies largely in the presentation of the traditional religious themes (religious ceremonies) using the forms of communication characteristic of modern media culture. Even though the celebrations still retain their recognizable religious character, simultaneously the form in which they are presented shows many features of modern popular culture. This way, the strict separation between the solemn and pompous on one hand, and joy on the other, is being overcome, at least to some extent.

Religious media events are an effective form of social communication, since they match the general trend prevalent in the popular culture for several decades, i.e. the increased significance of

visual communication compared to verbal. Modern culture is no longer logocentric anymore; rather, it takes the form of a culture of the image. While once visual representations used to just supplement verbal messages, now they became the center of interest. The visual forms of expression are crucial for the construction and interpretation of reality, including also these areas of social reality which have so far depended mainly on verbal communication (such as the sphere of science and education). Such a tendency, however, has an influence on the content of the message. Even though images and visual effects may enhance a message's impact on human imagination, in many cases there is also a certain "impoverishment of communication" as the focus on visual effects leads to a simplification of complex states of things and a deviation from serious arguments. These are replaced by aestheticization and maximization of the effect on the recipient, sometimes even at the expense of passing over some of the information (Pötzsch, Schnettler 2006, 195).

Religious media events have an emotional impact. The emotions, in turn, serve a unifying function, transcending all religious, national, and political barriers, including those based on social status. For instance, media coverage of the event that was the death of the Pope John Paul II made people who watched them feel the need to experience the mourning not alone but rather in communion with others, either participating personally in the celebrations commemorating the Pope, or at least connecting spiritually with the participants through the media. Media reports were, on one hand, a response to the emotional needs of the viewers, on the other they sustained and reinforced those emotions. The style of the communication served to evoke emotions through ceremonial music, appropriate symbolism of presented images, and creating a "parasocial relationship" between the viewers and the Pope as a person, an emotional bond, leading to a conviction that he was someone close, even if you have never had the opportunity to meet him in person. This goal was reached, among others, by showing pictures and recordings showing the life and work of the Pope, with a particular emphasis on those which showed him in informal situations, as a private individual (Dyczewski, Lewek, Ołędzki 2008). Creating an atmosphere evoking certain emotions around the presented events is known as *emotional framing* (Döveling 2005, 68-70) which involves a conscious stress of selected emotional aspects of the subject presented.

Evoking strong emotions is characteristic of media events as such, yet in the case of religious media events it merits particular attention. The traditional transmission of religious content stressed rather the intellectual, cognitive sphere, whereas the emotions were considered as an element which, while it may occur indeed, has no greater significance for the quality of religious teachings and practices. And yet emotions are

a constitutive part of human life, social life included. That which evokes emotions, reaches the consciousness and is able to serve as a motivating element which initiates human activities. Emotions are, therefore, not just internal psychological processes but they may also translate into social practice. This pertains to the communication sphere as well. Communication which is accompanied by emotions has a greater impact on the views, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals and communities and thus is more likely to gain a foothold in the situation of competition between various world views, religions, and lifestyles which compete with one another not only through the mass media but all media of personal communication (cell phones, e-mails, community forums, etc.).

What is characteristic of religious media events is the strong sense of community among the participants. This community may arise spontaneously, by focusing on a certain event (death of John Paul II, the conclave), it can also be arranged by various organizational efforts, as in the case of the World Youth Days (integration meetings, emblems showing the affiliation, playing the WYD anthem). Both in the former and in the latter case, the media coverage contributes to the reinforcement of the sense of community by stressing the “community” elements and creating the appropriate atmosphere using aesthetic and synesthetic means. The community is established on two levels: one consists of the participants present at the time and place of the event, the other are the viewers of television reports and the web users following the event on their computer screens. Both parts of this community affect each other: through their behavior (active participation in the liturgy, prayer and meditation, spontaneous expressions of joy), the participants influence the way in which the event is received by those who take part in it only through the media. In turn, the viewers and web users exert an indirect influence on the course of the event as well as the awareness of its participants that they are the subject of a media coverage received by millions of watchers all over the world leads to increase their involvement in the event and the intensity of the emotions they experience.

The character of the community of participants is intercultural and deterritorial in character (the conclave, World Youth Days), or nationwide (Papal travels). In both cases, the media stress the diversity within the community. The services of the World Youth Days are accompanied by multicultural music, and their participants often wear traditional costumes. Media reports from St. Peter’s Square show throngs waving colorful flags of countries around the world. During Papal travels, the viewers may watch representations of various regions, often wearing their peculiar regional costumes, local musical bands (such as the mountaineers’ band that played for John Paul II at the airport to bid him farewell at the end of his last Papal visit to Poland), and various

professional and age groups. This subscribes to the cultural trend that highlights pluralism and variety, promotes local cultures, and simultaneously stresses the global and universal outreach of the Church. During mass religious events, it is possible to contact the sacred even in places of primarily secular character. Thanks to the media, becoming a member of the community of believers does not necessarily require being present at the same place and time, as one may feel the spiritual connection with the community anywhere in the world. Also, due to presentation in media events, which would have remained very local without such coverage, gain international rank, and sometimes global importance as well.

The mutual penetration of the sacred and the profane is particularly visible in the way the faithful relate to the Pope, who is treated more like a media star than the head of the Church. During the conclave, Papal travels, and World Youth days as well, the faithful patiently await his appearance, often for many hours at a time, regardless of the time of day and weather. The appearance of the Pope is accompanied not by the traditional signs of respect but rather by outbursts of enthusiasm, chanting his name aloud, shouts little different from those at a pop music concert, waving flags and banners, and blinking flashes of cameras. Interestingly, such behavior has to be ascribed rather to the charisma of the office than the traits of the person, as they occur regardless whether the Pope is able to easily establish rapport with the faithful, like John Paul II or Francis, or is rather shy and reserved, like Benedict XVI. The Pope serves as a peculiar “logo” of Catholicism (Hepp, Krönert 2009, 169), symbolizing not only the institution of the Church but also the most important values associated with faith. The image of the Pope appears not only in the media but on countless gadgets and souvenirs as well. The celebration of the Pope’s presence shows that charismatic personalities and distinct role models are just as necessary in modern society as they were in earlier times. For the charisma of a person makes it easier to identify the content he symbolizes, encouraging mimetic practice.

In the course of religious media events, it is not only the “official” communication that counts, established through the mass media, but also the “private” one, conveyed by the so-called new media, that is cell phones, tablets, and e-mail. The research carried out during the World Youth Day in Cologne in 2005 found that 93% of participants had a cell phone on them all the time and used it not only for traditional communication with other participants but also as a personal multimedia center allowing them to document the course of the event (images, video and sound recordings reporting the personal, unique experiences of participants) and to share these experiences with their friends who were not present at the time and place of the meeting (Forschungskonsortium

WJT 2007). In the pictures showing throngs of the faithful awaiting the election of a new Pope at St. Peter's Square, there are many people filming the event with their cell phones and tablets. Such recordings are of particular value to their authors, as they represent their actual, personal experiences associated with the event, document and add significance, and later also allow to remember one's own participation not through the media but in the light of one's own experiences and accompanying emotions. This way, the participants feel they are not just the passive objects of media coverage but also its active participants.

In the specific and physical sense, religious media events taking the form of religious festivals or other mass gatherings constitute a transposition of religion (in the form of liturgy) from within the Church walls to open space, thus making it available not only to those who consider themselves as members of a religious community. However, this process may symbolize something more: a transfer of religious communication from a closed, institutional and systemic religious sphere to society at large. It is particularly important in a functionally diversified society, whose individual functional subsystems are beginning to function in an increasingly autonomous way and show more and more indifference towards the rules governing the functioning of other subsystems (Luhmann 1986, 186f). Due to its very nature (its claim to have a binding power in all spheres of life) and its goals, religion cannot afford to be confined within its own subsystem, as that would be tantamount to its marginalization and lose of influence on the functioning of both society and individuals. Media events, including those of religious character, are moments that restore social cohesion for a time and overcome social differentiation. For the duration of the event, society is unified by common values and ideals, shares common experiences, and feels the same emotions. Thus religious communication gains a public, not only systemic focus. The phenomenon of growing popularity and social influence of great mass events may be interpreted not only in the terms of the expansion of the entertainment culture and "society of sensation" (Schulze 2005), but also as a counterpoint for the social differentiation process. Media events, perhaps particularly those of religious character, are symbolic centers focusing on themselves the interest and attention of the whole society, or at least its significant part, and thus directing the process of social communication which may, in such a situation, somehow go beyond the borders of individual subsystems of social life (Schüle 2003, 374f).

The "festivalization" of religiousness is often identified with its banalization and interpreted as an attempt made by religion to adapt to popular culture. Some point out that it brings religion dangerously close to the ludic sphere, stresses emotionality at the expense of intellectual reflection, that such events leave no lasting effect on attitudes and

professed values, and that communities established there are short-lived. What can be just as dangerous, however, from the point of view of the Christian religion, is when the form of the message is badly adjusted to the needs of modern people (sermons not taking into account the category of recipients, inability to show the relationship between faith and life). It may contribute to a sense of alienation of religiousness and a conviction that religion is a separate sphere of life that has nothing in common with everyday life and loses its influence outside the Church walls. Religious media events, especially the meetings organized for the youth, are an opportunity for the Church to give a positive media performance of belonging to the Catholic community. Using various means of expression, tailored to the needs and expectations of young people, Catholicism is presented as an attractive proposal of worldview and lifestyle, thus strengthening its position on the “market” of religious proposals.

Obviously, religious communication cannot take place exclusively through the mass media, since religion constitutes a particular system of communication based on the interaction between people present at the same time and place. This is why it is impossible to wholly “translate” religious communication to the language of the mass media, and the community establishing itself in the virtual space can never replace a real community that allows direct interaction. However, the presence of the Christian religion in the media is necessary, as in many cases they are the only communication channel between the Church and its social environment, and make it possible to reach even people and circles who do not have any connection with religious communities and do not participate in daily religious communication.

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CHAPTER IX

THE PLURALISM OF SPIRITUALITY IN PRESS COVERAGE

JUSTYNA SZULICH-KAŁUŻA

Spirituality has become an important characteristic of modern societies and generally carries positive connotations. It appears to be a flexible umbrella term that does not conjure up strong and radical connotations. “Spirituality” belongs to the category of “soft”, blurred terms difficult to operationalise. As a complex religious and cultural phenomenon, spirituality is best researched using qualitative techniques and methods. The objective of the current research is to recreate the discourse on spirituality in modern media on the example of the traditional press. I identify media discourse on spirituality with the phenomenon of the intentional, non-accidental use of language with the purpose of conveying knowledge, information, opinion, judgements, values, ideas, conceptions and views on the subject of spirituality restricted to press publications. The main research technique applied here is a critical analysis of media discourse. It takes Jürgen Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action into account. The main assumption of this model of discourse analysis is that social changes occur under the influence of communication, therefore, on the social level, they can be partially caused by language. In the analysis, I attempted to highlight the descriptive-explanatory spectrum of the following themes:

1. knowledge about spirituality in publications (aspects: intellectual-cognitive, ideological-religious)
2. activity in the spiritual sphere: community and individual practices in publications (the ritual-cultural aspect)
3. the forms of experiencing spirituality
4. spirituality in everyday life (the aspect of lifelong consequences)
5. the attitude towards other spiritual communities

The examination of the aforementioned problems was based on the analysis of “Polityka [Politics]”, an opinion-forming weekly popular in Poland. It has been released since 1957 and holds a leading position amongst the most widely-read weeklies in Poland. “Polityka” was

connected with the party structures of the people's democracy and its chief editors held state offices. The form of a similar political magazine emerged in the early 1960s at the same time and dealt with the subjects of economy, history, culture and foreign affairs. Religious issues were avoided in the papers of "Polityka" (Władyka 2007, 11-12). During the times of real socialism, effective in Poland since 1945, it was attempted to eliminate religious-ecclesiastical inspirations from different areas of social and cultural life. All available means, including press, were used to achieve that goal. The subject of mutual relation between religion and other walks of life – morality, family, culture, everyday life values, economy and politics – presented little interest to journalists. Only critical materials about blameworthy positions and actions of the Church hierarchs and clergy used to be published in the weekly. Since the political transformation in 1989, the discourse on the necessity of democratisation of the Catholic Church and the adjustment of its teachings to the changing reality has dominated in most Polish media. Otherwise, the Church is predicted to gradually become an anachronism and, consequently, be rejected by its followers. "Polityka" engages in this discourse very decidedly.

Since the late 1990 theologians, philosophers and sociologists of religion have become increasingly interested in the new forms of spirituality. A characteristic fad of propagating coverage of different manifestations of spirituality appeared in the media. I recreated the discourse on popularised forms of spirituality, its dimensions and features based on articles on spirituality published in "Polityka". In search of the sources for my analysis I used the Internet archive of "Polityka". The archive possesses the facsimile versions of issues of the weekly that had been published earlier in paper. The process of selecting the publications consisted in applying the key word technique. For this reason, a catalogue of the following terms was created: religion, religiousness, religious identity, spirituality. The data analysed comprised 22 articles that had been published in "Polityka" between 2000 and 2013.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE PRESS

The analyses of the gathered material enable outlining two methods of writing about spirituality. The general approach dominates but there are attempts to provide more detailed analyses. These are interspersed with the existing tendencies of defining the approach to the phenomenon of spirituality. The concept of spirituality is sometimes expanded to the extent that it is no longer clear and contains a number of imprecise meanings. They refer to a poorly identified reality which can be only described as transcending the confines of what is biological,

material, everyday, routine. Testimony of its indeterminacy can be found in the words:

...it is difficult to talk about one definition that would render the depth and scope of the meaning of this phenomenon. Spirituality is like wind – although we may experience, observe and describe it, we cannot grasp it, it is too ephemeral (Wargacki 2009, 298).

A Broad Understanding of Spirituality

Broadly understood spirituality is defined as “what people think about the world, how they comprehend it, how they discover and experience it” (Szostkiewicz 2011, 116-122). Two features are included in the essence of spirituality: individualisation and openness. Due to individualisation, spirituality is something personal and intimate: “Individualisation is the only, unique route to shape one’s spirituality” (Szostkiewicz 2011, 116-122). Openness is the opposition of every restriction; man must personally make the effort to understand the route of their own spirituality.

Spirituality begins when man confronts fundamental questions but straight answers are not to be given. It is a certain persistence in inquiry. Authentic spirituality always stands against everything that is closed, it refuses to embrace unquestionable answers. True schools of spirituality lead to open reflection which actually never reaches final conclusions (Szostkiewicz 2011, 116-122).

Other features of spirituality are also enumerated: “It is inborn in everybody and everybody is doomed to have it” (Krzemińska 2010, 74-77).

A Narrow Understanding of Spirituality

A detailed understanding narrows down the semantic scope of spirituality and identifies it with relational consciousness of something outside man (Krzemińska 2010, 74-77). In order to explain the relational character of spirituality more precisely, we need to indicate the relation of a human being with something above and outside, which is a transcendental reality, other people and the whole environment. Spirituality embraces reflection on the following dimensions: “[...] awareness of God, other people, the surrounding world and ourselves” (Krzemińska 2010, 74-77). Relational consciousness can therefore have

three references: transcendental (relation with God), external (relation with other people and the surrounding reality) and internal – subjective (relation with one’s own “I”).

FORMS OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE PRESS

A thorough qualitative analysis of the collected press articles enabled distinguishing several sorts of spirituality described in the papers of “Polityka”; they are: spirituality inspired by Eastern religions, Christian spirituality and its numerous manifestations, alternative spirituality – extra-institutional, and non-religious spirituality.

