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# CHRISTIANITY WORLD • POLITICS

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*In the issue:*

Adolphe, Grosse, Igboin, Modood, Morieson, Sealy, Zenderowski

*Identity and religion in a post-liberal world*

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## *From the Editors*

The twenty-sixth issue of *Christianity-World-Politics* will explore the relationship between identity and religion in a post-liberal world. After more than a three decades triumphant march, Western liberalism has been halted and is experiencing a serious crisis: one that necessitates a consideration of the post-liberal social order. Many scholars have no doubt that the West itself, with its post-Cold War “liberal interventionism,” unbridled lust for profit and pervasive globalization processes, has contributed to this state of affairs [Kuźniar 2016: 195]. The reevaluation of liberalism is related to a series of international and domestic events and processes. In international relations, these include the rise of non-Western powers led by China, the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, the economic crisis, the energy crisis, adverse environmental changes and mass migrations, and above all the return to power politics, observed recently especially in the form of Russia’s unjustified aggression against Ukraine. On the domestic level, one can see, among other things, the proliferation of old/new ideologies that change the understanding of the human good and the common good. Such ideologies occur often in opposition to or in conjunction with religion; they also can be utilized to shape religion according to one’s needs. One can also see so-called populism as an old/new form of mobilization of people by politicians. It is worth considering whether, under these circumstances, we can already speak of an “epochal change,” or rather, we are dealing with a continuation of previous approaches and paradigms, albeit in a new guise. If the march of liberalism on the national and international level

seems to have stopped, what could replace it? What role does identity and religion play in this shift?

Identity (individual and collective) today stands at the center of attention of social science researchers. With the help of this category, social behavior, phenomena and processes are explained, which in the 20th century were freed from the stigma of determinism. Uncertainty about the nature and character of the “other” was reflected in the existential question of who am I myself or who are we as a group (the phenomenon of “self-consciousness” of an individual or collective subject). Identity, by definition, combines two meanings: the first related to continuity (“remaining the same” = sameness), and the second - to distinctiveness, differentiation [Jacobson-Widding 1983: 13].

The post-liberal stage of the world’s development and the “return of religion from exile” observed for several decades now in social life and research, especially in the form of post-secularism, poses a natural question about the role of “sacredness” in the construction of various dimensions of identity. It seems that the category of identity makes it also possible to better understand and explain the complex relationship between religion and politics. This applies equally to the Western system, as well as to other regions of the world, and consequently to the global order. One can venture to say that religion is one of the phenomena that has contributed to the reevaluation of the ideology of liberalism. As early as 30 years ago, Samuel Huntington emphasized the role of religion in the world, claiming that on a global scale the “expansion of the [secularized] West” had ended, and the “revolt against the West” had begun. Huntington contrasted religions (which in his theory were the foundation of identity in essentially every civilization he distinguished) with ideologies produced by the West [1998: 70]. He considered liberalism to be one such ideology, which - after its victory first over fascism, then communism - in Francis Fukuyama’s view had no more competition: “only liberal democracy is unencumbered by fundamental flaws, internal contradictions and a deficiency of rationality, that is, what led past regimes to inevitable collapse” [1996: 9]. However, it seems that in his vision, this author did not properly emphasize identity, and in it, the role of religion.

Although the classics emphasize that there is no single strain of liberalism - “there are many, sometimes quite loosely connected” - common to all variants seems to be “modern in character - the concept of man and society” [Gray 1994: 9]. Liberalism is individualistic, egalitarian, universalistic and melioristic, that is,

self-regulating and self-improving [ibid.: 8]. Thirty years after the decreed “end of history,” however, it becomes clear that such a understanding of man and society, which is the foundation for both liberal democracy and the global liberal order, has not withstood the test of time. Patrick J. Deneen, reflecting on “why liberalism has failed,” explains that liberalism’s core value of individual autonomy creates structures that consequently lead to a sense of loss of freedom in many citizens. “Populist reactions” thus become a grassroots response to problems in the political and economic spheres, which, contrary to what liberals believe, are characterized by a “revived democratic impulse” [Deneen 2021: 13]. Pappin, on the other hand, stresses that “liberalism has become an ideology on the wane” - it cannot clearly articulate what the common good is, nor is it “able to inspire the loyalty and shared sacrifice that nation-states require to function” [Pappin 2020].

It is not difficult to see that today, freedom, identity, and the truth about oneself, which has a transcendent dimension, are again at the center of human endeavor. John Paul II’s warning is alive: “In a situation in which there is no ultimate truth to guide and give direction to political activity, it is easy to instrumentalize ideas and beliefs for the purposes of power. History teaches that democracy without values is easily transformed into overt or camouflaged totalitarianism” [John Paul II 1991: No. 46].

However, there is also another approach. The same Fukuyama links the modern collapse of liberalism to the scarcity of equality and the fact that neither nationalism nor religion has disappeared as forces in world politics. According to him, modern liberal democracies have not fully resolved the problem of *thymos* - that part of the human soul that struggles for recognition, which manifests itself especially in nationalism and defense of religion pushed out of the mainstream [2018: 9]. According to this author, not less, but more liberalism in the world, the recognition of more human rights and their enforcement by the West (in pursuit of greater equality) could be the remedy for the observed crisis. It is worth wondering where in this liberal order of values, which exposes freedom and equality of people, the brotherhood called for by Pope Francis, among others, is lost.

All the authors from Poland and abroad whose articles we publish in the first part of the issue recognize the transformations taking place in the liberal social order under the influence of various factors. Their considerations focus on specific countries, regions or the global order. First, we present the considerations of two researchers of the developing Bristol school of multiculturalism in the UK. Thomas

Sealy addresses the problem of managing cultural pluralism in Western Europe, particularly the inclusion of minorities who, because of their conservative, often illiberal values, are seen as a threat to the social order. Tariq Modood notes the need to rethink political secularism. In his view, multiculturalism undermines the liberal consensus and raises religious questions in a world where religion has been marginalized. It therefore forces a rethinking of secularism. It turns out that liberal tolerance, limited to equal treatment, is not enough to fully recognize and integrate citizens of different groups - there must be a recognition of the importance of differences, including the role of religion in building their identities. In both texts, religious identity appears as a challenge and task for post-liberalism, which, according to the authors, at least in the UK, is gradually taking on a post-secular face. It resounds clearly from Modood's article that multiculturalism understood in this way, which incidentally requires active state action, means enriching, not impoverishing, national culture.

Jane Adolphe's article examines the question of the Holy See's attitude to the "global reset," a metaphor used by World Economic Forum President Klaus Schwab in the face of the COVID-19 epidemic and its aftermath. In his publications, Schwab assesses the resulting situation as a convenient moment to implement a new approach to managing societies, similar to an approach adopted by the Chinese government. In his view, the "fourth industrial revolution" is changing "who we are as human beings, through digital, physical and biological systems." As the author notes, the Holy See, through the mouths of its representatives (e.g., Cardinal Turkson), expresses acceptance of the idea of a "global reset," hoping to overcome social injustices in the world. However, there are also other Catholic voices concerned about such a turn of events (e.g., Cardinals Zen and Müller), seeing it as a simple road to dehumanization and totalitarianism. Properly read, Catholic social teaching can become an antidote to these problems.

The changes in the European region are addressed in the following three texts. Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse seeks an answer to the question of whether the offensive of left-wing currents in the EU, clearly visible in the second decade of the 21st century, i.e. in a period of deep post-liberal revaluations, can contribute to the healing of the European project, betraying signs of exhaustion. As the author notes, "it was the sphere of culture, or more precisely of narratives and ideologies, that was supposed to change social attitudes in such a way as to introduce uniform and universally accepted ideas," which Gramsci referred to as "cultural

hegemony.” At the same time, this was to lead to the push back of “fascist ideas,” that is, appealing, in his view, to patriotism, national identity and community. Under such conditions, it is much easier to build a community of transnational scope. Activity growing out of these premises has been observed in the activities of the European Parliament and other EU institutions, which, according to the author, is an expression of the leftist style of putting universal principles above national law. The author recognizes the limitations of this approach and its consequences, including depriving the EU of its civilizational foundations or destroying rationalism and the authority of science. This, in turn, may have contributed to increasing voter interest in right-wing formations. It also meant lowering the level of democracy in European institutions.

The identity of the nations of Central Europe and the importance of religion and history in its construction are the subject of Radoslaw Zenderowski’s reflections. Citing empirical research, the author points to cultural and worldview differences between Central Europe and its Western edge. He refers, among other things, to the myth of *antemurale christianitatis* or “the forerunner of European culture” and the role of religious institutions in the construction of their own identity by most Central European nations. Religion, according to the author, remains “the most prominent value” that distinguishes the region from Western Europe. Among other things, he introduces the concept of victimism, characteristic of the region, in which “it is about a specific kind of compensation for lost self-respect, resulting from some spectacular national defeat.” The author emphasizes what Western scholars often forget, that Central Europe has developed its own identity, which, although not supranational, has a common “grammar” that often manifests itself in the relationship between national identity and religion (the sacralization of *ethnos* versus the ethnicization of religion).

Nicholas Morieson writes about Hungary’s post-liberal “Christian democracy” and its impact on American conservatives in his text. He draws attention to the numerous visits of Americans to Hungary, their admiration for the Fidesz party, which seemed to have achieved the impossible, that is, “stopping the elites of their nation from taking over the state and driving conservatives out of the public sphere.” According to conservative Americans, the success was the consolidation of “Christian culture” and “post-liberal thought” in Hungary. Extending it to the American political reality, however, Morieson argues, proved too much of a challenge, although the influence of post-liberals in the Republican Party between 2016 and 2022 grew significantly. It is in this milieu that the most serious



criticism of liberalism occurs, which conservatives believe has opened the way for democracy-threatening leftist movements to achieve political success.

The last article in this section of the issue deals with secularization and religious identity in Nigeria - one of Africa's largest and most religious countries. We thus leave the Western research perspective, which the author, Benson Igboin, finds misleading when studying Africa. Colonialism and missionary religions brought their own secularization thought to the continent, but an objectified Africa has not had the opportunity to join the debate over it. Religion in Nigeria remains a key element of identity politics, and the complex provisions of the Nigerian constitution regarding the secular status of the state add to internal instability as they are interpreted differently. In Africa, religion has not moved into the private sphere and continues to be an important factor in politics, leading to conflicts and casualties that could be avoided. Neither Western secularization nor the "obsessive religiosity" of Africans is serving the continent's development. Igboin notes that a creative balance is needed between these extremes, and that "the decolonizing perspective of secularization requires more detailed research and application."

Complementing the considerations of the authors in the first part of the issue is an article by Wolfgang Palaver, in which the author sees an opportunity to reconcile cosmopolitanism with "open patriotism," the foreshadowing of which he sees in the current of Catholicism initiated by Jacques Maritain, among others. He stresses that open patriotism, unlike nationalism, "does not exclude intra-social pluralism, nor does it impose ethnic or religious unity." The task of religious communities, in this context, is "to become the necessary glue between localism and global solidarity."

Irena Popiuk-Rysinskaya writes about selected issues related to Europe's religious diversity and the post-war integration process. She points out that initially "federalization" was seen as a Catholic idea and contested by countries with Protestant majorities. Gradually, however, as the process of secularization developed, the religious factor lost its importance. Still, it is possible to see the influence of religion on attitudes regarding, among other things, the depth and extent of integration, as the author discusses in her article, referring to the research of Brent F. Nelsen and James L. Guth, among others.

In the following text, Maria Szymborska draws attention to the peculiar tension that arises among contemporary thinkers who, on the one hand, recognize the

need for spirituality in social life and deplore its disappearance, and, on the other hand, fear any influence of religion on political life. Using the example of Mark Lilia's work titled *Powerless God*, the author shows that negative conclusions for religion are drawn, however - firstly - on the basis of ideology, confused with religion, and secondly - "with disregard for the actual teaching of the Catholic Church on the autonomy of political life." In her opinion, "the cited perspective also ignores the fact that the primary area of conflict between good and evil is the human conscience and approach to truth."

W. Julian Korab-Karpovich writes about spiritual political leadership, which concerns the art of governing the state taking into account "the full and comprehensive personal development of man," his self-realization, which reaches its highest development in holiness, or union with God. This approach "promotes social harmony, which results from interaction between different groups within society" From this approach comes a practical demand. According to the author, "the leaders of the European Union and individual European countries should abandon the modernist trend of secularization and participate in the development of Christian civilization, uniting the humanity of the whole world on an ethical level, and always keep in mind the highest universal values and the ultimate goal of human life."

Michał Gierycz returns to the category of fraternity in his text analyzing its political dimension in Francis' encyclical *Fratelli tutti*. The author, first, tries to capture the essence of fraternity as presented in the encyclical. Second, he recognizes the importance of the political dimension in the Pope's proposal. Third, he shows the challenges that arise in the context of the proposed framing of fraternity in the perspective of the Church's social teaching. And finally, he analyzes the possible source of these challenges, "by showing the tension between the *Fratelli tutti*'s proposed understanding of fraternity and the Catholic tradition's specific understanding of fraternity."

Adelaide Madera reflects on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for the relationship between religious communities and the state. She points out that cooperation between these actors can contribute to the implementation of new ways of functioning, whereby all social actors make joint commitments to common goals, with a view to building a more sustainable future.

Hessam Habibi Doroh analyzes the role of Sunnis in the 2021 presidential elections in Shiite Iran. According to him, religious actors and institutions were mobilizing

factors in the political campaign. Interestingly, the Sunni elites in 2021, in the name of pragmatism, were able to reach a political agreement with the Shiite elites, thus ignoring the demands of ordinary Sunnis to solve the problem of inequality. However, according to the author, this shift in Sunni loyalty should be understood as a political compromise rather than an epochal paradigm shift in Iranian politics.

In their article, Tomasz Jarosz and Emmanuel Komba show the impact of the religious factor (faith-based organizations, FBO) on development in African countries using the example of a Catholic school in Morogoro, Tanzania. The set development goal motivates the members of the FBO to influence their secular partners, which leads to the achievement of concrete results (state exam results). The impact of the religious entity is being constantly influenced by impulses emerging from within the spiritual realm.

Finally, Michał Klakus discusses the circumstances of the would-be meeting between Charles de Gaulle and Primate Stefan Wyszyński during the French President's visit to Poland in 1967. De Gaulle, as a representative of the Western bloc, although pursuing his own vision of international politics, was very keen on this event. He saw the Primate as the spiritual leader of the nation he had come to visit despite the Iron Curtain, which had been drawn up for more than 20 years. However, the importance of the meeting was also recognized by the authorities in Warsaw, who ultimately prevented it, demonstrating the importance of the Church in the People's Republic of Poland and the concerns that the totalitarian authorities had about it.

The articles offer the reader a picture of religion intertwined with politics. This will remain an important component of individual and group identity in the post-liberal world as well, although its impact on social relations may be different than during the time of the triumph of liberalism. There are many indications of an increase in the importance of this factor as a source of identity, as religion challenges liberalism, but also of reevaluations and changes in post-liberal religious traditions themselves. Many of the challenges, it seems, will come from areas outside Western Europe and the roles and functions attributed to religion there. We invite you to read on, from which emerges an interesting picture of these relationships in local, regional and global, contemporary and somewhat more historical terms. We also encourage discussion in the pages of our journal, as the problem addressed remains a cognitive and practical issue that certainly requires further in-depth study. Fruitful reading!

Anna M. Solarz

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**Identity and religion  
in a post-liberal world**



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## *Multicultural Post-Liberalism: A Question of Identity*

**Abstract:** A significant aspect of post-liberalism is the reality of multiculturalism, or the cultural and religious diversity in contemporary Western European societies. This has provoked new thinking on how this pluralism is to be managed, and how these minorities are to be integrated, accommodated and included. This is especially the case for those groups whose values are seen as in tension with certain liberal secular values. In Britain, multiculturalism has emerged as a theoretical and policy response to this post-liberal dilemma. This article outlines this response and how it overlaps with post-liberal concerns and principles. It focuses in particular on how religion fits into this picture, as an important strand in multiculturalist and post-liberal thought. It is argued that multiculturalism requires new thinking on religion as part of post-liberal politics, and that it already possesses resources conducive to this.