Spirituality Inspired by Eastern Religions

The subject matter of spirituality inspired by Eastern religions is among the most frequently discussed in “Polityka”. They are the core subjects in 9 publications. This is a manifestation of the interest of media in esoteric movements, astrology, horoscopes, mysticism, occultism, psychological and parapsychological techniques.

Published texts contain recursive cognitive themes that cast light on Eastern religions: the history of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, the figures of prophets, the knowledge of the Qur’an. The authors focus on the essence of Eastern spirituality by enumerating their yoga components: meditation, studying books and body positions – most often identified with yoga. Meditation is defined as: “a process of taming, clearing the mind, interrupting the stream of consciousness, fencing off thoughts and emotions which haunt us, being in silence” (Kyzioł 2012, 88-89).

Authors of the publications observe unsettling phenomena weakening the spirituality of the East. Secularisation and democratisation of meditation are among them (Szostkiewicz 2007, 32-34). Meditation became an element of the Western mass culture and one of the domains of making profit:

There is no sign left of the mystical aura of the search for the Truth. It has been substituted with: a bit of exoticism, a bit of yoga, a bit of most basic meditation techniques. As meditation is popularised and commercialised, people do not want to just meditate – they want meditation of a transcendental kind, Christian meditation. The fundamental difference between Christian and Buddhist meditation is that Christians focus on meeting with God, while Buddhists of freeing their minds (Szostkiewicz 2007, 32-34).

Another threat to Eastern spirituality, according to the journalists, is commercialisation – liberalisation of spirituality which is “selling” spirituality, “McDonaldisation” – a process consisting in:

...selling products connected with the new alternative spirituality: especially with secret knowledge, the art of using the power of nature. It results in buying a talisman, enrolling in a transcendental meditation course, hiring a human potential trainer (Szostkiewicz, Mazurczyk 2011, 116-122).

Christian Spirituality

In articles of “Polityka,” Christianity is identified with a more mature form of meditation – transcendental meditation. The fundamental difference between the Christian and the Buddhist meditations, according to the journalists, is that Christians concentrate on meeting a personal God, while Buddhists on freeing their minds. For instance: the Benedictine Way, the Ignatian meditation, meditation of Taizé – the famous ecumenical congregation in the south of France established more than half a century ago by Brother Roger, and particularly popular with European youth.

Even non-believers eager for such experience come flocking to Taizé since they are captivated by spiritual simplicity of the prayer and meditation meetings (Szostkiewicz 2007, 32-34).

In press coverage, Christian spirituality is described as follows: “[...] systematic and thoughtful consideration of prayer, pious and compliant with the rules of Christian life” (O’Collins, E. Farrugia 2002, 201). In the published articles we can find texts about the richness of the forms of Christian spirituality. Positively valued schools and styles of Christian spirituality are distinguished: Franciscan spirituality, Dominican spirituality:

the 14th century Dominican school of Over-the-Rhine mystics is a manifestation of human genius, as gothic cathedrals are, Benedictine spirituality, the spirituality of Spanish mystics – especially Saint John of the Cross – who established an outstanding, unique and up-to-date school of spirituality (Szostkiewicz, Mazurczyk 2011, 116-122).

Along with those, we can distinguish modern forms of spirituality, for instance, Focolare, Neocatechumenal spirituality (Seewald 2005, 419). On the one hand, the authors emphasise the richness and attractiveness of spirituality with Christian roots and on the other, they stress the lack of acceptance by the high hierarchs of the Church.

When we investigate the history of the Church, to which the majority of us belong, we notice that one of its great values was providing the basis for new forms of spirituality: saint Francis, Teresa of Avila, Ignatius of Loyola – they could be enumerated endlessly. Obviously, they all had problems with ‘the papal position’. Loyola could not study in Spain since he was persecuted by the Inquisition. He had to leave for Paris. Nevertheless, the birth of new forms of spirituality is a crucial feature of Christianity (Krzemiński 2009, 28-30).

In classical Christian theories, we can come across different approaches to spirituality within particular denominations which prefer a given dimension of religious expansion, spiritual experience and practices (e.g. Marian, Anglican or Calvinist spirituality). The growing interest in orders, monasteries and convents that offer the possibility for laymen to attend a retreat in seclusion is a new promise for the Church (Szostkiewicz, Baranowska 2003, 86-87). In counterbalance, there are negative estimations of retreat’s value. The authors doubt the religious character of these practices:

...the fact that more and more people in Western Europe are buying such retreats does not necessarily lead to the revival of regular and traditional religious practices. It seems to be another symptom that the ‘how’ is becoming more important than the ‘what’. Relaxation and regeneration of mental strength with Camaldolese monks. Why not? But without responsibilities towards Church hosts (Szostkiewicz, Baranowska 2003, 86-87).

Along with the virtues of Christian spirituality the publications contain reservations towards it. The Catholic Church is described as fossilised and closed to other spiritualities:

The teaching Church cannot say anything else, reach a compromise with other doctrines. It was criticised after the Second Vatican Council 40 years ago for being too open to other religious and spiritual traditions. The Pope Wojtyła

was attacked by conservative Catholic circles for praying in Assisi for peace together with the clergy and followers of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam or Native American religions (Szostkiewicz, Baranowska 2003, 86-87).

Another accusation concerns the placement of the Christian religion outside the individual and characteristics by the absolute submission to its dogmas. An authoritarian, “closed” relation with a personal God who demands humble fulfilment of strict orders is stressed:

In Catholicism of the 19th and 20th century, spirituality was reduced to obedience to God the Father, which is understood as a complete submission, including the intellectual (Szostkiewicz, Mazurczyk 2011, 116-117).

It is required in Christianity to humbly open to God’s grace which is attainable under certain conditions, mostly penitence (Szostkiewicz 2007, 32-34).

National-religious Spirituality. A particular type of Christian spirituality in Poland is national-religious spirituality which was the subject of John Paul II’s teachings: The Pope showed the vision of Christian Poland whose strength was built on its rich history.

...In Poland – associating national ideology with religious identity gives the impression that the world of traditional belief, despite the symptoms of erosion, stands firm. Religious identity in Poland, preached by John Paul II in his homilies seemed more social and national rather than spiritual and private in character and bursts out in exceptional circumstances (Bilewicz 2005, 36-38).

An average Pole is proud of his religion, with its anchorage in Polish tradition and identity. S/he revels in the fact that his nation appears to be one of the most Catholic nations in the world (Żakowski 2004, 3-10).

In Poland partitioned by the occupiers, references to the traditions of the ancestors displayed a strongly patriotic character, which became national in time (Krzemińska 2011, 53-56).

Polish faith is specific – it undergoes a constant crisis intertwined with outbursts of religiousness. Therefore, we need to separate the individual religion – weakening, selective, without consequences in everyday life, and the religion of the nation which bursts out in exceptional circumstances. It is our history that bound religion and independence together (Podgórska 2006, 4-11).

Charismatic Spirituality. Another type of Christian spirituality is the charismatic one. It is associated with charismatic religious leaders who are endowed with extraordinary abilities. It is not cognition but emotions, epiphanies and mystical experience that are stressed in the forms of experiencing religiousness (Wargacki 2007, 123). Meetings – retreats of the followers with the charismatic leaders are great, spectacular mass events of vivid emotional character. Retreats with the charismatic Catholic healer and exorcist John Baptista Bashabora can serve as an example. They were described in publications as “...a religious show for the masses in a stadium” (Szostkiewicz 2013, 20-23).

Charismatic spirituality manifests itself in the papers of “Polityka” as the ability to heal and perform exorcisms. This manifestation of spirituality receives negative judgements:

A belief in omnipresent evil that is fraught with fear indulges the development of religious psychosis or neurosis in weaker minds....The Church resets its pastoral course. It chooses educating the followers to search for evil powers, ghosts, enemies of the Lord and the Church rather than teaching them to face the real challenges of the present day....The emotions of awe of God and fear of the Devil seem to prevail in this sphere of deep religious tensions....The common characteristic of the charismatic leaders is their strong religious emotions experienced in public....Where emotions are loud, minds are silent....An area of wild *sacrum* which is not tamed by anyone but flourishes much more easily than the wistful, martyrlly mass piety (Szostkiewicz 2013, 20-23).

The Spirituality of the John Paul II (JP II) Generation. The spirituality of the JP II generation is yet another form of Christian spirituality described in the weekly. The publications sketch out young Poles as more religious than their European peers. The young subjects of the publications say:

The religious values have receded into the background and religious people who treat them seriously do not flaunt them. This does not mean they are ashamed of their values; they just follow them as everyday guidelines....Young people asked about the values, spirituality, the need of a *sacrum* and present themselves as a religious generation (Podgórska 2006, 4-11).

To the young

...the Pope left much good behind. He was an authority, a great Pole, someone dear. He will remain in the hearts of millions of people. He demonstrated with his attitude and actions that the young are most important and they cannot be ignored. This is why the JP II generation loves him (Podgórska 2006, 4-11).

For the young, the death of John Paul II turned out to be unusually moving spiritual experience:

Some people who declare themselves as non-committed or non-believing spoke of the amazement about their own reactions [to the demise and burial of John Paul II]. It is one of the major themes – the young were surprised to realise the scale of their own reactions to what was happening. It was a sort of generational catharsis. They were called Generation X, Generation Nothing, commercialised and lost, not acknowledging their worth, they realised their own strength and believed that their generation was not that much different from others and is not as degraded as had been said....The sorrow after the Pope's demise will be the most lasting experience they will have remembered from that April. Experiencing the generational bond and the need for participation in a collective ritual were pivotal at that time. The importance of the Pope's death results not from belief and obedience to papal teachings but from a sense of durability of a particular situation, of 'being familiar' with the Pope" (Podgórska 2006, 4-11).

John Paul II was a constant in the world in the eyes of the young. What is characteristic of this type of spirituality is how young people speak of values.

When we ask them about the important values,...they will distinguish: success, ambition, combativeness, attractiveness, independence, investing in one's self. When we ask them about their individual values, they talk about intelligence, sensitivity, responsibility, being one's self, and sticking to rules. John Paul II was seen in an opposition to the evil, frightful world. He was a metaphor of their yearnings. It did not matter that they were at a disagreement with him concerning birth control. They respected his courage in preaching his opinions against all odds. The young have a sense of discomfort living in a mosaic world devoid of guidelines, possessed by the media and advertising. The Pope was a symbol of altruism, love, being faithful to one's self; in other words, the values they long for but are unable to break through to. God and religion have a therapeutic function for the young. They say that it is good to be a believer for it gives a sense of harmony, mental peace, calmness. They do not associate moral rules with people rather than with God. God makes them feel less lonely, is a reliable figure offering comfort (Podgórska 2006, 4-11).

It is becoming more and more common for the young to talk about the phenomenon of individual religion.

A young person is able to choose. Just like buying a mobile phone, they can take their time to think what they need. Whether they want polyphonic ringtones or a camera phone – whether they want to go to confession or to reflect on their actions in the privacy of their homes (Podgórska 2006, 4-11).

Modified Christian Spirituality (Believing in One's Own Way). Modified Christian spirituality is the response of Christian spirituality to the challenges of the present times. It draws on the feature of individuality and deinstitutionalises religion. Individuals create their own beliefs in separation from the institutionalised religion by choosing selected elements of the Christian doctrine. They take an ambivalent stance on the believer/non-believer scale: "Personally, I do not deny the existence of God but I don't acknowledge it either. I could be categorised as a pagan considering the variety of religious classifications" (Podgórska 2006, 4-11). The concept of "religious composers" coined by Professor Paul Zulehner appears in the papers of the weekly. Those who are looking for new, individualised forms of

religiousness or spirituality, act independently within the scope of personal freedom. They build their own “religious home,” compose their religious “music,” that way they become religious composers and architects who adopt only the appealing components of a religion (Zulehner 2004, 15).

Modified spirituality incorporates the acceptance and, subsequently, realisation of the universal values such as goodness, love, truth, beauty, peace, justice. These are reactions to the disorderly secularised reality:

There are opinions that the secular world is schizophrenic. To be more precise, it is under the influence of two antagonistic forces. People seem to want to preserve a safe distance from religions, yet they are moved by instances of deep faith such as Mother Theresa’s....It is hard to deny that many of those who refuse to willingly follow Christ, are happy to listen to teaching or, at least, to know that it is being taught. It was explicitly shown by the reaction to the preceding Pope. John Paul II’s public homilies, which comprised themes such as goodness, love, world peace, justice in world economy, were considered stimulating by many. People were happy that those themes had been discussed. Nevertheless, among his enthusiasts there were also Catholics who did not believe that all the rules he advocated had to be followed (Krzemiński 2009, 28-30).

Alternative-extra-institutional Spirituality

It is a popular conviction in “Polityka” that the decrease of the attractiveness of traditional religious forms inevitably leads to the emergence of new forms of extra-institutional spirituality:

The Institutional Church ceases being attractive, it cannot satisfy the thirst for spirituality, it stiffly adheres to the rituals and ceremonies which are done thoughtlessly....The institutionalisation of religion results in the decay of the individual religious experience, decay of the personal involvement and duality of life. Little do the clergy have in common with spirituality. Openness to the *sacrum* that is not cramped to the institutional confines is a feature [of new spiritualities] (Krzemińska 2010, 74-77).

Christianity was a great achievement, although it had dark sides as well. Inseparable was the temptation to coerce, to

put shackles on human conscience, although Christianity is based on voluntary acceptance of the Gospel. From this point of view, 'the end of the Christian world' seems comforting and gives an opportunity for new forms of spirituality. This is a crucial aspect of Christianity which we do not have to lose. Nor however during fragmentarisation there is a threat that we might lose some of those vital forms of spirituality rooted in our tradition (Krzemiński 2009, 28-30).

The world of official religious institutions appears to be a place where the most important spiritual values materialise. The problem is the credibility of the institutions which present themselves as carriers of spirituality. In Catholicism Spirituality is supposed to be guaranteed by a higher authority which provides such a guarantee (Szostkiewicz, Mazurczyk 2011, 116-122).

According to "Polityka" journalists, the extra-institutional spirituality is particularly attractive to young Poles:

Religion and spirituality are important especially to young people but they fail to find it in the institutionalised Church which is perceived as fossilised. The two processes of desacralisation and secularisation are happening simultaneously in Poland. Desacralisation is progressing rapidly. Religion is eliminated from cult, and feasts are more family than religious celebrations. The teaching of the Church, especially in the area of sexual ethics, is not translated into everyday morality (Podgórska, Czapla 2011, 30-32).

Post-Durkheimian spirituality is an example of extra-institutional spirituality in "Polityka". This blanket term covers a number of phenomena after 1968 including artistic, music, film, educational and political events. Spirituality was described as:

simultaneously congregational and subjective, ecological, referring to collective experience. It is fulfilled in new forms: at rock concerts, during the TV broadcast of Princess Diana's funeral or the requiem for the sunken Ferry Estonia. It is not the lust for sensation that drives people; they are driven by authentic elation. These are all, according to Charles Taylor, forms of religious belief, of

experiencing the transcendental unity. It is also true that such a form of spirituality devoid of institutionalisation is fragile in a secular and pluralistic world (Krzemiński 2009, 28-30).

Extra-Religious Spirituality: Folk, Neo-Pagan

A form of spirituality that devoid of any religious inspirations or neo-pagan, can also be found in the papers of “Polarity”. This spirituality is represented by the followers of “Rodzimowierstwo”, the Native Polish Church. They reject the prevailing Christianity, deeming it foreign to the native beliefs, and return to the religion of their ancestors. Primeval tradition and rituals are natural and more compelling to them. A man is a part of nature, therefore nature and patriotism are the two fundamental aspects of neo-paganism. As followers of the Native Polish Church describe themselves, “Rodzimowierstwo” is a religion and not a political movement.