**Keywords:** multiculturalism, post-liberalism, religious identity

**Abstrakt:** Realia wielokulturowości, czy zróżnicowania kulturowego i religijnego, we współczesnych społeczeństwach Europy Zachodniej są istotnym aspektem postliberalizmu. Fakt ten sprowokował nowy sposób myślenia o tym, jak ten pluralizm powinien być zarządzany oraz jak uwzględnić zintegrować i włączyć mniejszości, w szczególności te grupy, które są postrzegane jako sprzeczne z liberalnymi wartościami świeckimi, kontrastującymi z bardziej konserwatywnymi społecznie, nie-liberalnymi (a nawet ograniczającymi) wartościami niektórych mniejszości. W Wielkiej Brytanii wielokulturowość pojawiła się jako teoretyczny i polityczny odzew na ten postliberalny dylemat. Artykuł najpierw pokazuje ten odzew oraz przedstawia, w jaki sposób pokrywa się on z postliberalnymi problemami i zasadami, po czym skupia się na tym, jak religia wpisuje się w ten obraz, jako ważny nurt w myśli wielokulturowej i postliberalnej. Artykuł wykazuje, że wielokulturowość wymaga nowego myślenia o religii jako części polityki postliberalnej, oraz że posiada ona już potrzebne do tego zasoby.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wielokulturowość, postliberalizm, tożsamość religijna

## Introduction

Far from the end of history, the apparent triumph of liberalism after 1989 might be seen as more of a beginning than an end. At the same time as liberalism's triumph against communism was being proclaimed, in Western Europe it was beginning to face questions of adequacy from another source, emerging from the reality of multiculturalism. 1989 was the year of the first headscarf affair in France, which would eventually result in the banning of ostentatious religious symbols in public schools in the early 2000s and of full-face coverings in public spaces in 2011. 1989 was also the year of the Rushdie affair in Britain, when the issue of free speech and more specifically the freedom to satirise religion became a prominent public and political issue, and a variety of related controversies, and bans, have appeared in different European countries since. Just as liberalism seemed settled then, Western European populations were beginning to grapple with increasing claims from minority populations, particularly Muslims, as well as multicultural and multi-religious pluralism. Along with issues of racism and anti-racism that had gained increased attention in the preceding decades, Western European states were now confronted with questions about how to include and accommodate ethnic and religious diversity, which in turn would bring a variety of issues of free speech and public religion to the foreground of political and public debate. This would challenge certain core tenets of the liberal consensus, especially its ideas of neutrality and tolerance in the name of equality.

Beginning with the emergence of these multicultural challenges, and in relation primarily to Britain and a particular form of multiculturalist thinking that has emerged there, this paper aims to do the following: firstly, to explore the idea of multiculturalism as it has emerged in political theory as a response to these social and political issues, and secondly, to assess multiculturalism in particular relation to thinking about public religion. Multiculturalism itself is not explicitly posited as a form of post-liberalism by its leading thinkers, but there are two ways in which I hope to show its relevance in relation to post-liberal thinking. The interest for the first of these is multiculturalism's relevance as a form of thinking politically that although emerging from within a liberal democratic context does not orient around or justify its positions in relation to liberalism, and directly challenges certain liberal assumptions. The interest for the second is both that multiculturalism has been centrally concerned with religion in public and political life, and that this is a key point on which it contrasts itself with liberalism, and that post-liberal thought (certainly in relation to Britain) has a distinct and prominent theological strand. It is therefore pertinent to ask how these might relate.

Post-liberalism is perhaps best thought of as a family of positions connected but with distinct strands and emphases (and in this no different from liberalism or multiculturalism). John Gray [1993] took the ‘post-’ to be something like a new phase in liberalism, akin perhaps to what post-modern is to modern. Here, post-liberalism is engaged dialectically with liberalism, rejecting its stronger doctrinal claims, but liberal civil society institutions were held as the best, and universal, mode of managing divergent world-views, or incommensurable values. Gray came to revise his thinking, stating that, contrary to his earlier views on post-liberalism, “the institutional forms best suited to a *modus vivendi* may well not be the individualist institutions of liberal civil society but rather those of political and legal pluralism, in which the fundamental units are not individuals but communities”, and came instead to focus on ‘value-pluralism’ in which liberalism can be but one form of political life among many and without any special claims to universality or the good [1996: 352]. In coming to question liberalism more profoundly, we might see Gray’s departure from what he termed post-liberal as in fact closer to what some others have in mind when criticising liberalism from a post-liberal perspective.

The emphasis of much post-liberalism, certainly in the British context, has been to challenge the fundamental tenets of liberalism, including what Milbank and Pabst [2016] refer to as ‘the two liberalisms’, namely socio-cultural and political-economic liberalism. For the purposes of the discussion here, and with the focus on multiculturalism, I am more interested in the socio-cultural aspects, along with the political, although leave aside the economic. On these aspects, post-liberal thought moves away from the individual to the family and community, away from an abstracted, unencumbered self, to one embedded and deeply rooted, reinstating the social cultural into the political. Politically in Britain post-liberalism is manifested in the so-called Blue Labour and Red Tory movements, which leaning from (or perhaps into) different sides of the political centre line bring together a more conservative position on social values with a more socialist position on the economy. Goodhart [n.d.] sees it as a ‘moving beyond’ liberalism, where rather than atomised individuals people are seen as embedded in and dependent on relationships and the state of the wider communities of which they are a part. Sharing this general orientation, others have developed deconstructions of liberalism that seeks to present a new form of politics built on foundations beginning with embeddedness in the social sphere. Against ‘atomistic self-centredness’ of private freedom as individualism, Dallmayr [2019] calls for public freedom tied to equal respect across difference, for instance, and Milbank and Pabst, also point to

“inherent problems and deficiencies” of liberalism, of which its atomising tendencies are centrally important [2016: 2].

Notably, post-liberal thought, in Britain at least but not only, has a distinct and prominent theological strand in identifying problems of and proposed solutions to liberalism, and in which questions of the role of religion are central concerns and orientations. In Britain this has in particular been associated with the Radical Orthodoxy school, to which Milbank is strongly associated. This is of course not the case for all prominent post-liberals. Goodhart, cited above and who has been critical of multiculturalism [2013; 2019], would not come under this strand, but it is also notable that he cites work that does as consistent with his own non-theological conception. Importantly though is that this influence means that secularism, as part of liberal secular politics, is also a point of focus for interrogation. Bretherton, for example, states the need to “move beyond political liberalism to a post-liberal, postsecularist politics” [2010: 48]; Rowan Williams [2012], a former Archbishop of Canterbury, has distinguished between programmatic secularism, which is ideologically opposed to religion in politics and the public sphere, and procedural secularism, more accommodative of religion in public and political life. It is this issue of religion in the public sphere as part of a post-liberal settlement that this article is particularly concerned with in relation to multiculturalism.

It is important at this point to say something about the ‘post-’ in post-liberalism as signifying some important differences in what we take post-liberal to mean. ‘Moving beyond’ has already been evoked a couple of times above, but what does this mean? It might in fact be a part of looking sideways, to the reality of pluralism as we see it across different societies and different contexts (as seems to be at least partly the case for Gray’s revised position), or looking (to some extent) backwards, “seek[ing] to retrieve, revise and extend the classical legacy” [Milbank and Pabst 2016: 287]. For Bretherton, “the advocacy of a post-liberal, theological politics presumes a liberal constitutional order, the rule of law and a self-limiting state” and so is not about throwing the baby out with the bath water but more oriented towards (more or less radically) adjusting the temperature of the bath water. It is to recognise “not that liberalism is all bad, but that it has inherent problems and deficiencies” [Milbank and Pabst 2016: 2].

Here, then, in focussing on the context of Britain as a liberal secular state, I take post-liberalism in a way akin to the post-secular that Habermas observed. That is, not one where the prefix ‘post’ signifies something after, i.e. not a period after

liberalism, but where post- signifies the necessity of a more reflexive liberalism, that it is not the only game in town, that other ontological and epistemological claims are ineluctable parts of society, public and political discourse, that liberalism need not be the intellectual and cultural framework of appeal, and that just as others must reconcile with liberalism, so must liberalism reconcile and engage with those who challenge its form and content. That is to say that if we are to talk of post-liberal society, then it is one in which critiques and claims are not and cannot be restricted to a liberal framework or intellectual project, but must recognise the non-liberal to some extent as part of “a crowded and argumentative public square which acknowledges the authority of a legal mediator or broker whose job it is to balance and manage real difference” [Williams 2012: 27].

The first section below will develop an account of a form multiculturalism that emerges out of and responds to what we might call a post-liberal moment. The article will then go on to explore three central aspects of this multiculturalism with a particular focus on strands from political theology, in order to consider and question multiculturalism as an adequate response when it comes to religion specifically as part of this moment. Political theology for the purposes of this article is not to be understood in the Schmittian sense of politics as secularised theology, but draws on thinkers who bring a specifically theological orientation to political questions and issues, not least as there is a prominent strand in British post-liberal thought along these lines. While it will identify short-comings with certain concepts central to multiculturalism, and that multiculturalism has not made a clear enough statement on important questions relevant here, it will argue that multiculturalism offers the resources to do so, and point to how these might be developed.

### **Multiculturalism as post-liberal**

Before proceeding with the discussion of how we can see multiculturalism as a post-liberal form of response to problems and deficiencies of liberalism, it is important to specify what is being referred to by multiculturalism here. Multiculturalism is directly concerned with theoretical and state-policy matters of governing ethno-cultural diversity. In political theory it has developed against positions that emphasise individualist integrationist approaches (such as assimilationism) to place an emphasis also on the idea of group rights. Will Kymlicka’s liberal multiculturalism (1995), developed with the context of Canada firmly in mind is perhaps the most influential account. Another foundational text for multiculturalism is Charles Taylor’s well-known essay *The Politics of Recognition* (1994),



and this forms the basis of the specific form of multiculturalism that this article, focussed on the British context, explores. The exact form of multiculturalism I am interested in here, and what will be meant throughout this article when I use the term multiculturalism, is one which has developed in Britain and is in many ways a response to the British context. Indeed, it has recently been referred to as the Bristol School of Multiculturalism (BSM) [Levey 2019] in recognition of the institutional home of its foremost proponent (Tariq Modood, and institutional connection shared with others). This multiculturalism has developed in political theory and draws heavily from sociological insights. In contrast with Kymlicka's liberal multiculturalism, this form of British multiculturalism purposefully sets itself, its bases and foundational orientations, apart from liberalism. It has mostly been concerned with ethnic minorities, particularly Muslims, and, although emanating from anti-racism concerns, its principles have been applied to thinking about secularism and public religion [Modood 2019]. It is necessary to point out here that leading proponents of this school (notably Tariq Modood and Bhikhu Parekh) do not conceive multiculturalism as a post-liberal theory, and of course post-liberals are not necessarily multiculturalists (and might even oppose certain aspects of it). It is necessary, therefore, to outline ways in which this multiculturalism might be considered in these terms, and this can be done through outlining a few of its foundational tenets.

This section will outline multiculturalism's most important and foundational concepts and positions in relation to this question. The first point to note is that multiculturalism in its BSM form does not privilege liberalism. It is not a critical liberal account (as is Gray's for instance), and does not look to liberalism as its source of orientation or for its justifications. It does, nevertheless, presume a liberal constitutional order.

Multiculturalism rejects the notion of liberal 'neutrality' as a myth; liberalism, as Charles Taylor has pointed out, is its own 'fighting creed' [Taylor 1994: 62]. Stemming from this inevitability in a state or society promoting, whether self-consciously and self-aware or not, a particular cultural form, multiculturalism is particularly focussed on the impact this has on ethnic minorities and their full integration into the national community. Stemming from anti-racism concerns, this "begin[s] with the fact of negative difference" [2007: 37], that is, discrimination that needs to be addressed, but then importantly adds that positive identity making and assertiveness, held and led by minorities themselves, can challenge these inferiorised negative minority identities [Modood 2007: 41]. The focus here

then is on ethno-religious groups, patterns of discrimination, and minority claims making.

In this multiculturalism holds three important principles: liberal tolerance is not sufficient for full equality of citizens, which needs to be conceived in stronger and more positive terms of respect and fuller ‘recognition’; that for this to be achieved individual rights need to be balanced with group rights; and thus, that difference is not a negative obstacle to be overcome but requires multicultural recognition. When it comes to religion more specifically, it sees religion as a public good to be accommodated and supported through state-religion institutional connections [Modood 2019]. Indeed, a number of interventions by its leading proponents have been in response to events where the relationship between public religion and liberal secularism (especially in more ‘muscular’ forms) have been at issue, such as debates over Muslim women’s clothing and issues of free speech sparked by rows over satirical cartoons (in Denmark and France, for instance), and the Rushdie affair in Britain<sup>1</sup>. Multiculturalism’s focus is narrower than some post-liberal accounts, such as Milbank and Pabst’s focus on ‘the two liberalisms’ of the socio-cultural and the economic-political. It is narrower too than the account of recognition offered by Honneth (1995), and especially in relation to the subsequent debate around recognition and redistribution Honneth had with Fraser (2003). The form of recognition being focussed on here with multiculturalism has little to say about economic forms of recognition as found in these accounts, beyond pointing to socio-economic inequalities as a structural aspect of patterns of discrimination and a lack of recognition. Multiculturalism is more concerned with political recognition specifically, but on points related to social groups, group rights, and advocacy of public religion as a public good, it shares some overlapping concerns and orientations with post-liberals as set against liberalism. A more expansive conception of recognition in relation to multiculturalism would indeed be a useful exercise, but given the lack of an account of this type in the multiculturalism under consideration here, it is beyond the scope of this article.

My focus in this article is, moreover, narrower still. I am specifically concerned with multiculturalism’s conception of religion. I want to go on to consider in more detail this final aspect of multiculturalism’s accommodative stance towards public religion. Drawing on work by political theologians, we will see how when

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<sup>1</sup> It has been commented that multiculturalism “properly takes off” in Britain with the Rushdie affair [Modood, 2016: 483].

looked at more closely multiculturalism in fact reflects a secular bias, albeit one grounded more in liberal secular realities than liberal secular theory, resulting from its emergence out of, and primary concern with, anti-racism. The following sections explore two aspects of multiculturalism along these lines, in relation to identity, and the accommodation of religion in the public sphere. It is argued that this critical engagement forces new thinking for multiculturalists when it comes to considering religion as such – questions that multiculturalism should, but also can, say more about.

### **Multiculturalism and religious ‘identity’**

The first area where we might see a shortcoming in multiculturalism specifically related to religion is in how identity is conceived. There are two lines of critique we can highlight here, one which is more about identity as such, and the other about political identity, or the politics of identity, or identity politics as it is often called.

With regard to the first what we can note is that in talking about religious identity, multiculturalism is in fact concerned with *ethno*-religious identity. This stems from multiculturalism’s emergence out of anti-racism concerns and specifically the central place of Muslims for its theorising. Multiculturalism emphasises the cultural embeddedness of humans as ‘cultural beings’ [Parekh 2006: 125], and, following its anti-racism orientation, is particularly concerned with ethno-religious identities based on involuntary lines of descent. That is to say that religious identity, conceived as ethno-religious, privileges the ethnic as a marker of and proxy for the religious. It is not principally concerned with, for example, the identity ‘Muslim’ as a religious identity as such, but with how people as a result of being from a predominantly Muslim ethnic group can be seen as Muslim by others regardless of what or whether they have any religious convictions, and how people of this same group might identify as Muslim along ethnic and cultural lines, again regardless of any particular religious belief or practices. As multiculturalism emphasises, this might manifest in the experience of discrimination, where the strong link between ethnicity and religion is something imposed from the outside. Alternatively, it might be part of positive identity making and assertiveness, where minorities themselves challenge inferiorised negative identities “transform[ing] [them] into something for which civic respect can be won” [Modood 2007: 41].

There are sound sociological reasons for this, and I do not wish here to bring these into question, but one result is that whereas humans as ‘cultural beings’ become a focus for recognition, the same is not extended to humans as ‘religious beings’.

By effectively reducing the religious to the ethnic, multiculturalism reproduces a secular reading of identity that is unable to account for how recognition might in fact here be its own form of misrecognition. Religion, it has been argued, “can be a deeper formative force than culture or ethnicity, even though it is certainly shaped by them” [Chaplin 2011: 56; also Sealy 2021; Song 2009]. Moreover, some have called into question the capacity of the term ‘identity’ to fully capture how religious people and groups express and understand their faith and their religious worldview [Pennington 2020: 51]. In this sense multiculturalism’s terms themselves might “foreshorten the reality” [Taylor 2007: 509] being studied [Sealy 2021]. This is not to deny that there may be overlap between religion and ethnicity, but the two should not be a priori conflated, or the religious reduced or folded into the ethnic.