We consider ourselves patriots and respect the language, culture and tradition. The Slavic religion was a religion of nature, therefore the most important feasts are connected with the change of the seasons. Gods embody natural phenomena or manifest their existence through them. In Poland partitioned by the occupiers, references to the traditions of the ancestors displayed a strongly patriotic character, which in time became national (Krzemińska 2011, 53-56).

CONCLUSION

The press discourse outlined above shows the dynamic and diverse character of spirituality and enables us to draw the following conclusions:

1. Authors believe spirituality and religion to be important for both individuals and societies.
2. They acknowledge the existence of different religions and spiritualities in society. They testify to that by describing various guises of Christianity and Islam.
3. They appreciate the role of Christian religion and spirituality in Poland. They believe Christian spirituality to be rich and pluralistic.
4. The Catholic Church, as seen by the journalists, is becoming an unattractive institution, unable to grasp modern knowledge, progress or technologies. It should modify its spirituality which would be readily

accepted by the young JP II generation. Young people do not look for dogmas in religion and spirituality. The intellectual theological or philosophical discourse is of no interest to them. They look for a sense of security, acceptance and authenticity, and also joyful spiritual experience.

(Translated by Maciej Czerniakowski)

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CHAPTER X

**RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE
CITIZEN MEDIA**

JOANNA SZEGDA

The aim of this chapter is to examine how religiousness and spirituality function in the citizen media, which is, undoubtedly, a special type of media, and to determine what types of spirituality and religiousness we have to deal with in this media created by amateurs.

Religiousness is understood as a set of beliefs that directly or indirectly make a reference to God, to the sacred, and also to the practice of worship, or to some other rituals directed towards the sacred. In turn, spirituality is understood as a set of beliefs and ideas that directly or indirectly relate to transcendent and supernatural reality, together with activities and practices, individual or common, institutionalized or not, that are targeted towards this reality. Spirituality is a broader notion because religiousness is almost always spiritual (except for practices performed mechanically, without any deeper reflection), but spirituality does not have to be religious and may include various types of spiritual practices, like the bio-energy healing or the belief in the healing power of stones.

**THE CITIZEN MEDIA AS A PLATFORM FOR PROMOTING
SPIRITUAL PLURALISM**

In modern societies citizen journalism is developing rapidly. New web-pages, blogs and portals, dedicated to its users' work, are created online. "Through the Internet and electronic means of communication, modern man is able to create his own messages, which are, for him, most satisfying. Then, beside the general exchange process, we return to the 'production for our own purpose'" (Nierenberg 2011, 89).

Citizen journalists boldly enter into the competence previously reserved for people after journalism schools or longtime practitioners of the journalistic profession. They comment, express opinions, participate in discussions, supplement the information known already from the mainstream sources.

Citizen journalism is a concept of journalism that activates the public, “which plays an active role in the process of gathering, presenting, analyzing and distributing information and news” (Bowman, Willis).

Citizen media favors the development of a civil society through a wide participation of citizens in the creation of the media and the shaping of its content. In Boguslaw Nierenberg’s opinion, in the 21st century we returned to the 19th century approach to the profession of a journalist, who is the more reliable, the less professional he is.

According to Karol Jakubowicz, the citizen media are characterized by: independence from the government, from business, from religious institutions and from political parties, as well as a non-profit activity, the policy of ensuring that representatives of the public will participate, free of charge, in managing the medium and its content. They take actions for the social benefit and for the good of society, belong to a certain community and are responsible to it, and have an inclusive and intercultural character (Jakubowicz 2011, 167). However, according to Clyde Bentley: “citizen journalism is not a substitute for professional journalism....They can function without each other, but when they work together, they create something exceptional” (Bentley 2008). He believes that both the professional media and the citizen media will continue operating as before. “The key difference between traditional journalism and citizen journalism in its various forms is the distinction between ‘covering’ and ‘sharing’” (Bentley 2008, 13). Through his work, a professional journalist brings the world closer to the people, step by step, he shares the world with each information. A citizen journalist lives through the event he describes and shares his own life.

Due to this, citizen media can be a place where a person is able to express his views, also on religion and spirituality. Because it is believed that this type of media is less influenced by external factors, the published content is much more versatile and the decision, whether or not to publish, depends solely on the author and not the editor-in-chief or the publisher. What is more, it is a medium that is independent (unlike the mainstream media) from political sympathies and, if the published content violates no rules, one is able to publish whatever he wants. Therefore, the zealous Catholics, the agnostics, the followers of other religions, or the fans of meditation can all publish in the sphere of the citizen media and their texts have the same rights. On the basis of the content published in the citizen media, different types of spirituality and religiousness of citizen journalists who constitute a peculiar group of citizens: involved and interested in their own environment and culture can be described.

For the analysis of religiousness and spirituality in the citizen media, it was decided to study the largest and the most popular Polish citizen information service (also herein referred to as the ‘portal’) called *Wiadomości24.pl*. The service has been operating since 2006 and has nearly 400,000 registered members; approx. 2,000 texts and galleries are published therein monthly.¹ The site was created on the basis of general accessibility to content creation. Its functioning and development is based on the work of volunteers and amateur journalists, who have found a space for publishing their work in this news service. The service operates on the basis of legal and social regulations. Each registered user has a profile that can be viewed and functional icons are visible on it, showing the number of: friends, posts (there is an internal blog built in), comments, articles, and photo galleries.

The service users come from all over Poland, are of various professions, of different ages, and have many different interests, a testimony to which can be the wealth and diversity of the article topics published on the portal.

For content analysis, the publications of citizen journalists published on the web portal in 2010 in all categories were selected; however, the materials had to meet at least one of the criteria mentioned below:

1. They represented beliefs or ideas relating directly or indirectly to the sacred, the transcendental or supernatural reality;
2. They presented individual or collective practices, institutionalized or not, focused on the sacred, the transcendental or superhuman reality.

Press and photographic materials underwent subject and content analysis on the basis of a key code created from the following categories:

1. Text publications: the level of arrangement, the degree to which it was linked to the existing faith or religion, the social context of the spiritual practices, the type and complexity of the practices, the continuity of the practices, and the reference to tradition, the truths of faith, values and symbols;
2. Visual publications: the social context of spiritual practices, the type and complexity of the practices, the continuity of the practices and the reference to tradition, the truths of faith, values and symbols.

¹ http://www.wiadomosci24.pl/blog/wszystko_na_temat_wiadomosci24_pl_241879.html, retrieved on: 5.12.2012.

In total, 133 publications containing religious or spiritual content were analyzed, which constitutes 4% of all the texts on culture. 44 publications were created in the visual genre (a photo-report, a photo-reportage, a photo-column and a photo-essay). A vast majority, 94 publications, touched upon the subject of Catholicism. The other publications included the content regarding Islam (10 texts), modern paganism (8 texts), Judaism (6 texts), Buddhism (1 text) and the Greek Catholicism (1 text). Various texts on spirituality and religion in general, pertaining to human and Christian values (13 texts), were also presented.

THE TYPES OF RELIGIOUSNESS AND SPIRITUALITY PRESENT IN THE ANALYZED CITIZEN MEDIUM

In a majority of the analyzed texts (98), the subject of the publication was related to a holiday or a rite, ritual or symbol associated with it. However, not only the traditional holidays related to a particular creed or religion were identified as festivities, but also the informal religious gatherings which had the character of a ceremonial celebration. And so, in the analyzed material, the following holidays appeared: Palm Sunday, Easter and the Easter Triduum, Christmas, Corpus Christi, the Feast of the Epiphany (in Poland, popularly known as the Three Kings' Day), Ash Wednesday, the Pentecost, the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, the Grandfathers (*Dziady*), the Spring Mating (*Jare Gody*), the Kupala Night (Midsummer, also known as St John's Day), Falek (Torches), St. George's Day, the Hanukkah, the Chinese Tomb Sweeping Day, or the Eid al-Adha festival (the Muslim Day of Sacrifice). Since the theme of the festivities was predominant, there were also numerous religious symbols (particularly in Polish culture, but not exclusively) associated with particular feasts: a Christmas tree, an apple, nuts, chains, lights and crystal balls, bells, angels, bread, meat, a lamb, horseradish and butter, an egg, fire, a stone, a star, a cross, smoke, water, and Svetovid.

The religious and spiritual practices presented in the analyzed publications were mostly held at a strictly specified public social space: in Churches, at cultural centers, in chapels, on streets and in public squares, in schools, at galleries, at cemeteries, in Chram temples. In several texts (8), a private social space was mentioned: a house or an apartment. Rituals, customs, and superstitions characteristic of a given holiday were described in detail in 24 texts. The continuity of these rites and rituals, their embedding in culture and their importance to social and cultural identity of given group was emphasized therein.

Many texts revealed parallelism between old, traditional rites and new forms of expression of spirituality and religiousness that make the spiritual life more dynamic, thereby giving people the opportunity to

pursue and develop this sphere at their convenience. This shows that religiousness and spirituality are looking for new forms of manifestation. For a modern person, it is not enough to be limited by the established rituals and rites and within the sacred space – he is looking for new ways to manifest his own spirituality and religiousness. They include the following:

- using new means of expression to add splendor to a ceremony: concerts, plays, multimedia presentations, interactive exhibitions,
- combining religious festivals with local festivals, promoting local culture during religious festivals, organizing fetes, fairs (i.e. the Easter fair, the Christmas fair), and competitions (i.e. for the longest Easter palm) for the local community,
- manifesting religious views through marches organized in the public spaces, i.e., marches for life, marches for equality, the Holy Wins march,
- organizing plays with the purpose of bringing the faithful closer to truths of faith, figures or specific values, i.e. the Concert of Glory on Corpus Christi, the procession of the Magi,
- organizing festivals devoted to spirituality and religiousness (i.e. music festivals: Song of Songs, Be like Jesus, the Festival of Religious Songs in the Podbeskidzie region, *Sacrum Novum*, *Misteria Paschalia*) and meetings (the Youth Meeting in Lednica, the Week of Christian Culture, Parish Meeting with the Muses, Tischner Days).

Based on the content analysis, three types of spirituality occurring in citizen information service are distinguishable:

1. Traditional religiousness;
2. New forms of religiousness;
3. Non-religious spirituality.

The spirituality most frequently encountered in the service is the traditional religiousness (institutional and denominational). This includes all the ideas and practices that have been established by a religious organization, a Church or a denomination, and are regulated and maintained by it. This type of religiousness is strongly connected to ritualism and rituals, is based on traditional and established symbols, refers to established truths of faith, and is located in the sphere of the sacred, but is also open to the social space and shifts some of the practice into that very space. It also refers to fixed values like: faith, God, community, tradition, continuity, cultural and religious heritage, identity. It maintains a connection with the past and with tradition. The practices are complex, require knowledge and involvement from the

participants, although they are not always understood by them. They are composed of multiple actions that have a symbolic meaning. This type of religiousness is based on communalism and a strong relationship with the community culture. In the space of the service, there is a clear distinction between the Catholic and non-Catholic spirituality, characteristic of all faiths, religions, religious associations and religious communities, which function on the basis of specific rules, are usually registered as a Church or a denomination, have a systematic set of the truths of faith, but are not derived from Catholicism. An example of this can be the Native Polish Church, as well as all the smaller, and larger pagan groups, including magical orders. The organizational level of these groups is diverse, but they have one thing in common: they function in a specific, established framework. Other examples of this type of religiousness in the service are Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism.

Religiousness in the new forms (non-institutional denominational) is built on the basis of new forms of religiousness and spirituality, implemented in the private or public space, in the profane sphere, connected loosely, or not at all, with the rites and rituals characteristic of a particular denomination or religion, but referring to values, attitudes, behaviors and practices that are fixed and characteristic for a given religion. The predominant values are: community, youth, openness, faith, God, happiness, modernity. There is no reference to tradition (and if there is, it's scarce). Religiousness can be implemented communally or individually, and, accordingly, performed in the public or private sphere. It is often associated with popular culture and uses its forms of expression for its own needs. An example of this type of religiousness are various kinds of groups and activities organized ad hoc, once only within a particular Church or outside of it, but representing, in an obvious way, the truths of faith and the values associated with it. They are also practices that bear the signs of regularity, such as, i.e., festivals and reviews, marches and concerts. In the analyzed text, a specific example of this type of religiousness are groups of retirees and pensioners organizing Christmas meetings, young people organizing the March of Life, or groups organizing Christian music concerts.

Non-religious spirituality (non-institutional and non-denominational) covers ideas, beliefs and practices which are not associated with any denomination or religion; furthermore, they are neither organized nor institutionalized (they are individual and private). Spirituality is based on individual practices pertaining to a transcendental reality, celebrating nature, and man as a human being. The practices are usually simple, they do not form more comprehensive rituals or rites, and are usually uncomplicated and easy to understand. Spirituality is implemented in a private space, in the sphere of the profane, and is based on individually chosen and selected values and

beliefs. Dominant among the values are: harmony, balance, the good, freedom, beauty, man, self-development, oneness. The spirituality lacks continuity and a traditional basis, is not implemented in a community and abandons all rituals and rites. To this type of spirituality the beliefs from different cultures that were more or less prevalent in societies, which appear in a text entitled *Myths: The Everlasting Fight of Good and Evil* can be included. Another publication that reflects upon non-religious spirituality is the text entitled *Łódź. Goodness and Beauty' Has Come to Town*, which presents the ubiquitous struggle of good and evil, a strife of good and evil forces in a man's life. Presented in both texts is generally understood spirituality, the nature of man, who sometimes has problems to distinguish between the good and the evil, who looks for help in art and stories in order to answer existential questions. However, the answer is the result of social and cultural conditions or personal experience. There is no support in any institution or organization.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND A SUMMARY

Based on the content analysis of the publications on religiousness and spirituality, and the types of spirituality described herein, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. Regardless of creed or religion, a very important aspect of spirituality and religiousness is the communal dimension of spiritual practices. Even non-institutionalized groups strive to commonly participate in spiritual observances to be completed with individual dimension of spirituality.

2. Rites and rituals perform a very important role in all types of spiritual communities. Even neo-pagan communities base their spiritual practices on traditional rituals and pagan rites. This means that perhaps in order for an individual spirituality to develop, at least a small set of practices established and shared by the group is needed.

3. The great wealth of rites and rituals indicate a dynamism of spirituality, and their diversity points to the numerous functions they perform for the community and for individuals. Among the rites and rituals that appear in the analyzed material are the following:

- the Grandfathers – a rite performed to obtain the mercy of the dead, so the spirits can protect against evil and misfortune,
- the rites of Ash Wednesday – the reminder of Jesus' first days in the desert, celebrated as the beginning of Lent; a symbolic placing of ashes on a person's head,

- the rites of Fakle (Torches) – expelling all that is evil. On Maundy Thursday all the inhabitants went outside a village bearing torches to drive all the evil away from it,

- the rites of the Kupala Night – a new fire was started; numerous bonfires were lit and people jumped over them; animal sacrifices were made to gods in order to provide protection against diseases and evil spirits, and to protect animals and ensure a good harvest,

- the Chinese Tomb Sweeping Day – people have picnics at the graves of the dead including dancing and singing songs; willow twigs are gathered and brought up to the graves in order to ward off evil spirits; favorite foods of the deceased are put around the grave; offerings of paper money and plastic flowers are made to the ghosts.

- Related to rites and festivities are many customs and superstitions, i.e., it was believed that head garlands consecrated on Corpus Christi protected against misfortune and disease; the smoke from herbs cured diseases, animals were fumigated with the smoke from herbs, and it was believed that herbal smoke repelled storms and thunders. The drowning of a Marzanna doll (a straw figure representing winter) was supposed to chase away winter, drive out evil spirits and welcome the spring. It was believed that Easter palms heal sick throats and cure sick cattle. It was forbidden to bathe during the day between the spring and summer solstice in open waters, because it was supposed to cause the wrath of gods.