This has implications for how religion is thought about in society, not least because it leads to a position where religion-as-group-identity is opposed to religion-as-faith without seeing the profound, and socio-political, connections between the two. It is to this aspect of multicultural recognition, in relation to the accommodation of religion in the public sphere, that the following section turns. In particular it picks up on an argument made by Jonathan Chaplin that “where public life and institutions are principally governed as if transcendent religious authority is irrelevant—it will in practice almost inevitably lean towards programmatic secularism, if only by default’ [Chaplin 2008: 23]. That is to say that, where multiculturalism does not explicitly engage with questions provoked by a specific ‘religious ear’, it is in danger of reproducing a secularist bias of misrecognition with implications for how religion is part of the public good.

### **Multiculturalism and the accommodation of religion on the public sphere**

As has already been noted, multiculturalism sees religion as a public good in that it “can play a significant role in relation to ethical voice general social well-being, cultural heritage, national ceremonies and national identity” [Modood 2017: 55-56]. There are two aspects to this we can highlight here. The first that the national church (more specifically in this case the established Church of England) operates as a national church for all and not just its members, especially in so far as it serves to facilitate the inclusion on minorities. The second is that it supports state-religion connections, as, for example, found in the way the state partners with religious organisations in the third sector in welfare service provision, or in education. Moreover, the type of ‘thickening’ of religion in the national imagination and public sphere that has been called for by faith organisations [for example, Pennington 2020: 20], through the inclusion of more religious festivals, not fewer

for instance, is entirely consistent with a form of additive multicultural thickening. Yet, the key part of the issue raised in the last section and that has implications here is as much epistemological as it is institutional.

In terms of welfare service provision, it is perhaps not too much of an exaggeration to say that state welfare would be severely disabled if not collapse without the roles of and partnerships with churches and faith-based organisations [Dinham 2015: 109; 2009]. These kinds of arrangements are recognised as being instances of positive inclusion of religion in the public sphere, and this is certainly the case. Yet, following on from the previous section we can also take a more critical look at these arrangements which necessarily complicate this. Political theologians, for instance, have been critical of this straightforward position.

Bretherton [2010; 2019] is critical of a situation in which the church is little more than an interest group. He recognises that the kinds of relations and accommodations that seem to constitute positive forms of recognition and of religion as a public good, and organised religion's role in developing the public good, can increase the role and visibility of faith organisations. However, he also cautions that a result of these relations with the state often means that faith organisations have to mimic secular organisations through processes of 'institutional isomorphism' in order to enter into such partnerships. This, he suggests, can distort faith groups themselves and work to depoliticise them in the way that sideline the specific faith ethos of the organisations. It is in fact this depoliticisation of religion that the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams too challenges, arguing against the "mortgag[ing] [of ] the Church<sup>2</sup> to partnership in a rather bland global ethic" [2001: 71]. Consequently, Bretherton cautions the church about partnering with the state and calls it to interrogate the conditions of such partnerships. The force of Bretherton's argument is that these roles can be reductive, instrumentalist and functionalist processes of 'co-option, competition, and commodification' [2010: 2; see also Pennington 2020]. He argues that the church should not derive its social and political role and vision from outside of its belief and practice, which would recognise religion's critical role in sustaining social and political relations. One important question it provokes is on whose terms and on whose frame of reference recognition is made, what misinterpretations and misunderstandings might follow, and, moreover, what effect this has on social and political relations. We might see this as the political and policy equivalent of Milbank's [2006 (1990)] excoriation

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<sup>2</sup> his direct concern is with the Anglican Church.

of the social sciences, and particularly social theory, as effectively ‘policing the sublime’. This point of the depoliticisation of religion raises the important issue of the policy implications of the altered character of the relationship between state and religion, although such considerations are necessarily beyond the scope of this article, where the focus returns to multiculturalism’s conceptualisations of religion more specifically.

Taking these positions from the political theologians discussed above into account, multiculturalism requires a conceptual rethink of how its own terms might effectively draw the religious ethos, motivations and orientations as part of an argumentative public square and its contribution to the public good into the language and cognitive frames of the secular. The arrangements that multiculturalism might more readily and unproblematically accept in positive terms are in fact more problematic than appears. Chaplin has argued, for instance, that if public institutions do not operate on the basis of faith being a relevant factor that needs its own due consideration, they will by default tend to disregard it with secularising effects [Chaplin 2008: 23]. This is something that multiculturalism has so far said nothing about but represents a clear challenge for multicultural thinking and how and why institutional political relations occur. Nevertheless, multiculturalism has the capacity to accommodate such a position. There is a clear parallel between a multiculturalist position that argues “We must accept what is important to people, and we must be even-handed between the different identity formations” [Modood 2015 [1997]: 170], on the one hand, and, on the other hand for example, Williams’ position on a multiculturalism “that brings into public democratic debate the most significant motivating elements in people’s convictions about human dignity and destiny” [2012: 108-109]. This is significant in so far as a core part of the methodology of multicultural political theory is that the experiences of the groups themselves must be an important part of the considerations of reaching normative judgements.

What is perhaps more at issue is not so much a lack of capacity within multiculturalism’s terms, i.e. that multiculturalism is necessarily in conflict with these arguments from political theology, but that it does require an articulation of how multiculturalism might be compatible, and therefore, how these positions might be consistent with and able to come under the umbrella of an expansive multiculturalism that can be inclusive of the religious on its own terms, not merely as a proxy for ethnicity or a concern of anti-racism, and also push multiculturalism to address questions that it has so far said little or nothing about. This is as much

a matter of epistemic inclusion as it is institutional arrangements, where epistemic openness requires that multiculturalism pays attention to religion within its own scope. While multiculturalism has focussed on the latter, it has said little about the former in these terms. It requires then that multiculturalism be a part of critically questioning the scope and character of such relations and accommodations, and that it considers questions of religion and faith as such in these. To return to the first aspect noted at the opening of this section, this applies, on the one hand, to the established Church of England. While it might be right to insist that a Church operating as a national church play a positive role in facilitating the inclusion of faith in the public sphere in general, and religious minorities in particular, the Church cannot be functionally limited in such a way where it loses its own distinction.

We can develop this further looking at how Chaplin [2021] distinguished between two types of equality important for considering the place of religion in law, policy and the public imagination. Chaplin argues that while religious pluralism as freedom of conscience has been secured, a type of *ethical* pluralism in which religious groups can exercise their freedom to practice and live by alternative value systems is curtailed. Chaplin observes how where there is tension between, on the one hand, the freedom for religious organisations to operate according to their religious ethos and values, and, on the other hand, more equality driven perspectives, it is the latter that tends to prevail and thus there has been a trend towards more restrictions on religious freedoms. Chaplin cites well-known legal cases, such as where a Catholic adoption agency was ordered to place children with same-sex couples, going against their conscience and moral doctrine, or lose their charitable status, and where a marriage registrar in an area of London who refused to conduct civil partnerships for same-sex couples on account of her Christian faith was threatened with dismissal, and lost her case at the Court of Appeal and at the European Court of Human Rights. In both of these cases, as well as others, Chaplin argues that ethical pluralism and the freedom of organisations to operate according to their religious conscience and values were restricted in favour of them adopting a secular view and mode of operation. Moreover, and importantly, there were reasonable forms of accommodation that could be made in both cases; there were other registrars available to conduct same-sex civil partnerships, for instance. The balance between the freedom of religion and equalities law in these and other cases is perhaps inevitably difficult and riddled with tensions, but, what Chaplin argues is that we should seek greater parity and more fully explore matters and options of reasonable accommodation of ethical pluralism where possible.



A second point relates to the final part of Williams' quote above – 'people's convictions about human dignity and destiny'. This also points to how multiculturalism's own orientation, its starting point of negative difference, must also be reconsidered. The remit here is wider. It is not focussed on, nor does it emanate from, concerns derived predominantly from considering minority-majority relations. For what these positions emanating from political theology emphasise is not, or certainly not merely, the idea of turning a negative into a positive, but of beginning with positive conceptions themselves. Thus, when Modood, talking about the positive inclusion of religious groups emphasises a minority identity: "The demand here is that religion in general, *or at least the category of 'Muslim' in particular* should be a category by which the inclusiveness of social institutions may be judged..." [2019: 120, emphasis added], is too narrowly conceived for a wider post-liberal political vision. This requires greater latitude needed for faith-based providers to offer services in ways consistent with their values and shift from an attitude of the state permitting or admitting faith-based organisations into the public sector to one of the state supporting and integrating them [Chaplin 2021].

However, we need not see multiculturalism as too narrowly hampered and can point to two of its features to show how multiculturalism might be well positioned as an accommodative post liberal form of politics when it comes to considering the place of religion. The first is multiculturalism's emphasis on group rights alongside individual rights already suggests that such a position on ethical pluralism can be consistent with it, although the terms need to be worked out and we can only be suggestive of this here.

The other is multiculturalism's emphasis on dialogue. Multiculturalism proposes a form of dialogical hermeneutics that may be well-placed as a framework to develop not just inter-faith, and intra-faith, dialogue, but also dialogue between faith and non-faith partners, and a basis for democratic political dialogue more broadly in a context of ethical pluralism. A form of multicultural dialogue, or what Modood has called a 'multi-logue', draws on the Gadamerian concept of horizons as a procedural way of engaging value pluralism. This means recognising 'being-value' [Gadamer 2013 [1960]: 246] and investigating this situated in social and political relations. Our horizons are our 'range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point' (Gadamer 2013 [1960]: 313). Underlying horizons are prejudices, but prejudice for Gadamer can have either a positive or negative value and are more generally the fore-meanings of how "we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society, and state in which we live"



[2013 [1960]: 289]. This is an important part of the dialogue, and cornerstone of a multicultural dialogical approach as it recognises the identity-richness of the dialogue partners and the context in which they work. Crucially, understanding and accounting for these prejudices have the goal of opening us up rather than closing us off to understanding, such that ‘the solution is *genuinely open*’ and constructive of relations [Modood 2017: 86, emphasis added]. This then can provide the basis of multicultural engagements of value or ethical pluralism and for working out a common policy.

### Conclusion

What we might call the post-liberal moment is at least in important part suggested by the reality of multiculturalism, and efforts to think about the implications of this for society and politics.

Multiculturalism as a political theory, at least in the variant considered here, has responded to this by questioning important premises of liberalism, notably of its emphasis on individual rights and the idea of neutrality. To the former it highlights that such formal rights can never be ‘blind’, and that individual rights require balancing with group rights. To the latter, it holds that neutrality is a myth that masks its own cultural particularity.

Part of multiculturalism’s response has also been to argue for the public good of religion, and that religion can and should be positively supported in the public sphere through state-religion connections. In this it chimes with strands of post-liberal thought that emphasise value pluralism, and especially those, prominent in British post-liberal thought, that are particularly concerned with the place of religion in society and politics. Multiculturalism, however, lacks a clear and coherent statement in these terms. This is partly because its focus has in large part been more narrowly focussed on minority-majority issues, especially those more directly centred on Muslims, and partly because as a result some of its core concepts and assumptions have obscured more particularly religious concerns. This is notable, for instance, in its fundamental identity concept of *ethno-religious*, which it derives principally out of concerns of anti-racism, but which struggles to capture anything distinctly religious, and which has been accused of being unnecessarily secularising [Murad 2020; Birt 2018]. These shortcomings have been shown through an engagement with thought emerging from the vantage point of a few notable political theologians, where it was seen how multiculturalism’s conception of identity and of institutional arrangements under state-religion connections

required further consideration. In important ways then, a multicultural response to the questions raised is not immediately obvious.

Nevertheless, this article has argued that multiculturalism does offer the resources to accommodate the debates that have been highlighted in relation to religion and its accommodation in the public sphere. It has done so by drawing from multiculturalism's wider resources and orientations, in some cases re-orienting them. It has shown how multiculturalism's premises of even-handedness between identity formations when more evenly applied, its emphasis on group rights alongside individual rights, its emphasis on dia- (or multi-)logue can be considered in ways conducive to an articulation of a form of multicultural politics where questions of religion can be taken on their own terms. This article has been suggestive in this regard, while a fuller articulation must be the subject of future work.

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## *Secularism and Multiculturalism: Interrelated Political Challenges<sup>1</sup>*

**Abstract:** There may be various reasons to rethink political secularism but, in my view, the most significant today, certainly in Western Europe, is what I understand as the multicultural challenge. It is clear West European states are now highly challenged by the issues posed by post-immigration ethno-religious diversity, and that the new Muslim settlements of the last fifty years or so are at the centre of it. This has forced new thinking, not only about questions of social integration but also about the role of religion in relation to the state and citizenship. Accordingly, a fundamental issue that many thought had long been settled has re-emerged with new vitality and controversy, namely political secularism, especially as it articulates with questions of tolerance, recognition, and governance. My own contribution to the climate of ‘re-thinking secularism’ has been to argue that what is sometimes talked about as the ‘post-secular’ or a ‘crisis of secularism’ is, in Western Europe, quite crucially to do with the reality of *multiculturalism*.

**Keywords:** multiculturalism, secularism, Western Europe, religion

**Abstrakt:** Istnieje szereg powodów, by raz jeszcze przemyśleć sekularyzm polityczny. Najbardziej znaczącym z nich jest wyzwanie wielokulturowości, z którym mierzy się Europa Zachodnia. Państwa zachodnioeuropejskie są obecnie bardzo skoncentrowane na wyzwaniach wynikających z różnorodności etniczno-religijnej będącej następstwem imigracji. Nowe osiedla muzułmańskie powstałe na przestrzeni ostatnich pięćdziesięciu lat znajdują się w samym centrum tego problemu. Okoliczności te zmuszają do nowego sposobu myślenia, nie tylko o kwestiach integracji społecznej, ale także o roli religii w odniesieniu do państwa i obywatelstwa. Fundamentalna kwestia, którą wielu uważało za dawno rozstrzygniętą, wyłania się ponownie z nową siłą i budzi nowe kontrowersje – jest nią sekularyzm polityczny, szczególnie w kontekście tolerancji, uznania i zarządzania. Autor

<sup>1</sup> This account of my *Essays on Secularism and Multiculturalism* is derived from the Introduction to that book [Modood 2019].

niniejszego artykułu twierdzi, że postsekularyzm czy kryzys sekularyzmu mają w Europie Zachodniej dość zasadniczy związek z rzeczywistością wielokulturowości.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wielokulturowość, sekularyzm, Europa Zachodnia, religia

There may be various reasons to rethink political secularism but, in my view, the most significant today, certainly in Western Europe, is what I understand as the multicultural challenge. It is clear West European states are now highly challenged by the issues posed by post-immigration ethno-religious diversity and that the new Muslim settlements of the last fifty years or so are at the centre of it. This has forced new thinking, not only about questions of social integration but also about the role of religion in relation to the state and citizenship. Accordingly, a fundamental issue that many thought had long been settled has re-emerged with new vitality and controversy, namely political secularism, especially as it articulates with questions of tolerance, recognition, and governance. My own contribution to the climate of 're-thinking secularism' has been to argue that what is sometimes talked about as the 'post-secular' or a 'crisis of secularism' is, in Western Europe, quite crucially to do with the reality of *multiculturalism*. By which I mean not just the fact of new ethno-religious diversity but the presence of a multiculturalist approach to this diversity: the idea that equality must be extended from uniformity of treatment to include respect for difference; recognition of public/private interdependence rather than a dichotomized entity as in classical liberalism; the public recognition and institutional accommodation of minorities; the reversal of marginalisation and a remaking of national citizenship so that all can have a sense of belonging to it. This multiculturalist challenge, at one time seen to go with the flow of liberalism – of human rights, racial equality, decomposition of collectives such as the nation – is properly understood as requiring not just the reform and extension of liberal democratic institutions but a re-thinking of liberalism [Levey 2019]. Equally, the question arises, with greater and greater force, what implication does the emergence of this ethnoreligious socio-political complex have for political secularism (indeed for secular institutions such as workplaces, schools, hospitals, universities etc more generally). These are the themes of my *Essays on Secularism and Multiculturalism* [2019].