The connection between spirituality and the local community and culture is also quite important. A mutual link between religious and cultural rituals and customs creates a specific cultural characteristic typical for a particular group. The local people, frequently dressed in traditional clothing, come to processions and ceremonies, and traditional songs are sung. It all adds up to a socio-cultural identity of individuals and communities.

Symbolism has great importance for spirituality. It appears in both monotheistic and polytheistic denominations and religions, as well as in spirituality in general. Things and phenomena are given a symbolic meaning and, thus, a reference to transcendental reality is possible, i.e., the Marzanna doll symbolizes evil and winter; the wafer symbolizes the body of Christ; 12 dishes served for Christmas Eve dinner represent 12 apostles; olive groves were believed to be sacred and mystical; lashing oneself with willow twigs was supposed to drive off evil and illness.

Spirituality and religiousness presented in the service, regardless of type, are dynamic, vivid and rich in content. They combine traditional and new forms of manifestation, but rituals and rites are still important for the communities and for individuals. Religiousness and spirituality are an important part of the local and national culture.

This research confirms the assumed notion that the citizen media are a platform for expressing one's own religiousness and spirituality. What is more, amateur journalists are eager to use the opportunities provided by the Internet and publish their own content devoted to this subject. Thanks to the huge variety of topics and diversity of the authors, we are dealing with many creeds and worldviews in the space of the citizen media. Dominant among the publications are contents related to Catholicism. It is hardly surprising, since almost 90% of the Poles declare that they belong to the Catholic Church. Research indicates that more and more Catholics profit from modern forms of manifestation of one's spirituality and, in addition to the traditional religiousness, they develop other types of spirituality and religiousness. Studies also confirm that traditional religiousness is still strong and imprinted in Polish society. The opinions that the Catholic Church is undergoing a deep crisis appear to be premature.

(Translated by Natalia Misztal)

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CHAPTER XI

**FORMS OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY
ON THE INTERNET**

KRZYSZTOF JUREK

Technological and informational progress, which initially left the most significant imprint on the economy, slowly revolutionized every aspect of human social life, including the spiritual and religious. Religious content constitutes one of the categories that reign on the Internet. Should one google the word *religion* in the English language, almost one billion hits appear. The number is significant, especially when one realizes that search engines do not scan the whole web. According to Megapanel PBI/Gemius (panel research of Polish Internet), religious websites are regularly seen by 2.2 m. stages Polish guests. They surf on the Internet 800,000 hours per month and perform 44 m. hits. Interest in Christian websites systematically increases. The research of *Pew Research Center* reveals that 64% of Americans (82 m. people) use the Internet seeking websites and information associated with religion and almost 38% of them have received or sent messages containing spiritual content (spiritual email) (Hoover, Clark, Rainie 2004, 4).

One can distinguish three categories concerning users of religious content. The most numerous one (55%) consists of interauts whose activity is associated with the search for personal contact with religion through music, sending cards or e-mails for spiritual reasons and asking or requesting prayers. Internauts representing the second category (36%) look for information concerning hours and places of religious cult, possibilities to give donations or they use their e-mails while they plan meetings of religious groups or seek celebration methods. Users that constitute the third and last group (32%) seek information associated with religious events and matters (Hoover, Clark, Rainie 2004, 8). Piotr Siuda, referring to the catalogue *Open Directory Project* created for classification and categorization of the Internet resources, presents the following statistics: in the *Society* section and *Religion and Spirituality* category there are as many as 70 subcategories associated with religion. What is more, each of them may be classified in several dozen languages

(Siuda 2010, 28). This data was collected in 2009 and, to compare, nowadays (2014) there are 71 categories.

The Internet has an increasing impact on human's religious life – new virtual Churches and communities are being formed and they conduct formal and catechetical activity. When one googles “Who is?”, the list of results begins with “Who is God?” (the research was held in 2007) (Wieczorek 2008). The following article illustrates a variety of religious forms that are present on the Internet.¹ Moreover, this is an attempt to reflect on religion in general, as one may ask whether the anxiety about the *sacrum* and spiritual life moving to cyberspace is justifiable, and whether the Internet is an opportunity or a threat for the religion offline. The following contemplation requires additional explanation of a religion, which is widely understood by the author as institutions, communities, movements and various activities or practices that bring people closer to the *sacrum*, e.g., prayer, rites, habits or rituals. William James defined a religion as feelings, actions and experiences of an individual that are considered by this individual as relating to something that is divine (James 1997). This is not only about institutions that, in this context, may be secondary, as they are no more than an “intermediary” between a human and the *sacrum*; this is also about subjective experiences that are equally important. They underlie numerous actions, particularly on the Internet, where behavior is not subject to such strict control of the generally accepted norms of a community.

DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS FORMS ON THE INTERNET

To better understand the *sacrum online* is, one should outline the framework of this phenomenon. Every major religion, the majority of new religious movements and sects or various types of self-styled gurus, prophets and shamans are now represented on the Internet. One can find information about their functioning, structure of their actions, targets or contact details on websites. A website concerning the Catholic Church, www.vatican.va, which constitutes the most important documents, statements of the Popes etc., may serve as an example. On the news service www.franciszkanie.pl an internaut can find – apart from the text – photo galleries or a glossary of monastic and Franciscan terms. The majority of monasteries have their own websites. Judaism, Islam or Buddhism have similar websites to the Christian ones. Numerous Muslim websites not only provide religious or historical information, but

¹ The following article is a redrafted and updated version of the article the *sacrum online* – prywatyzacja religii w Internecie, in: *Ku prywatyzacji religii?*, ed. A. A. Szafrński, Lublin 2013.

also expertise on how and when to pray. The majority of websites offer – after registration – a range of free software, such as a stamp showing hours of prayers proper for any place in the world. The Official Website of the Association of Muslims in Poland, www.mzr.pl, is an example of this. Therefore, the first category consists of info-religious websites that aim at providing information about religion, its institutions, dogma, rituals, holy books, philosophy. They are characterized by the fact of being hierarchical and the Internet is in this case (mainly) a tool of unilateral communication, where on one side stands the main sender, and on the other a crowd of passive recipients. An internaut usually cannot participate in this process. Christopher Helland, a well-known sociologist studying religion, defines these websites as the *religion online*. Their character is highly official (Helland 2000, 205-233). The other group of the *religion online* consists of websites of non-governmental organizations, e.g., associations that are not religious but promote Christian values. The website of the non-governmental organization named Academy of Social Sciences in Lublin (Poland; www.akademiaspoleczna.pl) is a good example, as its ideological foundation is the principles of the Catholic social teaching included in social documents of the Catholic Church.

The second category of websites is a so-called *online religion*. Cyber-religion allows large autonomy, possibility of interaction, sharing experiences and participation. These are less formal websites; their owners or administrators let grass roots form a community, and involved users can shape it (Estes 2009). They are often established due to the same motives as in the real world; they enable people to contact, talk, have video meetings, share – not necessarily religious – experience, or this is just an interesting way of spending time. What is more, websites let people take part in virtual worship, common prayer online or virtual receiving of sacraments. A good example of the *online religion* is www.jezus.pl that allows users to listen to religious music, watch videos or download desktop wallpapers. Besides, it provides with a possibility of interaction and discussion on faith with the other users. As the authors highlight, it is created for anyone who would like to believe in and listen to gospel. An internaut can also read the Bible in a virtual reading room. The other example is www.katolik.pl, raising various, inter alia religious, subjects. According to the administrators of this website, this is a way of facing anyone who is seeking God but cannot find the answers for numerous persistent questions, which becomes an obstacle preventing from being obedient to the faith. Transfer of religious borders to cyberspace entails many opportunities, such as prayer, meditation, pilgrimages. On www.IslamiCity.org a user has a chance to take a tour of a virtual mosque on a Mekka street, where one can admire slides concerning Islam, listen to the Quran recitation and then discuss it on

chat. On the *3D Kabah* website one can see three-dimensional reconstructions of sacred Muslim places.

The *Online religion* is formed from above or at the grass roots. In the first case, institutions and religious organizations, formed and managed by professionals, enable the faithful to contact, help, support each other and deepen their faith. Numerous websites are, however, created by amateurs who work pro bono. One of such initiatives is www.Mateusz.pl, where apart from searching through the Church documents, catalogue of Christian websites or a large number of photographs and films, users can discuss in a forum. Virtual cemeteries are the other example. Users can light an “uno.eal” candle (on forums internauts use a symbol “[*]”). After the crash of the plane flying to Smoleńsk in 2010 and taking many high-ranking Polish officials to ceremonies marking the 70th anniversary of the Katyn Massacre, an alley with victims’ graves was created on the special website www.nekropolia.pl. Videoblogs and blogs are becoming more and more popular way of communication between American Bishops and the faithful (Płukarska 2011). The website www.News.va is a good example that recently appeared online. It provides users with interactive multimedia transfer and guests can watch video showing the Pope’s greetings or listen to the Vatican’s radio. This interactivity and global reach are ensured by the connection with a global social network – *Twitter*.

To sum up, the network is rich in the continuum of religious websites, beginning from the formal and official sites, ending with the less formal and social ones. In fact, none of them is purely informative, as most include chats, forums or other tools allowing users to stay in touch with each other. Therefore, such websites link features of both types; the *online religion* and the *religion online* (Fig. 1.). Piotr Siuda indicates another interesting analysis, which concerns a division of the religion on the Internet into traditional (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism) and new, unknown or even modern (in view of time) religions. The last ones are described by Siuda as innovative, though one may argue whether the period of religion’s existence allows us to describe it in such words. As was mentioned above, every major religion and Church has its official website. What is more, the number of websites concerning lower levels of organizations also increases; for example, apart from the main Vatican’s website there are websites of dioceses and parishes as well. Helland highlights that this phenomenon is mainly caused by the religious tradition – the richer it is, the more its presence on the Internet is aimed at a spread of information, propagation of holy texts or evangelization. One can also distinguish a new phenomenon: religious movements, which have their origins in cyberspace, therefore they do not have any equivalent in the real life.

Figure 1. Division of the religion on the Internet by the level of internautes' participation.

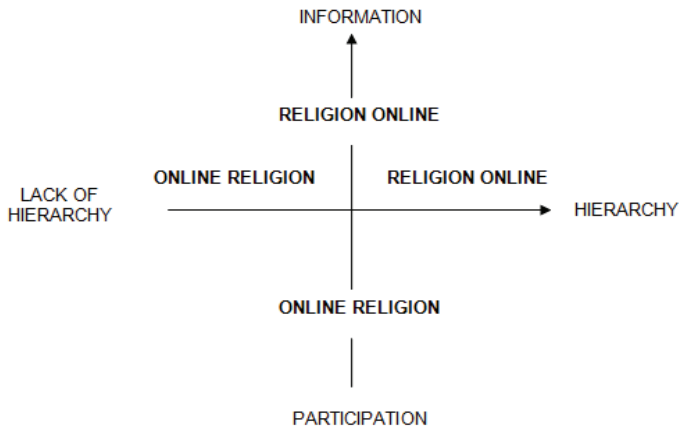
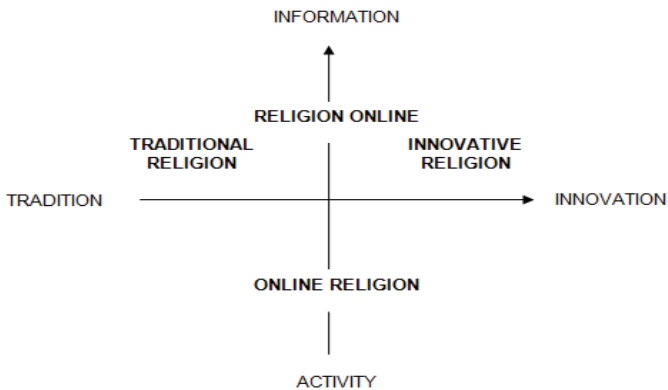


Figure 2. Division of religious websites associated to the coexistence and interference of four religious dimensions on the Internet.



Reference: (Siuda 2010, 37).

THE SACRUM ONLINE – EXAMPLES OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN CYBERSPACE

According to Clifford Geertz, religion is action, interaction and common rituals. While searching out websites, one can notice that many activities that normally should not exist in the virtual world not only come into existence, but also became very popular. In 2004, an idea of the project *Church of Fools* (www.Churchoffools.com) came up, and its

aim was to create a three-dimensional temple. The project was sponsored by the Methodists from the United Kingdom and the Bishop of London. It was directed to anyone interested, no matter what one's Christian fraction. Online masses proved to be extremely popular. The Church was quickly filled with virtual participants, represented by their avatars. The results of research revealed that most of them were practising in real life and the Internet helped them deepen their faith. Three-dimensional avatars were effecting religious gestures (e.g., they were kneeling) and in the meantime a discussion concerning religion was led in a textual layer (Siuda 2010, 82-83). Finding a website allowing users to practise religion on the Internet is effortless. Another example is www.VirtualChurch.com, which was set up for those who do not have time and willingness to attend the real Church. On *VirtualChurch.com* one can take part in Protestant worship, pray, read or listen to fragments of Holy Scripture.

On the home page, one can find that the website was established to give the internauts not only a possibility of religious experience, but also a comfortable access to it – every practice is adjusted to users, they decide what they want to do at any given time (prayer, reading Bible, conversation with other internauts). The website www.Masstimes.org is, in turn, a site established for the Catholics who travel a lot. One can find there information about Churches from all over the world, their mapped locations or the worship times. The majority of websites offer unusual graphics and sound effects that create an atmosphere similar to the one from the real life. Objects and gestures are well simulated and affect the recipient's mind. The founder of *Church of the Simple Faith* (www.Churchofthesimplefaith.org), father Bill (Bill Chastain), posts on his website some clues to how to perform rituals and therefore everyone can conduct an e-communion using ordinary bread or a cookie. After the communion one should pray, listen to and sing several songs. Subsequently, when initial rituals are finished, the internaut is allowed to take part in the worship.

Online prayer is performed either through videoconference or in a textual layer. For example, on the website of Jesuits from Ireland prayer has several stages. First, the internauts have to realize the presence of God and contemplate for a while on how his presence is manifested. Then, a fragment of the Holy Scripture appears on the screen, the internauts are supposed to read it and, finally, they can talk with Jesus. To make it easier, the website contains a description of some techniques helping to relax with use of breath or relaxation poses. Many websites have intention boxes as well. On the website *Mateusz.pl*, one can leave intention slip for Carmelite Sisters. Another type of box is called the *Sacred Space* and they are delivered to the other users instead of the clergy.

Pilgrimage is another interesting ritual taking place in cyberspace. The majority of pilgrimage destinations have their own – informative and promotional – websites. One can find there maps with directions or, more and more often, links to travel agencies organizing pilgrimages. However, the Internet allows one to do much more. *Beliefnet* is a commercial website allowing virtual (and charged) pilgrimage to Mecca, while www.lourdes-france.com lets one stroll around the Sanctuary of Lourdes. Each of them consists of three-dimensional models of buildings, photographs, films and a guide. The Virtual Pilgrimage Map to Jasna Góra (Poland) was an attractive initiative as well. On the website www.opoka.org.pl, one could find lines showing the location of the specific pilgrimage groups on the map of Poland, and this is all due to the system of the mobile telephony. The pilgrims can send MMS, greetings, films from their journeys and audio transmissions, videos with prayers, homilies, the Appeal of Jasna Góra etc.