The first step of my argument is to show that Islamophobia is a form of cultural racism. The next step is to show that anti-racism, whether in terms of difference-blind neutral liberal state or in terms of active de-Othering, is not enough. We

need a conception of equal citizenship that brings together the equality of same treatment with the equality of respect for difference, in short, multiculturalism. Combining a sociology of cultural racism, an analysis of several Western European political controversies involving Muslims and a political theory of multiculturalism, I show that equal citizenship requires a difference-sensitive accommodation of Muslim and other religious identities and that this means revisiting and rethinking the concept of political secularism. I distinguish between the US religious freedom-based separation of church and state, a French style marginalisation of organised religion in the public space and, thirdly, what I argue is the dominant mode of political secularism in western Europe. I call this 'moderate secularism' and I elaborate its norms as a Weberian ideal type or contextualised political theory, demonstrating that it does not consist of a separation of religion and the state. It in fact includes state recognition of and state support for religion (e.g., all the states of the EU, including France, fund specific faith schools or instruct specific Christian faiths in state schools [Stepan 2011: 217]) but insists that religious authority must not control political authority. In giving primacy to liberal democratic constitutionalism, it marries a conception of religious freedom with an understanding that religion can be a public good - or harm - and that the state may need to assist it in achieving that good. I argue that Muslims can be and should be accommodated within moderate secularism; and to do so is to achieve an egalitarian integration, a multicultural secularism.

### **Religion and Multicultural Accommodation**

How in Western Europe groups and controversies defined in terms of race or foreignness came to be redefined in terms of religion and how the accommodation of Muslims came to be the dominant issue in relation to multiculturalism has now been well established [Modood, 2005 and 2007/2013]. Part I of my *Essays* probes further this trajectory of racialisation in relation to issues such as Islamophobia, hate speech and Muslim assertiveness. The rest of the book looks at how these controversies have a multiculturalist aspect and as such have stimulated debates about what was thought to be the dead topic of secularism; and reflect a little on the modes of analysis I deploy.

This identarian thrust of anti-racism, besides showing the religious roots of anti-racism in the US in the third quarter of the twentieth century, and the influence of that movement in Britain, is, however, critical to the emergence and development of multiculturalism. Whilst Canada's state multiculturalism and the contribution of its illustrious political theorists such as Charles Taylor, Will Kymlicka, James

Tully and Joe Carens is, with good reason, often cited as a beacon of multiculturalism, in Britain, African American influence is stronger. It gave to British multiculturalism its bottom-up and anti-racist character, which is not so evident in say Canada or Australia, where in both cases multiculturalism was largely led by European-origin white ethnic minority lobbies and elite policymakers [Uberoi 2009 and 2016, Levey 2008, Modood 2022, forthcoming]<sup>2</sup>.

This is partly because group identities are not just a 'multi', but groups can shift from say a race to a religious focus, or fuse foci, for example, by combining ethnicity and religion. Moreover, religion itself is, of course, a multi-dimensional activity. For example, there is scripture, doctrine, worship, organisation, codes of living, community, art, architecture and so on. The multicultural interest is centred on an ethnoreligious identity group that needs to be protected against racism, and whose practices and symbols need to be accommodated in a respectful way in the public culture and institutions of a country in which currently they are marginalised or not recognised as part of that country. A good example of such an ethnoreligious group which has been subject to racialisation are the Jews. Jews could be understood to be followers of a religion, Judaism, but 'follow' here clearly cannot mean to believe in and strictly adhere to its rules. Many proud, self-defined Jews, who are recognised as Jews by fellow Jews, as well as non-Jews, are atheists and/or do not participate in approved collective worship and/or do not follow the rules of living, such as keeping a kosher kitchen or covering their heads. Indeed, it is perhaps better to think of Jews as a people with a religion, such that peoplehood and religion mutually influence each other, with religion a characteristic or a possession of a people, not of individuals per se. So, while Jews would not be the people that they are without Judaism, not every individual Jew has to be religious to be a Jew. Moreover, there can be sources of Jewish identity other than those that are the strictly religious, such as the Holocaust as a memory of a people or a collective commitment to the state of Israel. I hasten to add I am talking of a socio-political understanding of Jews, including the self-understanding of many Jews, not an understanding internal to Judaism. I am aware that different branches of Judaism have their own and differing criteria for defining who is a Jew, and that

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<sup>2</sup> Relatedly, it meant that British multiculturalism was built on and incorporated a prior focus on socio-economic issues, especially on racial disadvantage and social mobility. A happy consequence was that few in Britain thought socio-economic integration and ethnocultural accommodation were rival policy programmes as in the Netherlands, where the initial culturalist accommodation was abandoned in favour of socio-economic integration, as if one could only have one or the other. It has recently been argued that Norway too is exhibiting a bottom up multicultural struggle [Stokke 2019].



the differing criteria are a matter of great religious and – in so far as it pertains to the state of Israel – political dispute, both amongst different branches of Judaism and between them and non-religious Jews.

As with Jews, as with Muslims [and Hindus, Sikhs and so on, albeit not discussed here]. Various Islamic schools and sects have their own view on what is expected of a Muslim, and while they have some influence on how Muslims will decide who is and is not a fellow Muslim, as in the Jewish case, that is not decisive. Muslims also relate to each other as family members, as a community, as a political unity against Islamophobia or for justice for Palestinians, where non-religious Muslims, if they are not conspicuously anti-Islam, are taken to be Muslims. Muslims, in my book, are primarily understood in this way, namely as a people or ethnic groups with a religion, Islam, without any assumption that all individuals are religious or that the unity of the group is exclusively religious. In recognising they are a group or a people, we do not need to assume an exaggerated unity, just as in talking of black people in Britain or as an Atlantic diaspora we do not. Indeed, in thinking with my chosen category, ‘ethnoreligious’, we not only make explicit that we are talking about people not simply doctrines or organised religion, but these just being also a feature of the people, as in my example of the Jews, not exhaustive of the category. We also have a tool for recognising internal variation, especially in terms of ethnic group aspects. For example, many British Muslim parents have a strong preference that their children marry a Muslim. In communicating this to their offspring, whether they are aware or not, they are likely to assume ‘Muslim’ means a specific ethnicity: for example, Pakistani parents may feel that their offspring have not understood them if one of them introduces a Somali Muslim as a prospective partner. The parents’ image of a Muslim – at least in a context like this – is likely to be an ethnoreligious one, namely of a Pakistani Muslim. This ethnic dimension can be found at the very heart of the religion. Of the more than 1,100 mosques in Britain for which data are available, a large majority are mainly mono-ethnic and less than five percent have a multi-ethnic management committee [Naqshbandi 2017].

Thinking of groups such as Jews and Muslims as ethnoreligious has another advantage in that these terms do not just describe religiosity or people in terms of religion. They are groups who are racialised as a homogeneous, single group with uniform characteristics (sometimes this refers to a biological appearance, but it does not have to [Modood 2005]). This is done because the group in question is perceived to be a threat or inferior or simply exotic; and each of these



can be the basis for discrimination and unfavourable treatment of members of the group.

This complicates the phenomenon of racism. For example, Asian Muslims suffer from colour racism. But they also suffer from cultural racism. The perception of such Muslims, whether it be in some hard-core racist discourses, such as those of the British National Party, or implicit in wider British society, is that their defects lie deep in their culture rather than in a biology that produces their culture. This means that Asian Muslims, more than, say, black Britons, suffer double racism. This does not mean that they suffer more racism—such as harassment, discrimination, and institutional exclusion—than blacks. That is a complex empirical question, and one would have to be sensitive to the fact that the answer may vary by class, age, gender, geography, social arena, and so on. I think that systematic research of this sort would indeed show that the racism against Asian Muslims has been underestimated since at least the 1960s. My point is that research of this kind requires a conceptualization of racism that includes cultural racism as well as colour racism, and an understanding that Asians suffer a double or a compound racism.<sup>3</sup>

Racialised groups should be protected against incitement to hatred. The latter involves not just the danger of immediate violence, but the production as well of a climate of opinion or emotions, or the exploitation of that climate; not just the arousal of certain hatreds in the dominant group but also a fear and humiliation in the victim group that can lead in turn to conflict and violence. Whilst the purpose of such laws is to protect people not religious beliefs, the people in question may be people marked by religious identity: Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland, Jews and Muslims in Britain. It is evident that some Muslims are connected to aspects of their faith with such deep emotion that disrespectful attacks upon it will cause them the kind of distress that is caused to other groups by reference to (say) images of black bestiality or by holocaust-denial [Modood 1993]. Add to this a set of domestic and geopolitical circumstances in which these Muslims – and here we might include Muslims as well who are less intense in their religion – feel that they are being targeted and harassed as culturally backward, as disloyal and as terrorists, in short as not belonging to Britain, as unwanted and under threat. Does this not explain the explosions of protest,

<sup>3</sup> It should be clear that arguing that some groups suffer more racism and related disadvantages than others is quite different from an a priori ‘hierarchy of oppression’ argument [Modood 2021].

anger and violence sparked by *The Satanic Verses*, for example, or to the cartoons of the prophet Muhammad published in the Danish newspaper, *Jyllands-Posten* [Modood et al 2006, Levey and Modood, 2009]? Such cases may or may not be caught by a suitably framed law but thinking about such vivid examples is necessary to understand what should be prohibited and what should be censored. Indeed, censure is important for those who, like myself, want to limit the use of the law here. To rule out legal restrictions *and* censure is to leave minorities friendless and risk developing violent responses today and deep-seated divisions for the long term [*Essays* chapter 3].

### **Religion and Secular Accommodation**

The emergence of the non-racial forms of minority identity assertiveness that I mentioned in the last section was not anticipated or welcomed by British (or European) politicians or society. Similarly, just as the sociology of race for some time had a poor and distorted understanding of the identities of Muslims and the kinds of exclusion they experience in the West – a ‘misrecognition’ of an ethnoreligious group in terms of race and class – political theory, including political theory of multiculturalism, has been slow to rise to the occasion [Parekh 1990 and 2006 [2000], Modood 2013 [2007]]. If we have to think normatively of the place of religion in a polity and ultimately a multicultural citizenship, then existing political theory is not a good place to start, because it has too limited a traction with actual liberal democratic secular polities in which the challenge of a multicultural citizenship is being exercised. Normally, theories of political secularism assume that it consists of separation of state and religion and/or state neutrality in relation to religion. Yet even a cursory glance at what we might take to be secular states shows this to be false. Nearly a third of all western democracies have an official religion and more than half of all 47 democracies in the Polity dataset officially or unofficially give preference to one religion. Indeed, most of the others give preference to more than one religion [Perez and Fox, 2018]. So, let us seek greater empirical traction than political theorists usually do by beginning with a minimalist understanding of secularism, namely, the view that there are two significant modes of authority, political and religious, and each must be allowed to enjoy a certain autonomy within their own spheres of concern. Each actual political instantiation or normative concept will be more than this but by beginning with this minimalist concept, we will not take a particular interpretation or set of institutions to exhaust the possibilities that exist. Rather, it enables us to work with the full range of empirical cases without normatively excluding them or misdescribing them empirically.

Even ‘autonomy’ of spheres is perhaps too strong to cover all the cases we observe in the world, and it is best to just recognise there are two sets of institutions and activities, the political and the religious, each to some extent, sometimes to a limited extent, organises itself in its own way, with its own conception and practice of authority. Specifically, political secularism is the claim that religious authority should not control political authority in the sphere of government, law, and citizenship. Note that this understanding of secularism does not give automatic priority to religious freedom, conscience, toleration, or democracy. Of course, all these are important but for me they are constituent features of liberal democracy and so become features of secularism in a liberal democracy. One such version of secularism, which I identify by a grounded, empirical-normative focus on the institutions and practices of countries like Britain, is what I call ‘moderate secularism’, and it does indeed give an important place to freedom of religion [chapter 8]. Yet, at the same time when one considers the former Soviet Union, the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of Turkey and even aspects of *laïcité*, one sees that there is no necessary connexion between religious freedom and secularism, and secularists in certain times and places prize secularism above freedom of religion - as in France.

Nor should we attribute liberals’ concern to not treat religion as special [Eisgruber and Sager 2009] to secularism. For secularists, religion *is* special; their concern to delimit the sphere of religion is not extended to economics, science, the arts and so on but is singularly targeted on religion. Moreover, moderate secularism is characterised by an additional specialness as regards religion. It recognises that religion has a public good (and not just a harmful) dimension, and this may be supported by the state if it is judged by the state that it assists in bringing out the good. It does not promote the idea of political authority/autonomy in an anti-religious way, rather it allows organised religion and religious motives to play their part in contributing to the public good. This may be taken to be a form of privileging religion and of course it is. What must be borne in mind is that few if any states uniquely privilege religion. Whether our criteria are the expenditure of tax revenues, management by the government or symbolic status as ‘national’ or teaching in state schools, most states privilege various sectors of the economy, science and universities, museums, areas of natural beauty, the arts and sport and so on – all matters strictly outside the sphere of political authority. Therefore, apart from extreme libertarians and anarchists, most of us rightly have no problem with the idea of state privileging various social activities and judge each case on its merits – what I call ‘multiplex privileging’ [Essays, chapter 10]. It may be that we think that religion is unworthy of privileging in some or all the above ways. Yet that is not the existing political context

in which multiculturalists are seeking egalitarian inclusion. Moreover, the liberal goal of state neutrality about culture or religion is impossible [Modood 2013 [2007]].<sup>4</sup> Indeed, there is a sense in which the separation of religion and state is not a neutral view about religion; it is a very definite view that favours some religions and attitudes to religion while disfavours religions that want a partnership with the state. Or, to put it another way, if non-separation of religion and the state is reflective of an ethical-cultural perspective – what following Rawls is referred to as ‘a conception of the good’ – then so is its negation, the separation of religion and politics. There may be good arguments for separation, but they describe few contemporary states and to pursue separation is not an ethically neutral position. Most liberal democratic states may not choose multiculturalism or to accommodate ethno-religious groups, but they are not prevented in doing so by their existing form of political secularism. That is my key conclusion here.

### **Multiculturalist Moderate Secularism**

Let me offer two examples of how I think multiculturalism and moderate secularism can be brought together. It is meant to illustrate how the two ‘isms’ may work together, not be an institutional blueprint to be applied everywhere.<sup>5</sup> It also gives an indication of how I think majority and minority identities can be part of a national framework.

The first example is that of the Church of England, which clearly is an institutionalised feature of England’s and Britain’s historical identity. This is reflected in symbolic and substantive aspects of the constitution. For example, 26 Anglican bishops sit by virtue of that status in the upper house of the UK legislature, the House of Lords. It is the Archbishop of Canterbury that presides over the installation of a new head of state, namely the coronation of the monarch. I do not see the presence of a state church, such as the ‘established’ Church of England, as contrary to political secularism<sup>6</sup>, if it does not impinge upon political authority, is consistent

<sup>4</sup> Worth noting is how some political theorists, who argue that cultural neutrality on the part of the state is impossible and so support the state endorsement of one language, argue that state endorsement of any number of religions is a wrongful breach of neutrality. It is interesting that such discussions usually include reference to Quebec [Kymlicka 2001a; Bouchard and Taylor 2008].

<sup>5</sup> I show how my key concepts have some traction in relation to Flanders, Belgium in Modood 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Laborde 2018 has also come to the view that a Church of England type of establishment – ‘modest establishment’ – is compatible with minimal secularism [in Laborde 2013, she argued that it was compatible with a Rawlsian liberalism but not republican liberal secularism].

with liberal democratic constitutionalism, and contributes to the advancement of the public good – which, in the context of religious diversity, includes the promotion of multiculturalism. Given the rapidity of changes that are affecting British national identity, and the way in which religion, sometimes in a divisive way, is making a political reappearance, I think it would be wise not to discard lightly this historic aspect of British identity, which continues to be of importance to many even when few attend Church of England services and when that Church may perhaps have been overtaken by Catholicism as the religion with the most participants in the country. Yet, in my advocacy of a multicultural Britain, I would like to see the Church of England share these constitutional privileges—which should perhaps be extended—with other faiths. However, multiculturalism here does not mean crude “parity”. My expectation is that even in the context of an explicit multifaith arrangement, the Church of England would enjoy a rightful precedence in religious representation in the House of Lords and in the coronation of the monarch, and this would not be just a crude majoritarianism but be based on its historical contribution. To this must be added the multicultural condition, namely the Church’s potential to play a leading role in the fostering and development of a multicultural national identity, state, and society. Both the historical and the multicultural contributions to national identity have a presumptive quality, and usually they qualify each other, yet where they are complementary, the case for “establishment” is enhanced, and most of all where there is simultaneously a process of inclusion of non-Anglican faith communities.