Virtual confession is a separate category, not accepted by the Catholic Church, though widespread on the Internet. Therefore, on www.Absolution-Online.com one can confess or pray one's beads. While partaking in the virtual confession, believers can choose from the list of sins and move on, adding more sins or waiting for absolution.

The language and texts used on the website clearly originate from the Christian tradition. Confession online causes controversy, and so father Dariusz Kowalczyk argues in favour of the statement that the current formula of confession is more a matter of established discipline than the real nature of this sacrament (Kowalczyk 2002, 99-108). Kowalczyk supports the presence of Church on the Internet. He was the originator of retreats online in Poland and he considers dialogue, listening to the faithful's opinion, problems or spiritual needs as their biggest advantage.

IS THE *SACRUM* COMMUNITY CAPABLE OF REPLACING THE OFFLINE WORLD?

In 1995, Charles Henderson established the first Virtual Church in cyberspace – *The God Web*. At the beginning, it was a forum where people leaving traditional and real Protestant Churches were meeting. The faithful could listen to religious songs, sermon recordings or meetings with priests. Then, it developed religious rituals and virtual Church services in a chapel. The Church is ecumenical, it has chapels of the most significant religions and so-called *World Religion*. Everybody can then find something for themselves, the religion is a matter of private choice and individual needs. According to the optimists, the online *sacrum* is an extension of the real world with the proviso that the first one is a means for reaching many people in a fast and easy way,

facilitating modification and propagation of new forms of religious practice and allowing the formation of new circles of faith. In their opinion, virtual societies meet a need of social life, support, awaken a sense of identity with a group and form religious identity. Although the bonds they create are not related with a territory, one can admit they are legitimate human communities (Nowak 2011). The Internet is *an extension* of the offline reality, and “the network identity is in no case as separated from the real identity as pessimists would like, for any human activity occurring in cyberspace is subordinated to the targets of the real world. The way one acts in reality determines one’s online behaviour” (Siuda 2010, 10). Belonging to virtual societies involves intentionality and this is unquestionably their important feature. An individual chooses and decides where to belong and this requires engagement such as registration or logging in to the website.

Brenda Brasher is one of the “hyperoptimists” of the online religion and she forecasts that transfer of religion to the Internet is inevitable, although she sees in it more pros than cons, e.g., elimination of hatred or religious xenophobia (she believes that religion in the real life determines numerous conflicts). In her opinion, the Internet is the best medium for overcoming the phenomenon of secularization as this is a place where hitherto and new religions meet (Siuda 2010, 14).

For *digipessimists* it is not that obvious. According to them, “the digital reality ‘softens’ the personality of a modern man, therefore hitting society” (Nowak 2011). The Internet is for them an ingathering of independent individuals that are not capable of forming bonds with the others. Networks favour random, temporary and superficial contacts, whereby weakening traditional social bonds. In the scientific literature, but also in the journalistic discourse, there exists a term *supermarketization of the culture*. This phenomenon concerns religion as well; in the face of varied types of communities, religions compete with each other, they promote themselves in the same way as commercial enterprises, and the actions they undertake are based on the logic of the market. Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge, the authors of the theory of religious economy, use a term “religious market”. Religious values have to be attractive, religious practice interesting and engrossing, as well as the access to them easy and enjoyable. In postmodern societies, religion starts to function in accordance with the laws of supply and demand; furthermore, it becomes a part of the consumptive lifestyle. *Sacrum* turns out to be a part of pop culture or, to soften the tone, limits between the religion and popular culture slowly vanish, following the example of Church established on the basis of an Elvis Presley’s cult: *The First Presleyterian Church of Elvis the Devine*.

Religion online is a part of the wider phenomenon determined by sociologists as the spirituality beyond Church or privatization of the

religion. It is related with a search of the *sacrum* beyond traditional structures or even beyond religion. Janusz Mariański believes that more and more faithful people do not want their Church to decide on their religious life. They believe that they have the right to individual choice of their attitude towards the Church and the values or norms it established. Personal religiosity does not have to be consistent with the canonical requirements (Mariański 2005, 127). The tradition is more and more often judged selectively, according to individualized criteria, and therefore its role in formation of the individual's and communities' identity visibly wanes. From countless offers of competing Churches everyone chooses the ones that satisfy their personal needs (Nowak 2011). Privatization of religion consists in a union of opinions, varied religious practices and different sources often based on experimentation. The Internet as a highly individualistic medium ensures freedom of choice and use of the contents offered.²

What is significant, religion is a realm not only of the clergy, but it also begins to be available for every user of the Internet, therefore everybody can announce themselves prophets, priests, visionaries or heads of religious communities. Cyberspace is full of visionary and apocalyptic websites that advise what to do in order to survive the world's end or how to prepare oneself for that moment. Website of Laura Zink from Canada is an example. Laura, who declared herself Catholic, believed that she had mystical visions and revelations. She was informing the world about her visions and the messages sent to her from God (in years 1996-2003) through the website *Massages From on High* (www.mfoh.com). Some websites associated with a specific religion are occasionally created by people condemned by the Church. The most famous case is the virtual diocese Partenia, established by Bishop Gaillot who was excommunicated. Despite this fact, he managed to gather numerous online followers of his community.

The structure of organization and functioning of virtual communities is very interesting. Hierarchy, quite clearly defined in the real world, has minor meaning in cyberspace. Inequalities and social hierarchies arouse resistance (e.g., discordianism was based on the cult of Greek Eris – goddess of chaos, conflict, but also liberty and it opposes every authoritarian social structures. (One of the biggest websites promoting this religion is www.Discordian.com). Religious amateurs imitate professionals and experts invoking real sources of

² Religious philosopher, Louis Dupré, believes that man, while controlling more and more spheres of existence, started to consider himself the founder of values and does not need to subordinate to any transcendent source. Religion used to be a factor integrating people and referring all values to an overarching principle.

information. Multiplicity of religions is the reason why the faith in any of them becomes weak. Real authorities are undermined or even invalidated, e.g., the website *His Holiness Pope Pius XIII* (www.truecatholic.us).

The Internet is also an excellent propagandist tool, and in spite of optimistic visions of B. Brasher, religious websites are used for political, racist or discriminatory purposes. The network is a perfect place for communication, it ensures decentralized structure (it is difficult to find a source of information), and in the meantime, it facilitates control over and mobilization of well-wishers and followers. As a medium, it can be used for purposes that are not necessarily peaceful.

The third group consists of *digirealists* who treat the Internet as any other tool and they are aware both of its possibilities and limits. On one hand, it can constitute reinforcement and deepening of real religion, an additional source of contact with the *sacrum* rather than the replacement of the real life and religion. On the other hand, activity on the Internet is more often, according to Louis Dupré's description, a passive form of the experience called religious feeling. This is a way of "being with oneself in the world, directed onto the exterior reality which is however misty and indeterminate" (Dupré 1972, 34). Religion is reduced to admiration, irresistible attraction, overwhelming feeling of reality. A religious man was always aware of his active engagement in the *sacrum* experience. However, this awareness may be interpreted as if religion was nothing but a subjective experience. In such a frame, it remains entirely locked inside the ego (Dupré 1972, 37). Sergij Trojan, whilst analysing the influence of network on religious identity, notes that "a paradoxical feature of the Internet is that it can give an enormous freedom of choice, but it can also close users of religious information online in a narrowed circle, comprising only the faithful or even one's own thoughts" (Trojan 2011, 248).

Online rituals are restricted by three limits: physical, mental and technological, therefore they are absolutely different from those in real life. First, they do not entirely engage a participant (one does not need to be physically involved, e.g., kneeling, and psychically engaged at the same time) and they do not stimulate all senses. In real rituals, a community determines feelings and atmosphere that cannot be imitated in cyberspace, e.g., the smell of incense or the singing choir. Physical limits may also concern an individual and the capacity of fast writing on keyboard and reading at the same time, as well as the ability to use the network. Mental barriers concern difficulties while concentrating on the course and target of a ritual and its realization. Technological aspects embrace hardware and computer program's problems. Group rituals, based on direct contact, support social bonds, create a feeling of common values and form a religio-cultural identity.

INTERNET AND CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church has restrained opinion towards the Internet – on the one hand, it sees dangers such as alienation of individuals, use of the Internet in order to propagate violence, search for cheap entertainment and finally fixation of the consumer lifestyle, also in the context of the religious values; on the other hand, it treats the Internet as “a gift of God” (“media are wonderful technical inventions”), which can only bring good. The network enables direct and immediate access to libraries, museums, places of cult, documents or the teaching of the Church Fathers. The Internet is relevant to numerous activities of the Church:

evangelization, including both re-evangelization and new evangelization and the traditional missionary work *ad gentes*, catechesis and other kinds of education, news and information, apologetics, governance and administration, and some forms of pastoral counseling and spiritual direction (*The Church and Internet*).

Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* highlights that the world of media provides – for the Church – a chance for dialogue, presentation of its values, and ways to reach both the faithful and unfaithful. In modern Europe, where the percentage of baptized Christians is still decreasing, the Church faces an enormous challenge of seeking new methods of reaching the faithful and new “forms of participation, adherence and openness”.

A matter that certainly casts doubts concerning the *sacrum* online are sacraments. The attitude on the part of the Church is unequivocal. Pontifical Council for Social Communications assumes that

the virtual reality of cyberspace cannot substitute for real interpersonal community, the incarnational reality of the sacraments and the liturgy, or the immediate and direct proclamation of the gospel, but it can complement them, attract people to a fuller experience of the life of faith, and enrich the religious lives of users (*The Church and Internet*).

Joseph Ratzinger highlights that the sacraments are a form of contact with God himself, “they show that the faith is not clearly spiritual but is based on the community and forms the community”. The community and carnality of faith originating from God find their expression in the sacraments. “The religious experiences possible there

by the grace of God are insufficient apart from real-world interaction with other persons of faith” (*The Church and Internet*). The community is then more than a society or an association. Passive viewing of a media transmission has also nothing to do with the participation in a mass or other rituals. Any online activities should only concern specific situations (illness, journey) or they are supposed to encourage the unfaithful to participate in a real mass. Furthermore, not only does the Internet promote religious and moral discipline of users, but also provokes the erosion of social norms as it does not help to distinguish good from evil. The multitude of information and the simplicity with which it can be introduced online leaves an internaut lost between truth and lie. In this context, the Catholic Church has a difficult task as on one side the Internet facilitates communication with the faithful, on the other it jeopardizes the Church’s authority and teaching (e.g., blasphemous and heretical information).

The Internet is undoubtedly and permanently established in every area of human life. Not only does it provide various information on every subject, but also determines everyday habits and behaviours. Network facilitates life, it is a way of saving time and money, as shopping does not require going out and doctor’s visit does not have to involve long queues. Actions on the Internet often do not require any effort or engagement from a user: “meetings” with a friend are enabled by an account on a social network. For some it is an absurd (e.g., friendship online), for the others it is a “normal” component of life. The Internet, as well as the religion online, has its followers and opponents.

For some researchers the virtual life is an extension of the real life. The fact that religion came into being online is based on feedback, therefore it strengthens phenomena and processes existing in the real life. The Forum may become a perfect place to talk about Sunday’s gospel, God or to share religious experiences. But how about behaviours that transfer entirely to the Internet and so that participation in a mass does not have to be associated with going to Church? Numerous forums related to the subject of the *sacrum*, websites facilitating varied religious practice, websites satisfying spiritual needs are nothing special – many of them do not have any equivalent in reality. Many are based on the teaching of self-styled priests and prophets. Network promotes privatization and individualisation rules – religion becomes a part of a game based on the business statement: “faithful” is a customer for whom one fights through publicity and compensators, e.g., access to the *sacrum* at any time or flexibility and selectivity of religious practices.

Religion on the Internet is an interesting subject that still needs to be elaborated and examined. It may require new research methods and techniques that will allow us to describe and analyse this new phenomenon in a better way.

(Translated by Karolina Zielińska)

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CHAPTER XII

DIFFERENT FORMS OF SPIRITUALITY ON THE INTERNET

JÓZEF KLOCH and MONIKA MARTA PRZYBYSZ

On the Internet we can find a number of websites and portals as well as various types of Internet users' activities associated with diverse expressions of spirituality. Analysis of the content edited socially by Internet users, in particular, depicts this diversity at its best. The Internet offers good opportunities to witness (Przybysz 2013, 190-204) and to present different religious attitudes (in various forms) which are constantly evolving. In social networks, blogs, and on the websites. Groups of like-minded people, for whom faith is important, are formed. Many of them are very creative – they are able to bring together a circle of praying persons who meditate on the words of the Bible, discuss issues important to Christians and undertake many other activities on the Web.

This research has as its subject different forms of Internet spirituality with a particular focus on the possibilities offered by Web 2.0. By means of a qualitative research method, the authors analyze, via videos and blogs some (exemplary) Catholic websites in Polish related to Holy Scripture, texts of spiritual masters, prayer, retreats, pilgrimages, and creations of communities based on spirituality as well as evangelism.

In order to show how much both lay Catholics and the clergy are engaged in editing the aforementioned religious content, nearly three thousand people were examined. This empirical research has been carried out for the first time in Poland. It was done using an internet CAWI questionnaire. In the same way, enabling open answers, the reasons for passivity were examined. This is an attempt to examine the passivity of Internet users who do not utilize the Internet to convey religious content or activity, but a passive use of websites with religious materials.

In addition, there are a number of things on the Internet which threaten spirituality, a fact also noted in this article. The authors attempt to classify the types of Web spirituality and take on a scientific challenge to present the predictable fate of spirituality on the Internet.

THE ACTIVITY OF LAYPERSONS AND CLERGY ON THE INTERNET

What is the level of Web activity of laypersons and clergy in Poland? What is the reason why some Catholics who also happen to be internet users remain passive in this respect and what could activate them on the Web? Who are the people who make use of religious content on www sites, discussion forums and social websites? These and some other questions which will be considered by the authors in the following section of this article.

Lay Faithful and Clergy Taking Part in Editing Religious Content on the Web

The research was done between February 25 and April 10, 2013, using the CAWI questionnaire. 2824 internet users took part. Men comprised the majority of respondents – 56%. Half of the respondents were between 36 and 55 years old, while people younger than 36 comprised 31%; one in five persons (19%) was more than 55.

Half of the respondents had a Master's or Bachelor's degree. Nearly every fifth person participating in the research (17%) has done some postgraduate studies and one in ten persons (10%) had a doctor's or professor's title. Therefore, in total more than three quarters of the respondents are well educated people. 16% of the examined persons had completed secondary school leavers and 7% did not have a (full) secondary education.

A large majority of people were professionally active (66%), 7% were unemployed and 13% chose the "other employment status" option. University students and pupils comprised 13% of the total participating in the questionnaire.

The respondents are active internet users – 88% of them used the Internet daily and only 12% less frequently than daily. Most often they used laptops (66%), desktop computers (53%), less frequently – smartphones (24%) or tablets (10%).

Among the respondents there were slightly more laypersons (52%) than clergy and consecrated persons (48%). Slightly more users were active (52% published religious content on the internet) than passive, in regard to editing texts or recording video and taking photos of a religious nature (48%). From those who published something on the internet a larger group regarded themselves as attached to a particular religious order (55%), rather than those attached to a diocese.

The same percentage of laypeople and clergy (26% respectively) publish religious content on the Web, while among those who use the

Internet passively there are slightly more laypersons (26%) than clergy (22%).

Catholic internet users post on the internet various materials related to religion. The largest number of publications concern current affairs: gatherings and events (67% in total: 68% of clergy and 64% of laypersons who publish something), news related to Church life (63% in total: 65% of publishing clergy and 60% of laypersons), multimedia related to current information (51% in total: 52% of publishing clergy and 48% of laypersons) and future agendas and announcements of gatherings (43% in total: 42% of publishing clergy and 45% of laypersons). Second after the current affairs come issues related to spirituality: articles and external links connected with faith (41% in total: 39% of the clergy and 45% of the laypeople who publish something), meditation, Scripture fragments, sermons and retreat notes (31% in total: 32% of publishing clergy and 30% of laypersons). Other topics, not related to spirituality comprise 16% of the content created on the Web (15% of clergy and 17% of the laypersons who publish something) and posts concerning private life – 3% (in total: 4% of clergy and 9% of laypersons who publish something).

Religious content published on the internet by Polish Catholics is most often placed on www sites (76% in total: 85% of clergy and 59% of laypersons who publish something), then in personal profiles on social networks (25% in total: 21% of clergy and 32% of laypersons) and Facebook fanpages (21% in total: 16% of clergy and 30% of laypersons). Mailings and multimedia platform channels are used, respectively, by 16% (11% of clergy and 24% of laypersons) and 11% (12% of clergy and 9% of laypersons) of respondents. They use least often micro-blogs (7% in total: 7% of clergy and 8% of laypersons) and blogs or internet forums (5% in total and in each group) as well as Wikipedia (3% in total: 3% of clergy and 2% of laypersons).

The oldest communication channels with religious content on the internet are the www sites – 56% of the websites have existed for more than five years (If www existing for between two and five years (15%) are included, this makes a total of 81%). Conversely, only one in three mailing lists or internet forums have existed more than five years (Those launched between two and five years ago make up, respectively 25% and 32%). Although blogs have existed since the times of Tim Berners-Lee (At the beginning of 1990s, he had a blog on the first www site he created. He described there his achievements in internet tools (programmed by himself), containing religious matters and edited by participants of the research. They are by the greatest percentage (36%) between two and five years old. Video channels maintained for a year or two comprise 33% of the whole (A similar percentage of video channels (32%) are between one and two years old), while the rest are more short-

lived. Microblogs only started to gain popularity in Poland and most of them were created less than six months earlier (47%) (18% of microblogs with religious content are between six months and one year old). In turn, most materials created with the wiki tools are between two and five years old (47%).

The frequency of adding or updating religious content on the Web was divided into five categories (The sixth category was “no answer”). Video channels files are updated less frequently than once or twice a month (49%). Internet forums content is updated daily (44%). Fanpage content is added several times a week (36%), as is the micro-blog content (36%). www content is added with the same frequency (34%) as mailings are sent (31%). In the case of blogs content is added several times a week in 23% of them.

The category of “Meditations, Scripture fragments, sermons, retreat notes” is strictly connected with spirituality on the Net. Such content is placed on www sites by 8% of the respondents, on fanpages only by 3% of them, while on blogs only by about 1%. Taking into account only those who publish materials of this character on the Net this will mean respectively 15%, 5% and less than 1%.

The Reasons for Internet Users' Passivity in Publishing Religious Content

One in five respondents chose the option “I do not publish anything on the Net”, 17% of respondents did not feel the need for doing this and 16% pointed to their lack of adequate computer skills and necessary software for such activity. 13% of respondents indicated lack of time as the reason, 6% indicated lack of materials to publish, 3% pointed to not being entitled to start such activity and 3% of the questioned – to the fact that such work was done by some other person from their circle.

Few mentioned lack of interest in topics related to the Church (2%) and lack of space where they could post such publications (2%). Some explained that faith is a private matter of the respondents (2%), excused themselves by their lack of knowledge about the Church (2%) or by the fact that it is not within the range of their professional duties (2%). Some preferred other ways of contacting the recipients (1%) than communication mediated by the internet.

Nearly one quarter of the respondents, when asked what could motivate them to publish materials in the internet space, could not give a clear answer, while nearly one fifth answered that in their opinion nothing could encourage them to publish religious materials on the Net. Those who acknowledged the possibility of such publications answered that the motivation could be an increase in their computer skills and

internet tools knowledge (10%), more free time (10%), having valuable information which could be the basis of publications (7%), easier access to www pages (7%). The others mentioned as incentives: orders from superiors (5%), demand for such publications from a community (4%). Few (between 1% and 3%) listed out: the change in the range of professional duties, encouragement from some third party and being mobilized to activity.¹ Only 1% of the respondents pointed to a mobilizing role of financial remuneration. Summing up:

- laypersons (45%) more often than clergy (39%) post materials about faith on the Net and look for interesting external links related to this sphere of life. In turn, clergy (32%) publish Bible quotes, retreat materials, sermons and other spiritual meditations more often than laypersons;

- both clergy and laypersons use all examined communication channels and also in nearly identical order of popularity. The highest ranking is the www site, then personal profiles on a social website, fanpage and video channels and mailing lists. The least frequently used are the micro-blogs and blogs as well as internet forums and wiki. Clerics are more attached to w sites compared to laypersons (85%; 59%), while laymen more often use personal profiles on social websites to publish religious content compared to clergy (32%; 21%); it is also the case with fanpages (30%; 16%). Both groups use the other internet tools to the same or nearly the same extent – multimedia platforms, blogging, internet forums and wiki.

Internet Threats to Spirituality

Analyzing the issue of spirituality on the Net one should observe that the internet “gives the contemporary man the opportunity for prayer, meditation and sharing God’s Word” (Benedict XVI 2013, 11-12). It should be remembered, however, that the Net presents many threats to spirituality (Przybysz 2013, 104-120).

The first one is the internet itself, and more precisely – being addicted to it (Adrich 2009, 138-142; Draguła 2003, 193-198; Kułak-Krajewska 2010, 31-39; Tęcza-Ćwierz 2003, 16-17; Wyrostkiewicz 2007, 73-109; Wojtkun 2004, 29-34). Social websites arouse in many users the need of constant contact with their friends, the need of being informed about their activities, thoughts and location (Babik, Cholewiak

¹ Among those examined not many, just 122 persons (for N=1226), that is only 1% pointed to the research done by the author of this publication as an encouragement to start publishing on the internet materials connected with the mission of the Church.

2012, 27-36). It is especially the case with young people who can – in extreme cases – follow social websites for several, even more than ten hours a day, largely wasting their time for mere gossip, following the activity of the others and excessively indulging in entertainments.

Internet users are confronted with a flood of information, also religion-oriented, they are drawn into a never ceasing dialogue about trivial events, they feel the need of acceptance and look for constant entertainment. This leads to their confusion. The number of news items overwhelming contemporary recipients and the problems of information verification, credibility and hierarchization were often the subject of Vatican documents concerning mass media.

In order for the Net to be beneficial to human spirituality, there should be a fundamental internet principle of respect for a human person and dialogue. On the contrary, hatred, hate speech, aggressive behavior and destroying the other person's output should be excluded.

Negative phenomena characteristic for internet users also include excessive immersion in virtual reality and isolating oneself from the immediate family. They should be addressed especially by the believers' community – in particular by youth (Benedict XVI 2011, 73-74). More and more often parents seek contact with their children through social networks, adding their children as their acquaintances in order to learn about the life, activities and interests of their own children.

In regard to cyberspace there is a need of adequate rule making, keeping pace with the fast transformations in social communication. It is necessary to develop legal norms not only in Poland, but also on the international level, concerning privacy, copyright, universal access to databases, protection of women's and children's rights, spreading computer viruses etc. (Pontifical Council for Social Communications).

Internet users have different approaches in their activities related to internet publication of religious content. Some prefer a passive approach – they read texts and watch image and video materials. The others are active participants in dialogue – they post religious content on the internet, created either by themselves or by other authors, they take part in social networks discussions, they initiate new, non-standard activities or events on the Net. In the following section concrete activities undertaken on the Net by Polish Catholics will be presented.

SPIRITUAL SPACE ON THE NET

Verbal and pictorial communication of an Internet user concerns various spheres – of professional and private life, novelties connected with the Web users' passions or interests, entertainment, sex, politics as well as spirituality and religion. However, only part of the Internet users look for places associated with Christianity, faith in Jesus Christ, or take

interest in the authentic teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. This is because many Polish Internet users display aggression when topics related to the Roman Catholic Church, faith, religion and Christianity are discussed.

Many media users do not perceive the Internet as a way towards holiness, but rather as something negative and even opposite. However, the Web was, from the very beginning (in the 1.0 version), the repository of texts about spirituality, religious knowledge and information and the space for witness. New technologies made it possible to have a “wide and direct access to the tradition of teachings of the Church, to the words of the Scripture and the teachings of the great spiritual masters” (John Paul II 2011, 21). Scripture quotes, brief reflections and meditations, quotes by saints, etc. – were sent to subscribers via e-mail or text messages. Prayer intentions could be sent to the convents and monasteries by e-mail. Female contemplative congregations were in the lead. The texts of the first Internet retreats were placed on the *mateusz.pl* website by Fr. Dariusz Kowalczyk, a Jesuit, then residing in Rome that was Lent, 1997, the early days. However, technology offers completely different possibilities today. They are used in the field of spirituality as well, by both the clergy and lay Catholics (Kloch 2012, 53-97).

The contemporary Web offers Scripture passages and articles which build piety and religious knowledge, we can find a prayer group there, experience a virtual retreat, go on an on-line pilgrimage with a group of pilgrims, visit a Church in a virtual tour as well as support financially some chosen ecclesial works. Internet can be a space for developing holiness. The communication forms Internet users utilize towards this aim include: audio and video podcasting, graphics, photos, images and short texts. As far as the Internet audio version goes, we can find both Bible text and series of lectures on it, retreats, meditations and sermons – some of them also in video version. Apart from Bible quotes, on websites one can find audio prayers, but they are rather scarce compared to the number of audio files of the Scripture. Conversely, widespread are memes with quotes from the Bible, published in graphics and images repositories (Pinterest, Instagram) and also on Facebook, Twitter, Kwejk, Demotywatory, or in other types of social networks such as Facebóg (*Deon.pl*) or in blogs.

E-retreats

In the field of spirituality, virtual retreats have become a popular form on the Web. Initially, they were published as texts, and then audiovisual materials were included as well. Virtual retreats are run by some clergymen known from the media. They are published in various

forms – as complete series of meditations or as several regular episodes. They are particularly popular during Lent, but sometimes retreats can be offered during Advent, holidays and even the long May weekend. They are prepared in a professional way for the Web, or they are files with conferences of well-known retreat preachers usually recorded in Churches.

Web retreats can be found most often in audio form, because preparing the video version is much more complicated. Audio files are recorded live, during individual retreat teachings in the Church and published on the Web, but there are also those recorded in a radio studio. Virtual retreats can be exemplified by the monthly teachings in the Ignatian tradition² by Fr. Grzegorz Ginter, SJ (They were also broadcast by several radio stations). During weekdays, he published seven-minute introductions to personal prayerful meditation, which, as indicated by him, should have lasted half an hour every day. In the second week of spiritual exercises, a 15-minute examination of conscience was introduced. Five Sunday conferences stored in mp3 files completed the “Where Are You Going? Not for the Believers Only” retreat.³ The retreat was promoted on Facebook as an event lasting from February 24th till March 24th, and it was possible to make an appointment with a spiritual guide via the website.

In addition to the ongoing online retreat cycle in a given liturgical season, there are also series of retreat meditations available on many Christian websites and they can be downloaded as audio files. They are placed in the repositories of convents and monasteries, chaplaincies, or individual parishes and continue to help develop the spirituality of the Internet users.⁴ The podcasts contain Lenten retreats of the Dominicans: Fr. Jacek Salij⁵ and Fr. Paweł Kozacki – “Help Me in My Skepticism.

² Cf. Internetowy Dom Rekolekcyjny, *Wielki Post 2013*, <http://e-dr.jezuici.pl/category/rekolekcje/wielki-post-2013/> [access: 15.01.2014].

³ WAM Publishing House released the complete retreat teachings as an audiobook (*Dokąd idziesz? Rekolekcje nie tylko dla wierzących!*, audiobook, Kraków 2013). Releasing the retreat teachings in this form resulted in removing the audio files with the sound database from the website of the Internet Retreat House.

⁴ One of the largest podcast collections on religious webpages of the Polish Internet is the website with the audio files of Fr. Piotr Pawlukiewicz’s sermons. The recordings are made in St. Anne’s Church in Warsaw during Sunday masses which he usually says at 3 pm. The tradition of sermons began in 2005. The website contains a tag cloud to make a search for a given sermon easier and an iTunes RSS feed. In mid-January 2014, the website contained 283 sermons, including 264 Sunday ones – cf. <http://www.kazaniaksiedzapiotra.pl/> [access: 25.01.2014].

⁵ From 2012, from the St. James parish in Warsaw

Retreat in Installments”⁶ and “You Are the Light of the World”.⁷ The Dominican parish in Warsaw provides 20 full recordings of retreat series from 2009 till 2013.⁸ “A Night Thief,” the retreat teachings of Fr. Adam Szustak OP, was watched over half a million times per month (an individual episode was viewed 20 – 30 thousand times). The video files are still available on the Internet even after releasing the book with two CDs with the recorded sermons.⁹ The retreat delivered in Katowice for students from the academic chaplaincy¹⁰ was saved on the Web as well.

“The Convict in Love” series was perhaps the longest video retreat because it lasted 14 days. It was again Fr. Adam Szustak who preached it during Lent 2013. The Dominican’s sermons, usually ten or fifteen minutes long, were preceded and concluded with singing a few verses from the Scripture with double bass accompaniment and filmed in an ordinary room. These recordings were carefully prepared and then edited in episodes. Individual episodes were watched by 4-12 thousand Internet users.¹¹

A virtual retreat was preached by Fr. Leon Knabit, a Benedictine, during Lent 2013. The six truths of the faith were the retreat theme. These materials had their own website: www.franciszanska3.pl.¹² The Internet was the topic of other retreat meetings with Fr. Leon and they

⁶ They are called so because they are preached on Sundays only (4); cf. <http://www.krakow.dominikanie.pl/audio.php?c=2012#> [access: 15.01.2014].

⁷ The teachings from 2013 are available on the podcast of the Dominicans’ webpage – cf. <http://www.ddr.krakow.dominikanie.pl/kazania/konferencje/wyjestescie/> [access: 23.01.2014].

⁸ The recordings can be found on <http://www.sluzew.dominikanie.pl/nagrania/index.php?co=rekolekcje> [access: 13.01.2014].

⁹ *Złodziej. Nocny złodziej. Internetowe Rekolekcje dla czekających na świt*; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmNzi-oTZ1Y> [access: 16.01.2014].

¹⁰ Available on www.dagraniczna.eu website with six other retreat series [access: 16.01.2014].

¹¹ Since 27 February 2013, Fr. Artur Stopka has been systematically doing a thematic overview of the Internet, searching for such topics as faith, religion, Christianity, other religions, Catholicism, other denominations, atheism, agnosticism, the Church, etc. in his stukam.pl blog. The first episode is an overview of the Catholic laity’s and the clergy’s initiatives connected with Lent on the global Web. The overview of nearly 10 different endeavours is simultaneously their promotions on the www.stukam.pl website. It is evidenced by an Internet user’s entry under the post and her gratitude for the information. A. Stopka, *Internet wielkopostny*, <http://stukam.pl/index.php/internet-wielkopostny/> and a post on the same webpage signed “forget-me-not” [access: 16.01.2014].