My second example is about religion in non-denominational state schools.<sup>7</sup> I think multicultural moderate secularism should support a compulsory religious education (RE) in which children of all faiths and none are taught about a variety of faith traditions and their past and current effects upon individuals and societies, upon the shaping of humanity, taught to classes comprising those of all religions and of none. Such classes should certainly include the contribution of humanism as well as the atheistic critique of religion and can be combined with ethics. In many countries, there are advocates for RE as part of a national curriculum. The main issue in relation to majority precedence is in relation to religious instruction (RI), the induction into a specific faith. Broadly speaking, there are two majoritarian possibilities. We have a society where there is a majority religion and that alone is allowed as RI, and minorities might be exempted from those classes, but no

<sup>7</sup> I am not here discussing state-funded faith schools, which are common in many European countries. For discussion of such schools and why such funding should be extended to Muslim faith schools, see Meer [2007] and Tinker [2009].

alternative religious instruction is provided. Or secondly, the majority view is that there should be no RI in state schools, as in the USA or in France (except in French state-funded religious schools). Is it fair to impose either of these policies on minorities that do want RI?

That is an appropriate subject for a national dialogue, but if after that certain minorities want RI as well as RE, then a truly national system, certainly a multicultural system, must make an effort to accommodate minority RI. In my understanding then, under both the majoritarian possibilities, the minorities should have the right to have their religions instructed or worshipped within the national system. On the other hand, minorities do not have the right to stop the majority from including the instruction of their religion. We should not, for example, ask schools to cease Christian RI or worship or celebrating Christmas *because* of the presence of Muslims or Hindus; rather, we should extend the celebrations to include, for example, Eid and Diwali. Such separate classes and faith-specific worship needs to be balanced with an approach that brings all the children together and into dialogue; indeed, without that it would be potentially divisive of the school and of society. But where that is in place, voluntary pursuit of one's own faith or philosophical tradition completes the multicultural approach to the place of religion in such schools. Learning together about different faiths, including what they have in common and – separately – being instructed in or inducted into one's faith community heritage as a normal school occurrence and not something excluded from the school community are then the two mutually balancing aspects of multiculturalism.

- i) In this example, I draw on three principles which are derived from my discussion of multiculturalism in the *Essays*:
- ii) Schools should promote cross-cultural understanding and nurture inclusivity so all can develop a common sense of belonging
- iii) The presence of minority identities should be accommodated on an *additive* not a subtractive basis

The needs of minorities should not simply be understood in terms of majority preferences: just because the majority does not want something (e.g., to display faith through dress or RI classes), it does not mean there should not be institutional provision for a minority if it strongly feels it needs it and it is not harming anyone.

These two examples also illustrate an important point about national culture. The general liberal and civic nationalist approach is to say that diversity requires a

‘thinning’ of the national culture so that minorities may feel included and do not feel that a majoritarian culture is imposed on them. This is also the approach of liberal multicultural nationalists. Will Kymlicka argues that ‘liberal states exhibit a much narrower conception of national identity. In order to make it possible for people from different ethnocultural backgrounds to become full and equal members of the nation....In so far as liberal nation-building involves diffusing a common national culture throughout the territory of the state, it is a very narrow form of culture...’ [Kymlicka 2001b: 55-56].<sup>8</sup> Yet the two examples above are not a dilution of moderate secularism or of religion in state schools: they are a pluralistic enhancement. Multiculturalism adds to the national culture by not disestablishing the national church but bringing other faiths into relationship with it. Indeed, in general, a multicultural society requires more state action to not just respect the diversity but to bring it together in a common sense of national belonging and that in many instances means adding to a sense of national culture not hollowing it out. In the kinds of cases my book is concerned with, the bringing of minority faith communities into playing a role in aspects of the national or public culture alongside Christians and humanists requires us to think differently about the country, and so may require an appropriate public narrative about the kind of country we now are [CMEB 2000]. In this way, making secularism multicultural means making our national identity multicultural; and conversely, making our national citizenship multicultural requires making secularism multicultural – what we might call ‘multicultural nationalism’ [Modood 2018, Modood and Sealy 2021].<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> On how to evaluate if a minority is alienated from a national religious framework, see Modood and Thompson 2021].

<sup>9</sup> The multi-continental GREASE project, on which this contribution is based, has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement number [770640]. To see the framework for global comparative analysis that has now been developed, see Tariq Modood & Thomas Sealy [2022] Developing a framework for a global comparative analysis of the governance of religious diversity, Religion, State and Society, DOI: 10.1080/09637494.2022.2117526.



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## *The United Nations, the Holy See, and the Global Reset*

**Abstract:** The purpose of the paper is to consider the Holy See's position on what has been called the "global reset" through a consideration of its key statements and activities in relation to the World Economic Forum, a non-governmental organization (NGO), and the United Nations Organization (UN), an intergovernmental organization. To this end, the paper is divided into three parts. Part I defines terms and presents a backdrop for the discussion. Part II discusses the work of Klaus Schwab, Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF), who views COVID-19 as the trigger to launch what he describes as the "global reset", which is discussed and critiqued. Part III provides an overview of the current activities of the Holy See within the UN system, which seems to closely align with global reset initiatives of the WEF. Justifications for the Holy See's position are considered as well as voices critical of the same. The paper concludes that the Holy See has embraced certain global reset initiatives and is intentionally using language like that of the WEF; however, it claims that its approach is grounded in scripture and a prudent application of the social doctrine of the Church. Others disagree.

**Key words:** The Holy See, "global reset", UN, World Economic Forum

**Abstrakt:** Celem niniejszego opracowania jest przyjrzenie się stanowisku Stolicy Apostolskiej w sprawie „globalnego resetu” poprzez analizę jej kluczowych wypowiedzi i działań w odniesieniu do Światowego Forum Ekonomicznego (WEF), będącego organizacją pozarządową (NGO), oraz Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych (ONZ), będącej organizacją międzyrządową. Artykuł został podzielony na trzy części. W części pierwszej zdefiniowano pojęcia i przedstawiono tło dyskusji. W części drugiej omówiono i poddano krytyce prace Klausa Schwaba, przewodniczącego Światowego Forum Ekonomicznego (WEF), który postrzega COVID-19 jako impuls do rozpoczęcia procesu określanego przez niego mianem „globalnego resetu”. Część trzecia zawiera przegląd obecnych działań Stolicy Apostolskiej w ramach systemu ONZ, które wydają się ściśle powiązane z inicjatywami WEF dotyczącymi globalnego resetu. Rozważane są zarówno uzasadnienia stanowiska Stolicy Apostolskiej, jak i głosy krytyczne wobec niego.

Artykuł stwierdza, że Stolica Apostolska przyjęła pewne inicjatywy globalnego resetu i celowo używa języka podobnego do tego, którym posługuje się WEF, jednocześnie utrzymując, że jej podejście jest ugruntowane w Piśmie Świętym i stanowi roztropne zastosowanie społecznej doktryny Kościoła. Nie wszyscy zgadzają się z taką oceną.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Stolica Apostolska, “globalny reset”, ONZ, Światowe Forum Ekonomiczne

## Introduction

The purpose of the paper is to consider the Holy See’s position on what has been called the “global reset” through a consideration of its key statements and activities in relation to the World Economic Forum, a non-governmental organization (NGO), and the United Nations Organization (UN), an intergovernmental organization. To this end, the paper is divided into three parts. Part I defines terms and presents a backdrop for the discussion. Part II discusses the work of Klaus Schwab, Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF), who views COVID-19 as the trigger to launch what he describes as the “global reset”, which is discussed and critiqued. Part III provides an overview of the current activities of the Holy See within the UN system, which seems to closely align with global reset initiatives of the WEF. Justifications for the Holy See’s position are considered as well as voices critical of the same. The paper concludes that the Holy See has embraced certain global reset initiatives and is intentionally using language like that of the WEF; however, it claims that its approach is grounded in scripture and a prudent application of the social doctrine of the Church. Others disagree.

## I. Terminology

The constitutional structure of the UN is governed by the 1945 Charter of the United Nations. The UN consists of six principal bodies: Secretariat, General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Trusteeship Council (now defunct), and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Today, with 193 member states, a quick perusal of the UN Organization Chart displays a sprawling network of principle organs, subsidiary bodies, funds, programs, and semi-autonomous specialized agencies, all of which are commonly referred to as the “United Nations System”.

The Holy See, the Pope in the narrow sense, and the Pope and Roman Curia, in the larger sense, has been a non-member permanent observer state to the United

Nations since 1964. After a failed challenge to reduce the Holy See's status to that of a NGO, due to bitterness over the Holy See's strong negotiating skills at the major UN conferences in the 1990s, its state-like status was reaffirmed in the 2004 General Assembly Resolution (A/58/314) on the Participation of the Holy See in the work of the United Nations. The Holy See is the name given to the international personality of the Pope within the international legal system, which is separate and distinct, on the one hand, from Vatican City State, a sovereign state under the authority of its Monarch (the Pope), and on the other hand, from the Catholic Church, a visible and invisible faith community.

In 1971, the economist, Klaus Schwab, founded the WEF and made the case for companies to serve not only its shareholders but all stakeholders. WEF promotes what is called "valued stakeholders" to work in partnership with governments and the UN. The WEF is not an accredited NGO within the UN system, which would confine it to lobby states and UN bodies in the hallways where decisions are not made, and so WEF does not appear on the list of accredited NGOs, with consultative status, on the website of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). On the contrary, WEF presents itself as an international body equal in status to states and the UN, in terms of influence and prestige. The underlining premise of the valued stakeholder approach is that states and intergovernmental entities are no longer the dominant actors on the international level but should work alongside private stakeholders in international governance (e.g., big tech, pharm, and business).

## **II. The WEF, UN, and Global Reset**

### **A. General Considerations**

For fifty years now, Schwab has been developing his theory of economics, private-public partnerships, and international governance through books, WEF reports, and activities, in Davos, Switzerland, and in collaboration with world leaders. WEF activities and statements are available on its website. WEF is an international body under Swiss law, pursuant to a 2015 agreement entered into between WEF and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. Schwab's theories are explained in his books which include: "Fourth Industrial Revolution" (2016); "Shaping the Future of the Fourth Industrial Revolution" (2018); and "Stakeholder Capitalism: A Global Economy that Works for Progress, Peoples and Planet" (2021).

In 2020, Schwab popularized the term "global reset" with his co-authored book "COVID-19: The Great Reset" [2020]. On the website of the WEF, Schwab is quoted

as saying that the COVID-19 “pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine, and reset our world”. In other words, it is the impetus to transition into a new international form of governance characterized by Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). For the purposes of this paper, based on the discussions *infra*, the “global reset” refers to those who embrace strategic PPPs based on a socio-economic hybrid theory for international relations, which combines elements of capitalism, socialism, and communism with a co-relative reduction of the democratic processes.

WEF describes itself as an international organization for public-private cooperation, which entered into a strategic contractual relationship with the UN, on 13 June 2019. The UN-WEF Strategic Partnership Framework was signed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres and World Economic Founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab. The purpose of the agreement is to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. According to the pact, the UN and the WEF will work together on “private sector engagement, youth empowerment, communications, and outreach to mobilize action” in the following areas: 1) financing the 2030 Agenda; 2) climate change; 3) health; 4) digital cooperation; 5) gender equity and empowerment of women; and 6) education and skills [UN-WEF Agreement 2019]. In practice, the partnership includes presentations of the UN Secretary-General and other UN program heads at WEF meetings and UN networking with WEF hubs at the national level [ibid.].

### **B. Agenda 2030 For Sustainable Development**

Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is an all-encompassing global policy project that purports to offer a unified world vision of “sustainable development”, one that requires a transformation in economic, social, and environmental priorities and policies. Comprised of non-binding United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolutions, the Agenda includes:

- 1) a non-binding Declaration “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 Targets [A/RES/70/1, 2015]
- 2) an implementation review process with over 200 indicators related to the 169 targets of the UN Statistical Commission [A/RES/71/313, 2017; UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs (UNDSEA) Statistics Division]
- 3) the global financial framework, “Addis Ababa Action Agenda” (AAAA), which finances sustainable development through cooperation of multi-stakeholder

partnerships, including big tech, pharm, and business [A/RES/69/13, 2015; UNDSEA, Briefing Note].

In brief, Agenda 2030 includes SDGs that range from ending poverty and hunger to ensuring healthy lives, education, work, gender equality, sanitation and drinking water to the adoption of green policies related to food and agriculture, clean energy, human settlements, consumption and production, biodiversity, conservation, climate change and to the promotion of global partnerships for purposes of their implementation.

The High Level Political Forum (HLPF), comprised of Heads of State and government and other representatives, on sustainable development, plays “a central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes at the global level” [Agenda 2030 Decl. 90]. It is held every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly, which includes input from UN organs. For example, the review process is informed by certain reports, including:

- 1) an “annual SDG Progress Report” prepared by the Secretary General “in cooperation with the UN System, based on the global indicator framework and data produced by national statistical systems and information collected at the regional level” [ibid., no. 83].
- 2) the Global Sustainable Development Report “aimed to strengthen the science-policy interface at the HLPF [ibid.; cf. UN DESA Global Sustainability Report].
- 3) the AAAA, the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which sets out a comprehensive set of policy actions to help provide the trillions of dollars needed annually to implement Agenda 2030. It has its own review process which feeds into the Agenda 2030 review process.

Agenda 2030 has the goal of empowering domestic and international public finance programs and PPPs [Agenda 2030 Dcl. 43; SDGs 17.16, 17.17]; international financing institutions [Agenda 2030 Dcl. 44]; and the United Nations system [ibid. 46]. Taxation is to be expanded [ibid., SDG 17.1] as well as social welfare policies, “especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies”, under the guise of achieving “greater equality”. This will, in turn, improve “regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions” and strengthen “implementation of such regulations” [ibid., SDGs 10.4, 10.5]. In addition, there is to be access to universal health coverage [ibid., SDG. 3.7], including universal access to “sexual

and reproductive health and reproductive rights” [ibid., SDG 5.6], generally interpreted by UN organs and like-minded partners and states to encompass access to sterilization, contraception, and abortion. Finally, there is to be universal access to “modern energy services” [ibid., SDG 7.1] and the mobilization of \$100 billion annually for climate change initiatives for developed nations [ibid., SDG 13.a].

While few would complain about certain goals, such as ending poverty and hunger, there are no assurances that the overall global vision will not regress into “brutal forms of coercion” or a failed green plan that puts “our common future at risk” [Matikaninen 2019]. In support, one need only consider Agenda 2030 green policies implemented by global elites in Sri Lanka and The Netherlands [Blair 2022; Colton 2022]. Radical restrictions on fertilizer, livestock farming, and meat production have caused protests and riots, food shortages, starvation, and loss of livelihoods, while conflicts of interests of political leaders abound as they invest in projects designed to solve the problems their policies have created [ibid.]. Indeed, green policy supporter Bill Gates has recently “invested a half-billion dollars into [a] major online grocery retailer”, presumably to meet the needs associated with food scarcity problems created by the same policies [Mercola 2022].

What is clear is that “transforming our world” will cost an enormous amount of money and could cause untold human suffering under the guise of implementation through a violation of fundamental human rights, suppression of livelihoods, expropriation of property, and control of food production and distribution (referred to as “food security”). These negative effects, of course, which are considered as the price to be paid for the transition, would not slow but continue ever supported by continuous fear-based propaganda facilitated by big media, ever justified by collectivist or communist theories largely enforced through technological means and state law enforcement. By analogy, what should come to mind is Mao’s “Great Leap Forward” for China, launched in May 1958, pursuant to which he knew that “half of China [might] well have to die” [Chang, 2006: 519]. The plan was to “overtake capitalist countries in a fairly short time, and become one of the richest, most advanced and powerful countries in the world,” but without spending any money [ibid.]. It forced peasants to work longer and harder in the absence of safety measures and medical care, which resulted in failed public works, slave labor camps, and death by accident, overwork, and starvation [ibid., 519-535]. For some, Agenda 2030 represents a push for an advanced and powerful one world PPP regime, which has little empathy for the masses, while those in favor of such

a regime in the era of sustainable development, would likely protest the analogy noting that Mao failed because he did not invest money, which is not the case in Agenda 2030.