¹² L. Knabit, *Sześć prawd wiary. Rozważania na Wielki Post*, <http://www.franciszanska3.pl/6-prawd-wiary---odcinek-1,a,19036> [access: 16.01.2014].

were entitled “How to Sail in the Depths of the Web?” The monk and the Web users were wondering whether the Internet was a secularized area and had been usurped by non-believers. A chat was launched on the website and during his retreat preaching, Fr. Leon was waiting for the Internet users’ questions in the “Benedictine” room. This formula of virtual retreat proved that the Web was changing the retreat meetings from preaching into a dialogue, going towards a two-way communication: between the sender (retreat preacher) and recipients (discussion participants). Internet users greatly appreciate this formula. The retreat preacher led meditations on Catholic ethics on the Internet and then discussed the topic of “the Church in the third millennium” with the Internet users via chat. They discussed how this institution should function and the Church’s attitude to modern challenges of human life and moral issues.¹³ The retreat preacher and lots of his supporters reached the Internet users via Facebook requesting them to place links on their FB profiles or to invite their friends for the event.

In 2012 a Jesuit, Fr. Waław Oszejca SJ prepared an eight-day video retreat entitled “Life is Not a Theater – a Retreat of Living More”. 2.5 to 7.6 thousand Internet users viewed the Lent retreat and listened to each of the Jesuit’s meditations. Individual parts were recorded and edited in a professional recording studio – the European Center of Communication and Culture in Falenica.

Before a retreat begins, a promotional campaign is often conducted on the Web – religious portals and websites place both banners and promotional texts which encourage participation in the virtual retreat. There are often trailers – short video clips which present the initiative. For the information about spiritual exercises to reach the widest range of Internet users, social networks are used to circulate these materials with viral marketing. Facebook is in the lead. Religious websites and the printed press are also used to promote these endeavors (Radziszewska 2012, 90-91; Blikowska 2011, 7). Audio and video materials are pretty often of a high quality.¹⁴ Video materials have frequently an ordered structure, for instance, starting with the credits, next there is a short piece of music (e.g., singing with double bass accompaniment), then meditation and everything is concluded with a short prayer or a song. Some virtual retreats are just recordings of the

¹³ The chat’s archives on <http://czat.onet.pl/Benedyktyni,chat.html> [access: 16.01.2014].

¹⁴ The oldest materials only, pre-2010, are in some cases of poor quality. It is due to the fact that the people recording them had just simple data storage devices. In order to improve them, a fundraising among the Internet users to purchase professional equipment was organized – cf. <http://www.kazaniakstiedzapiotra.pl/zrzutka-na-nagrywaczke-rozliczenie/> [access: 1.01.2014].

teachings without any additional elements. Many retreats presented on podcasts are a coherent whole, while some of them are continued within a given Internet platform.¹⁵ Retreat meditations are listened to or viewed several thousand times. In the comments and letters from Internet users, we can read that online retreats do not rule out the participation in retreats in the real world. Paradoxically, the former are often an incentive to take part in the latter, an invitation, encouragement, and sometimes as well a motivation to go to sacramental confession in the Church.

Microblogging Retreats

The first Lenten retreat in the history of the Polish Twitter, “Seven Gates of Jerusalem,” became a valuable and also a very modern initiative. It was preached in 2013 by a group of priests – the editors of the @duchowni profile. The mini-meditations were written for a week by 20 priests who lived in Poland and abroad. The retreat focused on the places where man meets God¹⁶. The priests “tweeted” about confession, suffering, prayer, community, sex, silence, the Eucharist,¹⁷ placing 140-character tweets with the #TTretreat hashtag on their profiles. A priest of the Polish Community from Ireland established even a special webpage where he collected all the tweets from the retreat.¹⁸ “The Web enables priests from around the world to take joint initiatives; this trend towards collective pastoral activities starts to be visible in other fields, too”.¹⁹

The Polish clerics modeled upon Spanish priests who were evangelizing with the @CurasOnline channel on Twitter. The initiative of the Polish clerics was continued by a larger, 50-person group of priests, during the “#Marian services” when one invocation of the litany was meditated every day during the Marian services in Polish Churches. There was another Twitter retreat during Advent called “Set an Alarm Clock”. It was marked with the #alarm clock hashtag so as “not to sleep

¹⁵ Referring to the video, a relatively young Stacja7 station has a handsome collection – cf. www.stacja7.pl [access: 12/01/2014].

¹⁶ *Rozpoczęły się pierwsze rekolekcje na Twitterze*, http://www.magazynfamilia.pl/artykuly/Rozpoczely_sie_pierwsze_rekolekcje_na_Twitterze,7181,76.html [access: 12.01.2014].

¹⁷ L. Przelazły, *Prawdopodobnie pierwsze twitterowe rekolekcje na świecie!*, fronda.pl [access: 18.01.2014].

¹⁸ Fr. Bartłomiej Parys SVD was also the only person who placed the entries – cf. <http://barteksvd.net/> [access: 12.07.2013].

¹⁹ A. Stopka, *Twitter i nie tylko*, <http://stukam.pl/index.php/twitter-i-nie-tylko/> [access: 16.01.2014].

through Advent and Christmas”, therefore the tweets were written by the priests between 6 and 9 a.m. for the beginning of the day.²⁰

These modern, adapted to the speed of contemporary man, 140-character “teachings” preached by a group of priests are a way to adapt to the “spirituality in race” pursued by many Internet users. Lent and Advent retreats and May meditations on Twitter initiated by the editors of the @clergy profile, are the first attempt to change the retreat formula into a dialogue. People connected with the profile are priests and students of social communication. Matching theory and practice can produce interesting results for the ecclesial community in both the pastoral dimension in the Web 2.0 cyberspace and the scientific one.²¹

Creating Communities

The essence of communication in social media is not only a dialogue and partner dealing with an interlocutor, but also the possibility to share messages, to create contents of these media, and to co-create. On Facebook priests and nuns have their own private profiles as well as committed lay Catholics who create the accounts for communities, religious orders, ecclesiastical institutions, or specific actions and evangelistic events. Fr. Piotr Wiśniowski²² is one of the most active priests in this social network. He is connected with the “Ask a Catholic priest” website. By means of this site, the Internet users from around the world can pose questions to priests (it has nearly 29.000 users).²³

Fr. Piotr has become a sui generis online priest. He spends his evenings discussing various topics via Skype.pl and thus provides spiritual assistance to the Web users. Fr. Piotr was drawn to this kind of involvement in e-ministry after a conversation with a teenage girl who wanted to commit suicide. Fr. Wiśniowski reacted to her words at once, called the police and they managed to save the teenager (she turned the gas taps on). He realized how important the pastoral ministry on the Internet is, because you can save not only a human soul, but also life. “This incident motivated me to enter the online world, because young

²⁰ *Twitter: nastaw sobie #budzik*, <http://kosciol.wiara.pl/doc/1817162>.
Twitter-Nastaw-sobie-budzik [access: 12.01.2014].

²¹ The editors of the @clergy profile summed up the publication of May meditations entitled “We’re tweeting a Marian service” during the internal conference via Skype. They all deal with the media and one of them is studying the socio-institutional communication at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome.

²² Fr. P. Wiśniowski’s profile, <https://www.facebook.com/fatherpiotr?fref=ts> [dostęp: 29.01.2014], where he has more than 5.000 friends and over 1.400 followers.

²³ Data from 28.01.2014, <https://www.facebook.com/AskAPriest/info>.

people are really strongly rooted on the Web, and they often leave their problems there. Therefore, a missionary is needed there as well” – Fr. Wiśniowski is convincing.²⁴ His conversations on the Internet bring concrete spiritual help and advice.

Many priests are present in social media, but only some of them clearly and legibly disclose their status. Priests use their private profiles on Facebook to communicate with their friends, parishioners, young people from groups they take care of, students or pupils they teach. On the *wall*²⁵ they put information about important events, meetings of communities and prayer groups, Catholic events, and they invite their friends for the events (Fr. M. Misiak, Fr. P. Jarosiewicz). Some priests use Facebook to comment on current events of the Church life, but also of the political sphere (Fr. K. Sowa, Fr. D. Kowalczyk SJ, Fr. A. Draguła). On the noticeboard some priests publish links to evangelistic materials or notes from their blogs (Fr. A. Stopka). They gather around a virtual community of people who are interested in the viewpoints and information of a given priest. It is, however, a casual kind of acquaintance.

FaceBóg is an interesting project of a typical virtual community connected with the Catholic website called Deon.pl. The “do something good on Facebook” project was created at the beginning of Lent 2012 and the intention of the author (Piotr Żyłka) was to make it “feed the Web with short and valuable thoughts”.²⁶ It was to “awake all the people who stay on the FB to get a life” and fulfill the motto “FaceBóg – because God is everywhere”. The project is connected with the Jesuit Order and uses memes and tweets to evangelize on the Web.²⁷ Short texts linked with images are a good way to bring the Good News to those who do not perceive the Gospel as an important part of their lives.

Apart from the FaceBóg network, other online communities also make use of infographics to evangelize on Web 2.0. Such is the case of “Golgotha of the Young” and the “Prayer in the way” network with original infographics on FB. The ewangelizatorzy.pl website has over 3.000 followers and the infographics are created by Internet users connected with the *przeznaczeni.pl* webpage, among others.

²⁴ H. Dębska, *Kościół na Facebooku*, “Idziemy” 07.08.2011, <http://adonai.pl/wiara/?id=62> [access: 29.01.2014].

²⁵ The information webpage that appears after logging in Facebook. All the content added and “liked” to the fanpage by our friends is shown on it.

²⁶ P. Żyłka, *O projekcie faceBóg*, <http://facebog.deon.pl/o-nas/> [access: 29.01.2014].

²⁷ Ł. Ostruszka, *Deomotywatory*, <http://www.polityka.pl/spoleczenstwo/artykuly/1544313,1,facebog---o-ewangelizowaniu-za-pomoca-memow-i-tweetow.read> [access: 29.01.2014].

Many virtual communities are created temporarily and they concentrate on a particular event. Sometimes they are real events, and Facebook is an information distribution channel about this topic. At times they are only online events, an invitation to a retreat, service, night vigil or confession night.

Catholic communities are also formed around the blogs of priests, nuns and lay Catholics (Kloch 2011, 63-76). Blogs are an important tool for informal communication, they subjectively present – by means of their creators’ opinions – certain events, problems and ideas. They are a kind of testimony of faith of a given person, they can be (and often are) a space of discussion and learning about the faith experienced by someone.

Social media also consist of multimedia platforms where, by means of YouTube videos (the second largest file search engine in the world) or of other platforms (e.g., Vimeo), events important for the Church, faith, communion or community of believers can be covered. These materials can evangelize the communities of Catholics, strengthen them in their faith, but also catechize. Therefore, on YouTube we can find such things as subsequent episodes of the Franciscans’ video blog – “Without a slogan” – who respond to Internet users’ questions in a straightforward way, Scripture in images and a “3-minute Catechism”, in episodes that are attractive but simple communication.

E-pilgrimage

Internet spirituality is also a pilgrimage spirituality. Web 2.0 tools and mechanisms serve the pilgrims – both those making a pilgrimage to shrines and those who, for various reasons, have to stay at home and accompany the pilgrims virtually. First of all, websites of foot pilgrimages to Jasna Góra are created socially and on a large scale. Then, there are also other projects created on a smaller scale. Pilgrims make use of modern technology and observing the rules of pilgrimage, they publish their testimonies, photos, videos, recordings of retreat meditations, sermons and share their own thoughts on the Web.

Such a virtual formula of co-pilgrimage was initiated by the “Opoka” portal. Since 2007 it has provided virtual pilgrimage maps and photo galleries sent in an orderly way via MMS, providing a complete communication system for pilgrims and those who remain at home.²⁸

²⁸ The project was supported by the Plus telecommunications from the technological side. It was used for drawing a map, the so-called triangulation. “Thanks to a signal received by three broadcasting stations, it was possible to determine quite precisely where the pilgrimage was at a given moment. The colorful lines on the Virtual Pilgrimage Map indicated where the individual

Photos were taken by pilgrims with their mobile phones on the pilgrimage route and sent to the e-pielgrzymki.pl website managed by “Opoka”, where they formed galleries capturing the atmosphere of pilgrimages, together with short accounts sent via text messages and audio recordings. Reverse communication enabled those who stayed at home to pass information. The “Opoka” microblogs on the Virtual Map of Pilgrimages guaranteed an efficient flow of information. One phone number, continuously tracked in every pilgrimage, made it possible to draw a route that a particular group of pilgrims had already travelled and locate it with the accuracy up to several meters.²⁹

Individual dioceses launch pilgrimage sections every July and August on their own websites, on the Church institutions’ websites and on social networks.³⁰ Laptops, tablets, computers, digital cameras, and, above all, smartphones with wireless internet, make it possible to place not only short videos, audio and text files and photographs of lower resolution, but also to post multimedia materials of high quality. It is common to pass current information from the pilgrimage route. Prayer intentions and greetings are added to appropriate network sections. Pilgrimage websites edited online and socially are the basic way of communication during the pilgrimage. An example of such a well-developed system of communication is the website of Przemysł Foot Pilgrimage to Jasna Góra.³¹ The diocesan radio station called “Fara” is engaged in creating this system, too. The website, in addition to the aforementioned materials, also includes a list of over 700 spiritual pilgrims who are not able to go to Czestochowa, but they accompany the pilgrims spiritually making use of the materials placed on the pilgrimage website.

Scripture and Bible Study

The Web offers a digital version of the Millennium Bible on <http://biblia.deon.pl> website and it is the easiest way to find the quotes. The Old and New Testament published in 2003 by Pallottinum Publishing House (Scripture version applicable for Poland) is positioned

groups were”. – cf. *Wirtualna Mapa Pielgrzymek 2011*, <http://pielgrzymki.opoka.org.pl/0.1,index.html> [access: 13.01.2014].

²⁹ K. Augustyn, *Wirtualna Mapa Pielgrzymek*, http://www.przewodnik-katolicki.pl/nr/spoleczenstwo_i_kultura/wirtualna_mapa_pielgrzymek.html [access: 13.01.2014].

³⁰ K. Augustyn, *Wirtualna Mapa Pielgrzymek*, http://www.przewodnik-katolicki.pl/nr/spoleczenstwo_i_kultura/wirtualna_mapa_pielgrzymek.html [access: 13.01.2014].

³¹ *Przemyska Piesza Pielgrzymka*, <http://www.pielgrzymka.przemyska.pl/2013/> [access: 16.01.2014].

high in the Google search engine. It may be indicative of its frequent use by Internet users.

The biblijni.pl website offers an audio version of the Bible.³² The statistics of this website show that since its launch in 2011, the Scripture has been listened to more than one million times in total.³³ The website promotes the Bible in the audio form. The text is based entirely on the Millennium Bible. As the creators state, “Thanks to the website, you can spend your leisure time listening to various parts of the Scripture at any time, anywhere”.³⁴ You can listen to liturgical readings of a given day as well. The website has Facebook, Twitter and Google+ plugins.

Studying Scripture also involves everyday readings which are offered by thousands of Catholic websites – as readings for each day on <http://mateusz.pl>, in the reading tab on www.paulus.org.pl or mass readings on liturgia.pl. They are also published on the websites of parishes, religious movements and associations and on other Catholic websites.

Another extremely valuable initiative is a virtual Bible study prepared by researchers of the Faculty of Theology in Tarnów and published as audio lectures, professionally developed – in cooperation with a radio or a recording studio. We can listen to the lectures both in the diocesan RDN Małopolska radio station and via the website.³⁵ The Tarnów initiative, making it possible to listen to the Bible on the Web, has been built around a formula of “fides ex auditu” (faith comes through hearing) and is promoted by diocesan radio stations, local editions of national Catholic weeklies as well as various types of websites – diocesan, monastic/conventional and of various ecclesial communities.³⁶ The study has attracted Internet users who want to deepen their faith and promote a good knowledge of the Scripture.