The totalitarian nature of Agenda 2030 is discernible from a quick perusal of the:

- 1) conception as a vision “for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society,” (no. 4) and where “no one will be left behind” (preamble para. 2).
- 2) Breadth, since it touches on all areas of “critical importance for humanity and the planet” (preamble para. 4).
- 3) end to “free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure the planet” (preamble para. 2).
- 4) means that involve “bold and transformative steps...to shift the world on a sustainable and resilient path,” (preamble para. 2), which we have already seen in Sri Lanka and The Netherlands will, by necessary implication, involve the sacrifice of certain fundamental human rights.
- 5) standardization of terminology, creation of structures, mechanisms, and coordination of financial partnerships to promote the narrative of “transforming our world” for a sustainable future.
- 6) applicability, in that “universal goals and targets” are said to “involve the entire world, developed and developing countries alike” (para. 5).

It is noteworthy that as an integral part of the global reset, Agenda 2030 has its roots firmly set in the UN Major World Conferences 1990s and 2000s [Agenda 2030 Decl. 11], where the Holy See (Pope), discussed *infra*, and like-minded states, battled against dehumanizing ideas that sought to limit freedom of religion and conscience, on the one hand, and to promote a universal right to abortion, disintegration of the natural family, and gender ideology, on the other hand. Such ideologies were promoted by certain like-minded member states, UN bureaucrats, and NGOs at each international meeting on development and related themes, such as the environment, human rights, population, women, children, and human settlements [Marucci 1997]. Such efforts were an attempt to generate a shared global vision of development through separate non-binding outcome documents, generally referred to by UN bureaucrats and like-minded states and NGOs as UN policy statements or soft law. The ideological battles have continued into the conference review processes that followed the original meetings. Disagreements among states remain to this very day.



Equally noteworthy is the current effort to strengthen the World Health Organization (WHO) [Agenda 2030 Dcl. SDG 3.9a]. With reference to the “Global Health Security Architecture”, in 2020, Director-General of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, advocated at the World Health Assembly (WHA) for a pandemic treaty between states for the purpose of strengthening pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. [Hemmati 2022]. The treaty drafting process was launched the following year [WHO WHA Press Release]. The Council of Europe favors the treaty [Council of Europe Policies], while the case against it has been made by others who favor “multi-stakeholder collaborations in which governments, intergovernmental institutions, and non-state actors” make and sustain commitments “without creating treaties” [Fidler 2021]. Others oppose the initiative because of an erosion of trust in the WHO over “the ineffective (and often harmful) management” of the COVID crisis, and its unwillingness to thoroughly investigate its origins, “seemingly giving in to Chinese resistance” [Hemmati]. Still, others oppose an expanded role of the WHO’s power on the grounds that it would minimize national sovereignty, and in effect, constitute the first department or Ministry of an impending one world government [ibid.].

### C. The WEF’s Global Reset Initiative and the CCP

The WEF website sets out elements of the “Great Reset Initiative”, namely the new ideas for “this unique moment in history”, which has been provided “by the disruption to economics, politics and our everyday life” that can be used “to catalyze a new approach to how our societies are run” [WEF The Great Reset]. According to the 2019 UN-WEF Strategic Partnership Framework for the 2030 Agenda, among other things, there is collaboration to

support countries to realize universal health coverage to achieve good health and well-being for all, within the context of the 2030 Agenda [and to] focus on addressing key emerging global health threats, including antimicrobial resistance, mental health and other issues that demand stronger multi-stakeholder partnerships and action.

On the topic of digital cooperation, the two organizations will “meet the needs of the *Fourth Industrial Revolution*”; advance global “digital governance and digital inclusiveness”; and promote “public-private partnerships” to address global reskilling for transition of about 1.8 billion young people (Emphasis is mine).

The expression, the “Fourth Industrial Revolution,” is the name of a book written by Schwab [2016]. He sums up the thesis in an interview, wherein he states that such a revolution changes who we are as human beings through digital, physical and biological systems [Epoch TV Loudan, 2022]. He foresees that within ten years, microchips will be inserted into our clothes, necks, and brains to connect us directly to the digital world; presumably, the same means will also bring man under control of the new regime [ibid]. He also foresees human beings as eating insects, something good for man and the environment; and foregoing property ownership, for presumably the same reason [ibid] Schwab recognizes that such a revolution might “robotize” humanity, which he views as dehumanizing, yet he fails to admit that subjecting man to a collectivist vision of the world is equally dehumanizing [WEF Fourth Industrial Revolution].

In its most pessimistic, dehumanized form, the Fourth Industrial Revolution may indeed have the potential to “robotize” humanity and thus to deprive us of our heart and soul. But as a complement to the best parts of human nature—creativity, empathy, stewardship—it can also lift humanity into a *new collective* and moral consciousness, based on a shared sense of destiny. It is incumbent on us all to make sure the latter prevails. (Emphasis is mine)

Schwab, in his book on the global reset, offers reflections on what the “post-pandemic” world might look like from macro and micro perspectives. Three defining secular characteristics or forces are considered: interdependence, velocity, and complexity, as well as five macro categories: economic, societal, geopolitical, environmental, and technological. Regarding certain micro trends and industry resets, only two possible paths are anticipated: one positive: inclusive, equitable, and environmentally friendly with harmonious societal repercussions under a surveillance regime; and one negative: individualistic, unequitable, wasteful with violent societal outcomes, not under a surveillance regime.

The global reset book rejects the idea of objective truth, underemphasizes the role of human rights, and omits any reference to the rule of subsidiarity. Moreover, the global surveillance network is seen as a positive development, and China is discussed without reference to the daily atrocities committed by the Chinese Community Party (CCP) against its own people. A revealing passage in its discussion about US-China relations is the following:

Views, of course, differ radically on which country is ‘right’ or going to come out ‘on top’ by benefiting from the perceived weaknesses and fragilities of the other. But it is essential to contextualize them. There isn’t a ‘right’ view and a ‘wrong’ view, but different and often diverging interpretations that frequently correlate with the origin, culture and personal history of those who profess them [Malleret, Schwab 2020: 120].

A few sentences later, the authors emphasize its fundamental relativistic viewpoint:

Pursuing further the ‘quantum world’ metaphor mentioned earlier, it could be inferred from quantum physics that objective reality does not exist [ibid.].

For those following events in China, we know that China’s social credit system, a digitalized personal identity and surveillance system, is used to control populations. This is just one of many tools employed by the totalitarian Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which also favors genocide of religious communities, slave labor, arbitrary imprisonment, torture, and forced organ harvesting [Adolphe, Szymanski 2021]. These atrocities are discussed in detail by a lay coalition formed to respond to the call of Cardinal Charles Bo, President of the Federation Asian Bishops Conferences, for an annual week of prayer, in May, for the “Peoples and Church of China” [Global Prayer for China; International Catholic Jurists Forum]. The details of the atrocities are recounted by experts and victims on two websites devoted to the cause [ibid.].

China’s zero tolerance approach to Covid has included, among other things, the lock down of millions of Shanghai’s residents without sufficient food, leading to death by starvation [Wolfe 2022]. More recently, about one million Chinese banking customers have complained after having their digitalized bank accounts frozen in rural Henan, which cited internal system upgrades as the problem. The amount frozen, in total, is about “39.7 billion yuan (\$5.91 billion)” [Li 2020]. After two months, hundreds of thousands intended to travel to the office of the banking regulator in Zhengzhou to protest, but were blocked by their COVID-19 apps, which displayed red, indicating that they were potential COVID patients. The result was the effective barring of these people from train stations and highway entrances, public restrooms, and shops with the possibility of facing “mandatory quarantine in centralized isolation centers”, if they did not return home [ibid.].

In response to the totalitarian measures of the CCP, a lot of Chinese have renounced their membership with the CCP according to the “End CCP petition” of the Global Tuidang Center, based in New York [End CCP; Eva 2022; WU 2022]. The website of “End CCP” claims that the CCP is promoting global communism through a number of means, including well placed politicians of Western democracies:

The CCP not only craves geographical power but also aims to inject the globe with communist ideology. Systematically, CCP is taking control of the narratives in the West: the mainstream media, big tech companies, Hollywood, the sports industry, and politicians ... we have watched them bowing down, again and again, self-censoring their speech in favor of Beijing.

Support for this thesis is found in the actions of numerous leaders of democracies with strong links to the WEF and the CCP, such as Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and his equivalents in Australia, Austria, and Italy. For example, Schwab has proudly named some of the global elites who have been formed through the WEF young leaders’ program, such as “Prime Minister Trudeau and half of his cabinet.” [Epoch TV Louden] Indeed, Trudeau reportedly told a women’s group, in 2013, that he admired the dictatorship of China, which permitted the CCP to do whatever it wanted, especially in regard to its green policies [Miltimore 2022].

There is a level of admiration I actually have for China because their basic dictatorship is allowing them to actually turn their economy around on a dime and say we need to go green, we need to start, you know, investing in solar.

He continues:

There is a flexibility that I know [Prime Minister] Stephen Harper must dream about: having a dictatorship where you can do whatever you wanted, that I find quite interesting.

These global leaders have suspended democratic processes, imposed mandates (e., mask, lockdowns, vaccine), implemented the “no jab, no job” policy, all of which have provoked political, economic, and social chaos [Oltermann 2021; Polumbo 2022; WSJ’s editorial board 2022]. Trudeau’s tactics have included the demonization of certain groups, namely the “unvaccinated” and peaceful protestors (e.g.,

members of the truckers' convoy), while the latter have been arrested, fined, imprisoned, and their bank accounts and funding platforms closed. A witty overview of the situation is available on Amazon, wherein in Dr. Zeus-like fashion, an author tells the story for children about "How Trudeau Stole Freedom" [Knipe, Smith 2022].

Schwab has admitted that the WEF has been working with China for the past "four decades" [Epoch TV Loudan]. He makes this admission in an intervention he gave at the 2022 World Youth Development Forum, in Beijing, China, organized by the All-China Youth Federation (ACYF), a puppet of the youth division of the CCP. [ibid; World Youth Development Forum]. One author and TV host, Trevor Loudan, has referred to it as a "communist gathering", [Epoch TV] because it drew 2000 young persons from various communist youth groups from around the world. These are listed on the conference website, along with the WEF [World Youth Development Forum]. Other listed sponsors include UN bodies, such as UN China, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) [ibid]. Additional interviews with Schwab show him speaking with a bust of Vladimir Lenin, in the background, a hero of Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, who, in turn, is a philosophical, political, economic, and military ally of Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, who also admires Lenin. [Epoch TV].

#### **D. A Critique of the Private-Public Partnership Model**

According to Jen Martens [2019: 207-209], WEF proposes a model that joins private-public partnerships in a system that would replace recognized democratic structures based on the underlying assumption that "global problems are too big, and the public sector is too weak to solve them alone". Martens describes the fight to redefine "global partnership" (between states) versus "multi-stakeholder partnerships" (corporations, or non-governmental organization and the state). He outlines how the WEF position is largely captured within context of 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with reference to "multi-stakeholder partnerships." in SDG17. He states that "[in] the context of the 2030 Agenda, the difference between partnership and partnerships is not just semantic sophistry but reflects two fundamentally different views of the role of the State" [ibid.]. The former refers to a global partnership based on the idea that the state "as duty-bearer, particularly with respect to human rights, and as central provider of public goods and services" [ibid.]. The latter refers to multi-stakeholder partnerships

based on the idea that the state is a “moderator and facilitator of actions of various public and private ‘stakeholders’ [ibid.]. In other words, the state, elected by the people, has authority and responsibility for the common good, including respect for fundamental human rights, while pursuant to the latter view, democratic governance has been dismantled, replaced by collaboration and cooperation of various bodies with no real responsibility to the common good, welfare of human persons, and their fundamental human rights.

WEF “postulates that a globalized world is best managed by a coalition of multinational corporations, governments (including through the UN system) and select civil society organizations (CSO’s)” [ibid.]. Martens, however, does not accept that the weakness of the public sector is inevitable, but rather has become weak do to deliberate decisions. He states:

What we see is a vicious cycle for weakening the State: the combination of neoliberal ideology, corporate lobbying, business friendly fiscal policies, tax avoidance and tax evasion has led to the massive weakening of the public sector and its ability to provide essential goods and services [ibid.].

Martens emphasizes that

corporations have a fundamentally different primary interest from that of governments, UN agencies, CSOs, and social movements: “corporations’ are primary interest-enshrined in their fiduciary duty to satisfy the interests of their owners, creditors and shareholders. The stakeholder discourse blurs this important distinction between the different actors [ibid.].

### **E. Various Critiques of COVID Policies**

In June 2022, many people around the globe are questioning whether COVID-19 was ever an emergency, in the first place. This has nothing to do with one being against vaccinations *per se*. It is about people doubting the rationale behind COVID polices. The question is whether WEF and leading capitalists (e.g., CEOs, directors) have deliberately promoted policies and plans, in part or whole, as part of the implementation of Agenda 2030, in a way that has frustrated social, political, and economic systems to pave “the way for an autocratic global future more closely resembling the communist-capitalist system of an increasingly dominant China” [Pentin 2021d].

It is worth noting that within the UN, for years now, so-called “emergency” type arguments have been promoted within the United Nations to bring about massive changes in thought and action (e.g., so-called population crisis of the 1990s) [Brownstein 2019; Marucci 1997]<sup>1</sup>. It is common knowledge that key UN bodies mobilize billions of dollars to create data, frame arguments, build networks, provoke changes in national legislation, and promote centralized planning ideas, which include a depopulation element (e.g., sterilization, contraception, abortion). The arguments are usually part of a larger theme devoted to the plight of refugees and migrants, violence against women, violent climates, and disaster relief. In the past, the Holy See consistently opposed depopulation elements, while at the same time accepted more positive elements of these discussions [Marucci 1997].

Of these “emergency ideologies,” one of the most effective has been the COVID pandemic, evidenced with the swiftness of the almost global measures. The reason for this is best articulated by Klaus Schwab [Malleret, Schwab 2020].

The spread of infectious diseases has a unique ability to fuel fear, anxiety and mass hysteria...it also challenges our social cohesion and collective capacity to manage a crisis. Epidemics are by nature divisive and traumatizing.

In sum, for Schwab and like-minded world leaders, COVID has exposed fundamental problems in social, political, and economic systems and presents an opportunity to reshape all aspects of our world by promoting new policies and structures on a more technological, sustainable, and environmentally friendly track.

Others claim that COVID policies demonstrate the birth of a new totalitarianism. A group of Catholic lawyers and scholars gathered under the auspices of the International Catholic Jurists Forum, in 2022, to study Aquinas, Law & Politics in Times of COVID, where Piotr Mazurkiewicz [Press release International Meeting, 2022] Professor and Director of the Political Science Department at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, in Warsaw concluded:

There is a real question about the extent to which the pandemic has changed the way Western democracies function. Theoretically, there is

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g., Marucci 1997: Holy See’s Interventions at the 1994 UN World Conference on Population and Development, in Cairo.

a possibility of transforming liberal democracy into totalitarian democracy (J.L. Talmon). The essence of totalitarianism is when a government takes complete control, not only over the external behaviors of citizens, but also over their inner life - the way they think and evaluate the world. Through technology, the means to achieve total control over society no longer rests with 'naked violence'.

He continues:

Governments can take control over communication and educational systems with the possibility of excluding dissenting voices from public debate. Some Western governments have attempted to achieve just that through an informational monopoly over health policy. The fact that citizens often value security more than freedom makes it easier for them to succumb to health security propaganda.

The thought of Mazurkiewicz finds support in the work of psychologists, authors, politicians, and Catholic religious leaders, who view certain COVID measures as indicative of totalitarian regimes and the spread of Marxist materialism, rather than well-functioning democracies [Cristin, 2017; Desmet 2022; Gockowski, 2020; Hinchcliffe 2020; Slisco 2021; Wolf 2022]. Regarding cancellation culture that demonizes dissenters of the mass media's narrative on COVID and other issues (e.g., gender ideology, Black Lives Matter), the phenomenon has been compared to Maoism during the "Great Purge" of the cultural revolution, but with less blood [Adorney, 2022]. Mao implemented a plan of terror against dissenters using the means of public humiliation, torture, and death [Chang, 2005: 635-637]. We know that many COVID vaccine dissenters have lost their jobs and have been otherwise ostracized or publicly humiliated, while families complaining of the adverse effects of vaccination, such as disability and death, have been largely ignored.

Regarding vaccine passports, David Thunder [2022] claims that "[by] excluding the unvaccinated from full and equal social participation, and applying significant pressure upon them to vaccinate," the system undermines two pivotal values to a free and open society, namely "the right to bodily integrity, and the equal standing of all citizens in the public square;" they have also "created social conditions propitious to resentment, public unrest, and political instability".



With respect to the job, groups of physicians and medical scientists have mobilized to question what they deem are scientifically untenable COVID policies in light of emerging evidence regarding vaccine and gene therapies, their ineffectiveness, and adverse side effects [Great Barrington Declaration 2020; Global Covid Summit Declaration 2021; Global COVID Summit Declaration 2022; MedEthica; Morrison 2022].

Still, others remain concerned about violations of freedom of conscience and religious freedom by coercive vaccine mandates [Press Release, ICJF, 2022] and forced closure of churches, when liquor stores (or even barber shops) remained opened as “essential services” [Sagers 2021]. Such actions indicate an animus against religion under the guise of COVID policies.

Lastly, many others wonder whether there is a depopulation theme, given the growing number of adverse effects, and early deaths associated with vaccinations. [Cotovio et al 2021; Gat et al 2022; Grome et al 2021].

#### **F. A Critique of Schwab’s “Great Reset”**

Schwab rejects a world view that he describes as promoting the idea “that humans are intrinsically selfish, uncooperative and aggressive, and without the civilizing influence of governments and leaders, order would soon break down and chaos reign” [WEF, Building Blocks of the Great Reset]. To the contrary, the website of the WEF argues that this vision of man “was simply made up. And made up by a surprisingly small but depressingly influential number of individuals – from Machiavelli and Adam Smith to Milton Friedman and William Golding”. For Schwab, COVID has provided the possibility to “make it up again,” that is, to recreate man and mold him into the new man for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, computer chips included [ibid].

As articulated, after dismissing centuries of philosophical thought about man and his world, Schwab admits that he has no firm vision of man, although intends to make one. His new vision will presumably conform with Agenda 2030 to serve the new multistakeholder paradigm of public-private partnerships. It is beyond the scope of this paper to present an overview of ancient, medieval, and modern philosophy on the topic or even a rapid and cursory review that is available elsewhere [e.g., Rommen, 1998; Pope John Paul II, 1998]. Suffice it to say, we know that Schwab’s “global reset” certainly does not embrace the Judeo-Christian vision of man, created in the image and likeness of the Triune God, with faculties

of intellect and will to know the truth and choose the good through the practice of virtue, which, in turn, leads to the right ordering of society and openness to the grace of God ordered to contemplation of the Blessed Trinity. Rather, Schwab negates the existence of objective truth, along with any notions of right and wrong, meaning there is no foundation for man to engage in a deeper understanding of the meaning of life based on faith and reason [Ibid; see also Bushman 2008; Greene 2020]. Schwab's economic vision promotes the collective at the expense of the individual, who can take on multiple identities (male, female, other), congruent with gender ideology entrenched in Agenda 2030 [Dcl. SDG 5]). In the end, man is a mere cog in an environmentally friendly, economic machine shaped by socio-economic forces in a universe devoid of transcendence or the divine [ibid.].

Schwab's vision of man seems to dovetail nicely with Agenda 2030 [Dcl. preamble paras. 5 -10]. Sustainable development, an ambiguous term capable of multiple meanings and nuisances, is based on three pillars: social, environmental, and economic, neatly summed up in the preamble with the five Ps: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. The "people principle" reads: "We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfill their potential in dignity and equality." That the term "people," not "person" appears implies that humanity is "one people", with a nod to gender ideology (male, female, other) and fluid sexuality. Current efforts to redefine the term "woman" to include men who think they are women, in turn, might be used to reinterpret every international document and provision pertaining to women on the international level. Moreover, that "dignity" is not defined, nor prefaced by inherent (or transcendent) means that purely material considerations will likely rule the day, and possibly justify euthanasia, abortion, or sterilization in the name of dignity. The approach seems reminiscent of the "people" in the "People's Republic of China," under the CCP, where human beings are the means to carry out economic, social, and political projects determined and imposed by the state, something WEF refers to as state capitalism.

Contrast this approach with that of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), where "mankind" is one "human family." [UDHR] [preamble paras. 1, 5], founded upon the "human person" [ibid., preamble para. 5], male and female [ibid], "endowed with reason and conscience" [ibid., art. 1], who come together in marriage to establish the family, "the natural and fundamental group unit of society...entitled to protection from society and the state" [ibid., art. 16]. Fundamental human rights flow from the "inherent dignity" of the human person

[*ibid.*, preamble paras. 1, 5], essential characteristics of which are recognized in article 1, which, together with freedom of religion and conscience, in article 18, implicitly recognize both the material and spiritual dimensions of the person. Both of these dimensions form part of “integral human development”, a broader concept than sustainable development and the one promoted by the Holy See.

In sum, Schwab’s understanding of man is dangerous. He is promoting a form of global totalitarianism, where a human being’s value or importance is determined by his or her usefulness to the state working with private partnerships in a purely material world. His promotion of PPPs reads almost like a type of a deification of this new global regime that could command absolute adherence through the priorities and policies of Agenda 2030, and which is implemented by nation states through financial agreements with the assistance of big tech and big media. In short, the vision of Schwab has the appearances of a Marxist project.

### **III. The Holy See and the Great Reset**

#### **A. General Considerations**

The Holy See does not operate in a vacuum. The Holy See has a specific vision of God and man [Catechism 1994; Compendium 2004]. It commences with the Triune God (Father-Son-Holy Spirit), who created the world and man out of love to draw all men to himself. Made in the image and likeness of God, man’s inalienable dignity is founded on his worth to God, gratuitously bestowed upon him; he is a child of God, capable of communion with him, which, in turn, constitutes the foundation of the equality of human beings.

Man has a resemblance to God in his very being, not merely in memory, intellect, free will. We are made for a loving relationship with God and others, and, as such, ought to live an ordered and virtuous life in view of man’s dignity, origin, and destiny, ever cognizant of the tragedy that accompanies human freedom - that fallen human beings can choose to reject God. In brief, the economy of salvation is a love story with three distinct chapters: man (the creature), man (the sinner), and man (redeemed in Christ).

That man is a child of God means that he is called to love as a member of a family, the first expression of which is the human family, the natural and fundamental unit of society, based on marriage between a man and a woman, in a loving union that is fruitful, faithful, and forever, which creates, nurtures, and educates new citizens. Family members and groups of families create larger social groupings

from intermediate local groups to villages, towns, cities, nations, and to the international community of nations. The natural family unit, in turn, requires protection from wider social groups and the state.

Authority is founded in the social nature of man, and consequently, God, as its author. All persons in positions of authority must be guided by the moral law. There is value in the democratic system characterized by free elections, holding elected officials accountable, and replacing them with peaceful means. Yet, one “cannot encourage the formation of narrow ruling groups which usurp the power of the state for individual interests or ideological ends” [Compendium 406]. Neither can one accept that there is “no ultimate truth to guide and direct political activity, [since] then ideas and convictions [could] easily be manipulated for reasons of power” [Centesimus Annus (CA) 46]. One finds support in history that demonstrates, “a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism” (ibid.).

For human relationships to develop in a harmoniously way, key principles must be applied, such as the common good, justice, solidarity, and subsidiarity. Developed in accordance with scripture, tradition, and the magisterium, these principles are proposed by the Holy See to all persons of good will.

Since man is made to love and serve God and others, man cooperates and collaborates with others to create something good for all people and the whole person, so that all can live in a common good. It is defined as “the sum total of social conditions which enable individuals, families, and organizations to achieve their own fulfilment more fully and easily” [Gaudium et Spes (GS) 26, 74; Catechism 1877-1948, Compendium 164-170].

The principle of justice – to give to the other what is his or her due (or own) – presupposes the possession and ownership of property as well as right and wrong based on objective truth. There are different types of justice, depending upon the social relationship in question [Catechism 2411]. Yet, respect for rights and duties is the bare minimum; the human person is called to act in charity to go beyond justice, to give to the other what is his own. [Caritas in Veritatis (CV) 6] Whether a law is just or unjust is determined with reference to “the moral law inscribed in [man’s] nature” (Pacem in Terris (PT) 5–6), which is “revealed to him by his [well-formed] conscience and insists upon preserving it” (GS 16). The natural Law, founded in human nature and the ends of man, is the “common

moral ground that is right for all human beings and at some level known to all human beings”, something fundamental to the idea of fundamental human rights [Budziszewski 21].

The principle of solidarity highlights the intrinsic social nature of man, the equality of each person in his or her inherent dignity, the rights and duties that flow therefrom, and the common and interdependent path that man treads ever tending towards a genuine ethical-social unity [Compendium 192-196]. Solidarity is also a moral virtue which means to commit oneself to the common good: “the good of all and of each individual” [ibid., 193].

The principle of subsidiarity implicitly recognizes that the fallen human being tends to accumulate power for himself and treat human beings as “members of a hive or herd, dominated by the pressures of the collective, or the will of some tyrant who could control the collective” [Caldecott: 2001, 21; See also Compendium 185-188]. Consequently, the principle requires authority or power to be exercised in the service of others at the lowest or most local levels compatible with the common good, which determine its limits. In this way, “everyone is given the maximum scope to exercise their own free will”, [Caldecott] and so according to the principle of the common good, cited above, “achieve their own fulfilment more fully and easily”. In this way, the concept of hierarchy is not rejected, but the authority or power continually flows toward the base and empowers human persons to act freely and responsibly [ibid., 22].

The combination of the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity brings one to the option for the poor – to love and serve the most vulnerable, those at the bottom of the world’s hierarchy [Ibid., 23]. The two principles are also vital for a humane economic system, founded on a correct understanding of the human person. The economic system, according to the philosophies of socialism and communism, are fundamentally flawed in their materialist vision of man, elimination of the right of private ownership, diminishment of the personal responsibility of the worker, threat to the family, religion and the very existence of the Church, and lack of subsidiarity, since the party (e.g., CCP) imposes a state-controlled economy. The Church has a long institutional history of fighting the errors of both socialism and communism. [e.g., *Qui Pluribus*, 1846; *Nostis et nobiscum*, 1849; *Quanta cura*, 1864; *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, 1878; *Rerum Novarum*, 1891; *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, 1878; *Divini Redemptoris*, 1937; *Decree Against Communism*, 1949; and so on].

The system us according to the capitalist or free market economy us promotes ownership of private property, incentivizes the worker, and has “subsidiarity in abundance”, since control is exercised at the local level [Caldecott 24]. Unfettered capitalism, however, is a problem. The free-market economy needs to be circumscribed within a “strong juridical framework which places it as the service of human freedom”, to avoid consumerism and other abuses associated with caprice and greed [CA 42], although, it would “appear to be the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs” [CA 34].

The question is whether the vision being promoted by Schwab, seemingly accepted by the Holy See, as discussed *infra*, constitutes an “alternative” or third way: a market “appropriately controlled by the forces of society and by the state so as to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole of society are recognized”, in accordance with a proper understanding of man [CA 54]. It must be a “sustained commitment to promoting a relational-based universal integration that is open to transcendence” (CV 42); for communion and the sharing of goods (CV 42); and for the principle of unity in diversity, obviously opposed to cultural leveling and syncretism (CV 26, 55). This would presumably require the elites, who are promoting the global reset, to have well-formed consciences and to utilize a discernment process based on the criterion of “charity in truth”, which seeks, above all, the development of “the whole man and all men” (CV, no. 55).

### **B. The Holy See and the “Global Reset”**

The Holy See, under the papacy of Pope Francis, seems to have its own socio-economic agenda, and one which it intends to carry out with the assistance and collaboration of UN bureaucrats, like-minded world leaders, and influential NGOs or international bodies. For example, Pope Francis commenced his papacy with attention to the global theme to end international human trafficking and gathered like-minded persons, believers, and non-believers, alike [Francis 2015a]. He was invited to push for an item on human trafficking to be included in Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals [San Martin 2015], and the Holy See was criticized for failing to lobby aggressively on life issues [Ballinski, Crane 2015]. On the first anniversary year of these goals, however, the Holy See sent a “Note” to the United Nations that detailed its reservations and maintained its position of challenging ambiguous language, akin to the days of the UN World Conferences, in the 1990s.

The Holy See [2016] actively supports the United Nations Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees [Gomes 2018] and has its own UN affiliated Global

Compact for Education, whose aim is to create a “global change of mentality” through education of “young people to fraternity, to learn to overcome divisions and conflicts, promote hospitality, justice and peace” [Vatican Global Compact on Education]. The Holy See is also engaged in “transformative education” [Mission 4.7], which refers to sustainable development goal 4.7 on education for “sustainable development, global citizenship education, environmental education, climate education, peace and human rights education, and others,” and draws upon the “global leadership” of UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [Vatican Mission 4.7].

In addition, the Holy See supports “inclusive capitalism”, through the Council for Inclusive Capitalism with its sister Coalition of Inclusive Capitalism [Bank of America 2020; Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism; Council for Inclusive Capitalism]. Thomas Storck [2021] argues that the Holy See works with a long list of “leading capitalists” (e.g., CEOs, directors, officials), including the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, as well as Lady Lynn Forrester de Rothchild; “in short, many of the richest people in the world, people who, hitherto at least, have profited quite well on account of ‘the absolute autonomy of markets and financial speculation’ .Storck is skeptical of the initiatives, suggesting that only time will tell whether “the entire effort is little more than a public relations gimmick to make people less likely to get angry on account of their unemployment or poverty” [ibid.].

The Holy See is also open to the climate change movement as evidenced in the encyclical of Pope Francis on the environment [Francis 2015b] but has been criticized for participating in UN conferences on climate without speaking out about its negative aspects [Pentin 2021b].

### **C. The Holy See and COVID**

The Holy See has been extremely active on the COVID issue, and the following represents only a few examples. On January 2020, Pope Francis penned a message to Schwab, on the fiftieth anniversary of the WEF [Francis 2020c]. That WEF annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland was devoted to the theme “Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World”, where the Holy See was represented by Peter Cardinal Turkson, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

In the message, Francis praises the WEF for providing “an arena where political will and mutual cooperation can be guided and strengthened in overcoming the



isolationism, individualism and ideological colonization” [ibid.]. Francis articulates the “overriding consideration” that “we are all members of the one human family,” from which springs the “moral obligation to care for one another” and “the correlative principle of placing the human person, rather than the mere pursuit of power or profit, at the very center of public policy”. He also emphasizes the need “to give full consideration to the ethical dimension in seeking resolutions to present problems or proposing initiatives for the future”. He laments “materialistic or utilitarian visions, sometimes hidden, sometimes celebrated, [which] lead to practices and structures motivated largely, or even solely, by self-interest”. He also criticizes using “others as a means to an end” thereby preventing “truly integral human development” that allows everyone “to be included, and contribute to, pursuing the common good”.

In December 2020, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [CDF 2020] found COVID vaccines “morally acceptable to receive”, even though they “have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process.” Due to the ongoing pandemic, the CDF states that “all vaccinations recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience, with the certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute formal cooperation with the abortion from which the cells used in production of the vaccines derive.” The CDF underlines, of course, that it does not “judge the safety and efficacy” of the vaccines, and emphasizes that “vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation and that, therefore, it must be voluntary.” Key elements of the analysis include recognition: 1) of one’s conscience in making vaccination decisions; 2) of having reasons to refuse vaccines due to links with aborted fetuses or other reasons (e.g., medical); 3) of having the duty to the common good, that is, to protect “the weakest and the most exposed”; and 4) of the duty of states and organizations to ensure that vaccines are “effective and safe” and “ethically acceptable” and “accessible”.