³² Available on the following websites, among others: The Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński Institute: <http://www.nonpossumus.pl/ps/>; Biblia 2000: <http://www.biblia.info.pl/>; or audio version: <http://biblijni.pl/>; <http://www.tyniec.benedyktyni.pl/ps-po/pismo-swiete/>; <http://www.biblia-mp3.pl/> etc. [access: 06.01.2014].

³³ Cf. biblijni.pl [access: 16.07.2013].

³⁴ V. www.biblijni.pl/o-nas [access: 16.07.2013].

³⁵ On the www.studiumbiblijne.diecezja.tarnow.pl website it is possible to download text files with the lectures in addition to audio files. They were developed into a biblical series entitled “*Poznając Biblię*” – cf. Łabuda, P (2012): “*Wszelkie Pismo od Boga natchnione jest i pożyteczne...*” (2 Tm 3,16). *Proforystyka biblijna jako szczególne zadanie współczesnego duszpasterstwa*, “Tarnowskie Studia Teologiczne” no. 31, p. 115–127.

³⁶ Information about Tarnów radio and online Bible study, as well as the full list of links to the files of three-term lectures can be found on the Benedictines’ website, among others: <http://www.tyniec.benedyktyni.pl/ps->

A podcast is another characteristic form of spirituality connected with the Bible or prayers which is used on the Web. In some cases audio files can even be downloaded from the Web and saved on a portable device (iPad, smartphone, etc.) and then one can listen to the recordings when travelling by car, bike, subway or during a walk, etc. (Levinson 2010, 243-244).

Prayer on the Web

Many Internet users want to find a community of people who share similar interests, values, passions and hobbies. Some Internet users who believe in God search for a prayer community, too. The Polish version of the Irish Jesuit “Pray as You Go” website is called “Prayer on the way”.³⁷ A few-minute recorded meditations include an introduction, a fragment of the Gospel, questions related to it and a reflection read by a professional artist. Breaks between individual parts of an episode are a time for reflection and pondering over a given fragment. They are filled with calm instrumental music or religious songs. Audio files with meditations can be downloaded individually or as a weekly package in the podcast form. The complete meditation is professionally prepared and the website has got Facebook, RSS feed and iTunes Preview plugins.

Many Internet users look also for people who will pray for them in different life situations. Such a formula has been offered free of charge by a Carmelite Convent from Szczecin on the mateusz.pl website for many years.³⁸ The Benedictine nuns from Jarosław pray to express their gratitude for financial support of their seriously ruined convent’s renovation: “Take one small step” is a typical crowdfunding action.³⁹ We can send specific requests for prayer to the convent. Thanks to this endeavour the Benedictine nuns have started the fourth stage of the renovation and have gathered more than 1 million PLN for this purpose. The website and Facebook profile enable them to hold a good communication with the outside world.

Another formula of a prayer community is known as a “Rosary Rose”. It is a rosary prayer to Our Lady, said together in a group,

po/konferencje-duchowe/wyklady-studium-biblijnego/ [access: 16.08.2013]. The information on the study can be found on the Capuchins’ website, too: <https://www.kapucyni.pl/index.php/info/3154-studium-biblijne-na-kapucyni> [access: 06.01.2014].

³⁷ It can be found on www.modlitwawdrodze.pl as well as a link to many religious websites, e.g. www.deon.pl website [access: 17.07.2013].

³⁸ *Skrzynka intencji*, <http://mateusz.pl/intencje/> [access: 19.01.2013].

³⁹ On www.zrob1malykrok.pl [access: 16.07.2013].

popular among Catholics, functioning in the real world. The virtual Polish version appeared on Facebook in October 2012 and its structure is the same as in traditional groups. Each group consists of 20 people, including the “zelator” (i.e. the leader). These people commit themselves to pray one decade of the rosary every day. The only difference between the “rose” gathering in the real and virtual worlds is a method of building new groups – in the latter case, Facebook is the tool for it. The project involves and is supported by people of media, culture, science and art including actor Jerzy Zelnik, sports journalist Przemysław Babiarczyk and Ewa K. Czackowska, a journalist who deals with religious topics. The project is called “Rosary Rose – see how it works”.⁴⁰

Another form of spirituality on the Internet is the “Bring a priest up, adopt a seminarian” fanpage. It is a modern prayer initiative for the seminarians of the Seminary in Lublin. Fr. Łukasz Kachnowicz from the parish of Our Lady of the Rosary in Puławy encourages the Internet users to have a share in a priest education via the Internet. By sending an e-mail to the organizer, we can receive a return letter from the coordinators with the name of one seminarian. The task of the person taking part in this initiative is a daily prayer for this particular seminarian.⁴¹ A similar project, a prayer for missionary seminarians, has been launched in the Diocese of Sosnowiec.⁴² In the Archdiocese of Gdańsk, the *kaplani.com.pl* website gathers around the people of good will who start praying for concrete ordained priests. Even though the website does not use (except for a Facebook profile) any Web 2.0 tools, it creates a certain online community around the very website and encourages being involved in prayer. Such initiatives are abundant on the Internet.

Apart from promoting the Scripture, encouraging to prayer and creating communities of prayers, many websites and spaces in the virtual media offer the possibility of reading commentaries and meditations on selected parts of the Bible as well as texts of great spiritual masters.

⁴⁰ Cf. www.facebook.com/rozerozancowe [access: 16.07.2013].

⁴¹ *Adoptuj kleryka*, <http://www.niedziela.pl/artykul/6186/%E2%80%9EA%20%80%9D> [access: 23.09.2013]; *Wychowaj księdza – adoptuj kleryka*, <http://www.katolik.pl/wychowaj-ksiedza---adoptuj-kleryka,23691,794,news.html> [access: 12.01.2014]; *Wychowaj księdza – adoptuj kleryka*, <http://www.deon.pl/religia/kosciol-i-swiat/z-zycia-kosciola/art,16366,wychowaj-ksiedza-adoptuj-kleryka.html> [access: 23.11.2013].

⁴² *Adoptuj kleryka w kraju misyjnym*, <http://www.diecezja.sosnowiec.pl/audio/2023-adoptuj-kleryka-w-kraju-misyjnym> [access: 23.12.2013].

THE FUTURE OF SPIRITUALITY ON THE NET

Nowadays, it comes as no surprise for anyone to learn that even enclosed religious orders use the Internet. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life allows them explicitly to do that “with prudent discernment and for everyone’s benefit...for the exchange of information or for reasons of work” (Verbi Sponsa, 111). In his message for the 48th World Communications Day, Pope Francis encourages all believers to be receptive: “Keeping the doors of our Churches open also means keeping them open in the digital environment so that people, whatever their situation in life, can enter, and so that the Gospel can go out to reach everyone. We are called to show that the Church is the home of all. Are we capable of communicating the image of such a Church? Communication is a means of expressing the missionary vocation of the entire Church; today the social networks are one way to experience this call to discover the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ. In the area of communications too, we need a Church capable of bringing warmth and of stirring hearts”.⁴³

The Internet can give better opportunities for encounter and a brotherly “solidarity among all people, and it is something truly good, a gift from God” – that way Pope Francis described the global Web in his message for the 48th world communications day. None of the apostles ever had such easy an access – using many types of communication channels – to such a large agora and a real possibility to reach out “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). However, the “competition” among Gospel preachers is tough. Media recipients have a wide choice of religious and non-religious offers, and access to ideologies, different philosophies and worldviews is easy. Consumption competes against faith, and sects, other religions and even atheism compete against the Church. Gospel preaching is thus primarily an encounter with another human being. “It is because through the media we can help people move from the chaos of information to the reflection upon their own lives. Contact with a person through the media can never relieve us of direct ministry, but it may be one of the forms of reaching people. In a world where relationships are limited to digital presence, which often leads to alienation, there is a huge opportunity for the Church to use the media to contact a specific person”.⁴⁴ As was emphasized by Pope Francis, “We

⁴³ Pope Francis, *Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter. Message for the 48th World Communications Day*, Polish transl.: <http://www.archpoznan.pl/content/view/3069/107/> [access: 29.01.2014].

⁴⁴ M. Han (*E*) *wangelizacja i formacja w Kościele*, <http://jezuici.pl/ewangelizacja-i-formacja-w-kosciele/>, [access: 29.01.2014].

have to be able to dialogue with the men and women of today, to understand their expectations, doubts and hopes, and to bring them the Gospel, Jesus Christ himself, God incarnate, who died and rose to free us from sin and death". In his Apostolic Exhortation in 2013, the Holy Father reminded us sternly that "we need to move «from a pastoral ministry of mere conservation to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry»" (No. 15). Therefore, in Pope Francis' opinion, "Pastoral ministry in a missionary style...has to concentrate on the essentials, on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing and at the same time most necessary. The message is simplified, while losing none of its depth and truth, and thus becomes all the more forceful and convincing" (no. 35). In such a pastoral ministry, mass media, including the Internet, can be of invaluable help.

The scope of preaching the Good News on the Web depends on the commitment of the believers who are Internet users to publish religious materials. The quality of these materials and methods of promotion in specific Web channels, especially social networks, are essential. In addition to posting spiritual messages on Facebook and fanpages, microblogging websites are becoming more and more popular, also in Poland, and Twitter is in the lead. Graphic files with the Christian message are becoming increasingly important as well (especially infographics). They are placed in repositories such as Instagram and Pinterest or on the Polish Deomotywatory website. Moreover, there is still a big interest in video and audio files on multimedia platforms.⁴⁵

A crucial challenge for the Church is the rapid development and popularity of tablets and smartphones as well as the ability to use them. Ever increasing personalization, accessibility and mobility make the multimedia and interactive websites for mobile devices more intensely used.⁴⁶ If we want them to show spiritual websites, these must be adapted to the requirements of this type.⁴⁷ That is why we must think as information recipients do, search for ways to reach them and prepare Christian mobile applications for these devices.

Enabling communication among social network users (among authors and readers, in particular) has created better opportunities for

⁴⁵ Social Enterprise 2012 – Report, http://www.synerway.com.pl/asktualno_sci/RAPORT_Social_Enterprise_2012.pdf [access: 3.02.2014].

⁴⁶ Cf. Oracle, 2013 B2B Commerce Trends, <http://www.oracle.com/us/products/applications/atg/2013-b2b-commerce-trends-1939002.pdf> [access: 29.01.2014].

⁴⁷ Some CMS systems optimize the content simultaneously for desktop computers and mobile devices; wix.com is such an example.

dialogue on the Web.⁴⁸ At the same time, the requirements for online publishers of religious content have increased. As far as the Web is concerned, this interactive form of contact is a chance to reach people who are not very active religiously in the real world or do not believe at all. St. Paul and the other Apostles could only dream of such possibilities which are offered to Internet users in their dialogues on spiritual topics.

The latest technologies – despite real threats – can be “a means of solving human problems, promoting the integral development of a person, building a world ruled by justice, peace and love” (Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 51). The Internet can help in developing Christian spirituality and be a tool in the pursuit of holiness. It is, after all, a place where we can obtain religious knowledge, the texts from the Bible, the spiritual masters and the Church teachings, and it is useful in spiritual guidance and in contacts with religious people. Many contemporary social networks make it possible for the Internet users to reflect on different matters and encourage them to pray, develop their spirituality, especially when they make use of the Internet skillfully and wisely and avoid various threats.⁴⁹

In the aforementioned ecclesial practices the point is not to move them to the Internet, but to use Web 2.0 in the Church mission in the best possible way. Therefore, the Internet can be a place to proclaim the kerygma, to evangelize directly and to encourage personal encounters and participation in religious events (direct evangelism, evangelistic concerts, gatherings for continuing formation, and even so-called “confession nights” or adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Church for young people, and additionally, to join the Church community), but it is also a space for catechizing, strengthening one’s faith and for spiritual formation. However, the Web is, above all, a space for presenting activities of institutions, religious movements and communities. It is because many young people believe that if something cannot be found on the Internet, then it is almost non-existent in the real world. Hence, it is essential to preach the Gospel on the Web. Young people spend several hours per day there, changing their habits and learning behaviors and patterns which are different from the real world. The first online evangelization congress on the iMisión platform is an example of a valuable use of the Internet. It was attended by Antonio Spadaro, Salesian (cybertheologian) and Gustavo Entrala, the creator of the papal

⁴⁸ A. Garapich et al., *Przyszłość Internetu jest dotykowa*, http://pbi.org.pl/aktualnosc/20121212_Raport_IAB_OPI_PBI_przyszlosc_internetu_jest_dotykowa.pdf [3.02.2014].

⁴⁹ Their concise description together with the addiction typology is presented by M. Drożdż, *Duchowość w Sieci* (2), p. 99–104.

channel on Twitter, among others. The congress was opened by Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli, president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.⁵⁰

In past centuries, a similar intellectual and pastoral effort was made by clergy and lay Catholics after the inventions of print, radio and television, and Web 1.0, so as to make the Church Message of Salvation noticeable there. Nowadays, we are urged to reflect on Web 2.0. In many cases, members of the ecclesial community in Poland have already done all the necessary research and apply these solutions to a lesser or greater extent. Growing effort in this area will enable religious communities to use possibilities offered by Web 2.0 on a broader front.

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⁵⁰ V. M. Raczkiewicz, *Madryt: I Kongres Ewangelizacji w Internecie*, http://pl.radiovaticana.va/m_articolo.asp?c=788218; more on: www.congresso.imision.org [access: 6.04.2014].

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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

PURPOSE

Today there is urgent need to attend to the nature and dignity of the person, to the quality of human life, to the purpose and goal of the physical transformation of our environment, and to the relation of all this to the development of social and political life. This, in turn, requires philosophic clarification of the base upon which freedom is exercised, that is, of the values which provide stability and guidance to one's decisions.

Such studies must be able to reach deeply into one's culture and that of other parts of the world as mutually reinforcing and enriching in order to uncover the roots of the dignity of persons and of their societies. They must be able to identify the conceptual forms in terms of which modern industrial and technological developments are structured and how these impact upon human self-understanding. Above all, they must be able to bring these elements together in the creative understanding essential for setting our goals and determining our modes of interaction. In the present complex global circumstances this is a condition for growing together with trust and justice, honest dedication and mutual concern.

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) unites scholars who share these concerns and are interested in the application thereto of existing capabilities in the field of philosophy and other disciplines. Its work is to identify areas in which study is needed, the intellectual resources which can be brought to bear thereupon, and the means for publication and interchange of the work from the various regions of the world. In bringing these together its goal is scientific discovery and publication which contributes to the present promotion of humankind.

In sum, our times present both the need and the opportunity for deeper and ever more progressive understanding of the person and of the foundations of social life. The development of such understanding is the goal of the RVP.

PROJECTS

A set of related research efforts is currently in process:

1. *Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change: Philosophical Foundations for Social Life*. Focused, mutually coordinated research teams in university centers prepare volumes as part of an integrated philosophic search for self-understanding differentiated by culture and civilization.

These evolve more adequate understandings of the person in society and look to the cultural heritage of each for the resources to respond to the challenges of its own specific contemporary transformation.

2. *Seminars on Culture and Contemporary Issues*. This series of 10 week crosscultural and interdisciplinary seminars is coordinated by the RVP in Washington.

3. *Joint-Colloquia* with Institutes of Philosophy of the National Academies of Science, university philosophy departments, and societies. Underway since 1976 in Eastern Europe and, since 1987, in China, these concern the person in contemporary society.

4. *Foundations of Moral Education and Character Development*. A study in values and education which unites philosophers, psychologists, social scientists and scholars in education in the elaboration of ways of enriching the moral content of education and character development. This work has been underway since 1980.

The personnel for these projects consists of established scholars willing to contribute their time and research as part of their professional commitment to life in contemporary society. For resources to implement this work the Council, as 501 C3 a non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Colombia, looks to various private foundations, public programs and enterprises.

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