Unfortunately, to the contrary, global elites have offered questionable interpretations of the common good, rejected reasonable limitation of measures to only the most vulnerable, refused to accept reasons for refusal of vaccinations, and have used laws to coerce people into vaccination. Pope Francis, in his personal capacity, seems to have followed this path. For example, in an effort, to encourage vaccinations globally, in August 2021, he described getting vaccinated as an act of love [Watkins 2021] and later made statements underlining his doubts about whether any reasons might be offered to refuse the vaccinations [Francis 2020b; Associated Press 2022; Francis 2022; Winfield 2022] and followed up by implying that taking



COVID vaccinations was a moral obligation [Francis 2022; Winfield 2022]. Then, as sovereign of Vatican City State, he seemed to reject the CDF document, when he endorsed a “no jab, no job” policy, in October 2021, which reportedly resulted in three Swiss Guards leaving the Pope’s service, and another three being “temporarily suspended after they refused to comply with compulsory” Covid vaccinations [Pentin 2021c].

Further, on 20 March 2020, Francis requested the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (DPIHD) to “create a Commission, in collaboration with other Dicasteries of the Roman Curia and other organizations, to express the Church’s solicitude and care for the whole human family facing the COVID-19 pandemic” [Vatican COVID-19 Commission]. In Schwab like terms, COVID-19 is described in the following terms:

the defining crisis of this generation, from which we can either emerge for the better or the worse. It has laid bare the inequities and injustices that threaten people’s well-being, safety, and lives, and exacerbated an interconnected set of crises – economic, ecological, political, social.

Among other things, the Commission intends to usher forth “the transformation of hearts, minds, and structures toward a new model of development”. A quick perusal of the Commission website reminds one of United Nations’ websites with its glossy reports containing photography of vulnerable peoples and succinct one-page factsheets. The Commission’s website also displays links to resources of the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), UNICEF and others [Vatican COVID-19 Commission, Documents, Reports, Audiovisual material].

In the Commission’s Report, “Prepare the Future,” of March [2021], the Commission is said to have been “Inspired by [Encyclicals] *Laudato Si’* and *Fratelli Tutti* [Brothers All]”, only two documents from the deep reservoir of the social doctrine of the Church. It also called to “prepare the future through science, theological reflection, and collaboration with others, while prioritizing the least among us.” Working Group I, for example, provides a section on “Local Practices and Good Practices”, where the following appears, with an emphasis on socio-political work:

Campaigns by local churches to combat misinformation. Church infrastructures repurposed for quarantined populations and as COVID-19

treatment centres. Chaplains providing spiritual support and trained to monitor communities and assist treatments. Local churches engaged in political advocacy vis-à-vis national governments [ibid. at 3].

Consistent with the current thrust of the global approach to the pandemic, there is no mention in the report of fundamental human rights, including religious freedom.

It is noteworthy that in response to one of the Commission's pillar Encyclicals, "Fratelli Tutti" [Francis 2020], an essay published on the WEF website describes the document as an effort "to shape what's been termed a Great Reset of the global economy in response to the devastation of COVID-19" [Letzing 2020]. The picture chosen for the article is one depicting a group of priests praying with Pope Francis, which, upon first glance, looks like they are bowing their heads in allegiance. The picture is attractive for those who would like Francis to act like a CEO, and strong arm all members of the Catholic Church into submission. The author writes:

Pope Francis criticizes the 'dogma of neoliberal faith' in his encyclical, adding that 'the fragility of world systems in the face of the pandemic has demonstrated that not everything can be resolved by market freedom.' He advocates for a political life not subject to the 'dictates of finance,' and for making human dignity the focus of new, 'alternative social structures [ibid.].

#### **D. Justifications and Criticisms**

Clearly, the Holy See has embraced the idea of a global reset. The question is whether the Holy See's "encounter with the world" is one that constitutes an unfortunate "accommodation of itself to the world," rather than a genuine call to "conversion in obedience to the divine law written on every human heart and revealed in its fullness in the redemptive incarnation of God the Son" [Gockowski 2020].

The Holy See and its supporters maintain that it engages in dialogue with all interested fora and parties, even those who are hostile to Christianity, generally, and have devoted their lives to agendas opposed to key elements of the Catholic faith, for example, the right life from conception (e.g., Jeffrey Sachs, Melinda and Bill Gates) [Pentin 2020]. They view this as congruent with the Holy See's spiritual and moral mission, founded on scripture and the social doctrine of the Church.

For example, Cardinal Turkson reportedly states that the Holy See is open to initiatives of the great reset: “The objective for us and from the point of view of Pope Francis is to reimagine a social order with more justice, equity, where social injustices are overcome” [Pentin 2021a].

Turkson confides that sharing information at meetings with the UN and WEF means that the language between the Holy See and WEF “now begins to be closer” [ibid.]. The crucial difference for Turkson is that the Holy See’s position is rooted in Scripture. The Holy See also claims that those who oppose COVID and its polices have been hypnotized by misinformation or “conspiracy theories” about a new world controlled by elites [ibid.]. Indeed, Francis has invited Catholic organizations to devote themselves to addressing misinformation [Watkins 2022].

On the contrary, others argue that the Holy See moves well beyond dialogue, to initiate and promote a global social-economic vision based on Third World economic and theological-political principles linked to liberation theology, which, in turn, is “anti-Western (and especially anti-US), anti-capitalist, progressive, pro-Marxist, and essentially communist” with a “parallel praise of poverty as an effective instrument for approaching God” [Pentin 2021e].

Raymond Cardinal Burke does not mention Francis directly but has some harsh words for Church leaders. He states: “[many] have manifested a woeful lack of sound catechesis,” a lack of “understanding of how Christ continues his saving work in times of plague and of other disasters” [Gockowski 2020]. In brief, members of the faithful are not receiving responses from shepherds based on unchanging faith and morals, but “from secular managers” [ibid.]. The consequences are grave, not only for Americans, but for mankind. In the words of Burke, for the last two years, we have been focused on finding a way “to understand and direct” our lives “in disease and its prevention,” instead of “in God and in his plan for our salvation” [ibid.].

Similarly, along the lines of Burke, some have challenged the authority and analysis of Catholic leaders to coerce members of the faithful to submit to experimental vaccines and gene therapies as well as related policies that support coercive mask and vaccination mandates, along with green passes and the shutting of Churches [Buscemi 2021; Facchinei 2021; Gondreau 2022; Sullivan 2022; Sammut 2021; Smith 2021].

An “Appeal for the Church and the World,” addressed to “Catholics and all people of good will, was released in May 2020 [Pentin 2022b] with more than 80 signatories, Catholics, and non-Catholic alike, including Cardinals Joseph Zen, and Gerhard Müller. The document underlines the following points, namely that under the pretext of COVID:

- 1) the inalienable rights of citizens have been violated, including “the exercise of freedom of worship, expression and movement, [which] have been disproportionately and unjustifiably restricted;”
- 2) powers are deliberately creating panic “with the sole aim of permanently imposing unacceptable forms of restriction on freedoms, of controlling people and of tracking their movements;” and
- 3) certain “containment measures” have “precipitated a crisis that has brought down entire sectors of the economy” which, in turn, encourages “interference by foreign powers and has serious social and political repercussions.”

In response, the signatories appeal to all people of good will to work within their respective fields to ensure that “centuries of Christian civilization [are not] erased under the pretext of a virus, and an odious technological tyranny to be established in which nameless and faceless people can decide the fate of the world by confining us to a virtual reality.”

Vatican journalist, Edward Pentin [2022a], has strong words for Church leaders, beginning with Pope Francis, and others in the Roman Curia. He claims that: 1) Church leaders have been “silent and complicit” in the face of grave wrongs regarding vaccination mandates, the danger of adverse effects, and lockdowns; 2) Francis, as Sovereign of Vatican City State, has perpetrated the injustices committed by other world leaders in his own territory by implementing “some of the world’s strictest vaccine mandates.”

### **Conclusion**

This paper has offered an analysis of the Holy See’s position on its openness to the “global reset” through its increased cooperation and collaboration with global elites, including UN bureaucrats and the head of WEF. The Holy See and its supporters view this as congruent with the Holy See’s spiritual and moral mission in the world founded on scripture and in accordance with the social doctrine of the church.

Others disagree. They view the global reset as a new totalitarianism or type of global communism antithetical to the Holy See's spiritual and moral mission, the gospel, and a prudent application of the social doctrine of the church. They argue that the Holy See has lost its way, too involved in creating a socio-political new world order with interested fora and parties, many of whom are hostile to Christianity *per se* or otherwise devoted to agendas opposed to the Catholic faith.

The question remains whether the moral voice of the Holy See has been so compromised by its complicity in various great reset initiatives that it can no longer direct hearts and minds to the natural moral law, with reference to the specific Christian task, ever "motivated by the hope drawn from the saving work of Jesus Christ" [Benedict XVI 2008]. As Christians, we know that Jesus Christ is the global reset. Saint Pope John XXIII [in his opening of the Second Vatican Council] stated: "The whole of history and of life hinges on the person of Jesus Christ." Similarly, Pope Saint John Paul II [1979] in first Encyclical "*Redemptor Hominis*," states:

The Redeemer of Man, Jesus Christ, is the centre of the universe and of history... "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"... This act of redemption marked the high point of the history of man within God's loving plan... Through the Incarnation, God gave human life the dimension that he intended man to have from his first beginning.

As Christians, we can never forget that the battle here on earth is spiritual. We can never underestimate Satan's hatred for God and man, because "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (Jn 3:16). As Christians, when we pray that our father, with the phrase "thy kingdom come," we "commit ourselves to serve its coming by living in peace and by seeking peace and justice for all who suffer in our homes, our workplace, our neighborhoods, our world" [Magnificat 2021: 296]. As Christians, we do this knowing that, while we should care for our health, it is God who created us out of love and who maintains our lives in existence out of love [Schall 2018: 192].

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## *A left-wing offensive in the European Union*

**Abstract:** The article has three main research goals. First, to show the tenets of the strategy proposed by left-wing thinkers at the end of the 20th century. Secondly, the theoretical and philosophical assumptions of this strategy will be confronted with the practice of the functioning of left-wing groups in the European Parliament and other EU institutions, especially after the outbreak of the crisis in the euro area after 2010. Thirdly, to summarize the previous deliberations from a global and European perspectives. The aim of the article is to provide the answer to whether the offensive of the left, visible in the EU in the second decade of the 21st century, can contribute to the success of this formation and to the healing of the European project.

**Keywords:** socialist strategy, hegemony of leftist values, democratic revolution, radical democracy, constraint of exclusion

**Abstrakt:** Artykuł ma trzy główne cele badawcze. Po pierwsze, pokazać założenia strategii proponowanej przez myślicieli lewicowych pod koniec XX wieku. Po drugie, założenia teoretyczne i filozoficzne tej strategii zostaną skonfrontowane z praktyką funkcjonowania ugrupowań lewicowych w Parlamencie Europejskim i innych instytucjach UE, zwłaszcza po wybuchu kryzysu w strefie euro po roku 2010. Po trzecie, wcześniejsze rozważania zostaną podsumowane z perspektywy globalnej i europejskiej. Celem artykułu jest odpowiedź na pytanie, czy ofensywa lewicy widoczna w UE w drugiej dekadzie XXI wieku może przyczynić się do sukcesu tej formacji oraz do uzdrowienia projektu europejskiego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** strategia socjalistyczna, hegemonia lewicowych wartości, demokratyczna rewolucja, radykalna demokracja, wykluczające ograniczenie

### **Introduction**

The article has three main research objectives. First, to show the tenets of the strategy proposed by leftist thinkers at the end of the 20th century. Along with

the collapse of the communist bloc of states and the popularity of the neoliberal doctrine and neoconservatism in the US and the UK, the Left struggled with waning popular support and the challenge of finding a programmatic prescription to rebuild its political influence. The concept of the political counter-offensive of the Left will be reconstructed based on the reflections of influential thinkers Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe [1985], who draw on the intellectual output of the icon of the European left, namely Antonio Gramsci. Secondly, the theoretical and philosophical tenets of the strategy of the Left will be confronted with the practice of the functioning of left-wing groups in the European Parliament and other EU institutions, notably after the post-2010 eruption of the Eurozone crisis. The aim of this comparison will be to trace the extent to which the prescriptions of Laclau and Mouffe could be put into practice within the reality of the integrating Europe. Thirdly, I will summarize the earlier reflections on the premises and practice of the implementation of the political strategy of the Left in a global and European perspective. The starting point for this assessment is Immanuel Wallerstein's famous assertion regarding the inevitability of the collapse of the global left, primarily represented by the progressive movements in the US and the EU. In other words, the objective of this summary will be to provide an answer as to whether the offensive of the Left, evident in the EU in the second decade of the 21st century, can contribute to the success of this movement and to the healing of the European project.

### **The socialist strategy**

According to Immanuel Wallerstein, the global left was shaped by the revolution of 1968 [Wallerstein 2021: 19], which swept through many countries on both sides of the Iron Curtain. In the case of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, societies revolted against communist regimes and dependence on the Soviet Union. Thus, their protest was essentially anti-Marxist in character. The situation was quite different in the West, i.e., *inter alia*, in the Federal Republic of Germany, France, and Italy. There, the demands of the protesters were extremely far left, in many respects anarchist and anti-systemic. As it appears, between the two parts of the EU, this fundamental discrepancy in the focus of the revolt continues to have consequences today. In the Eastern flank of the organization, this is reflected in an aversion to the curtailment of national sovereignty and democracy by supranational institutions, as well as a suspicious attitude of societies towards the proposals of the extreme left. In the western part of the EU, on the other hand, there remains alive the legacy of the 1968 anti-systemic revolution, as well as a much greater openness to political proposals evoking the philosophy of Karl Marx.



According to Wallerstein, communist states, most notably the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China (PRC), were a great inspiration for the Western European and American left. It is also worth noting that this fascination was systematically stoked by Soviet policy, which infiltrated and supported circles of the radical left in the West. The collapse of the communist bloc of states after 1989 proved to be a great blow to the leftist movement in the capitalist countries. Another problem was the increasing popularity of liberal ideas, notably neoliberalism in economics, as well as neoconservatism in the United States. The period of Ronald Reagan's and Margaret Thatcher's administrations was marked not only by the collapse of the bloc of communist states and the defeat of the Marxist ideology they pursued, but also by the triumph of liberal and conservative thought, which it was even said would eventually and conclusively prevail as the leading political current on a global scale [Fukuyama 1992]. In other words, it was the Western states that achieved geopolitical success. Thus, ideas opposed to Marxist concepts were henceforth to be of dominant importance. This posed a serious challenge for the Left in the West – notably to that strand of the Left which was globalist in nature and therefore, in line with Marxism's premise, internationalist, while at the same time, ever since the 1968 revolt, possessing an anti-systemic and radical dimension.

It was for this reason that several works by left-wing thinkers appeared at the end of the 20th century, which sought to develop a political counter-offensive against this political milieu. These included works searching for a so-called third way, i.e., positions between neoliberalism on the one hand and discredited Marxism on the other [Giddens 1998]. In essence, this constituted a recipe for building a moderate social democracy which, on the economic plane, would mitigate neoliberal market principles, while on the political plane, it would approve of liberal democracy and intend to build a centre-left electoral position.

Another response to the problems faced by the Left was offered by radical thinkers who referred to Marxist concepts. Among those, there emerged an influential work on the search for strategies for socialist movements. The starting point for Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe [1985] consisted of the reflections by Antonio Gramsci, an Italian anti-fascist and Marxist. He considered that systemic change does not proceed through a revolutionary upheaval but requires a prolonged period of the creation of a cultural hegemony – a common platform of ideas and values connecting the intellectuals with the people. It was the realm of culture, or more precisely of narratives and ideologies, that was to

change social attitudes in such a way as to introduce uniform and universally accepted ideas, which Gramsci referred to as cultural hegemony. In parallel, the dominance of left-wing views was to systemically exclude fascist ideas, i.e., above all those referring to patriotism, national identity, and national community. In a broader dimension, that included other currents of thought that paid homage to right-wing and conservative ideals. A society shaped in this way should approve of the rule of the radical left, in addition, one operating in a supranational set-up. Thus, it constituted an excellent inspiration for radical left movements both at the European and at the global level.

Like Gramsci, the authors of the socialist strategy were focused on achieving hegemony, i.e., a dominant position of left-wing ideas, in the cultural realm. They planned the systemic elimination from public discourse of liberal, right-wing, and conservative ideas, which, in Laclau and Mouffe's view, were dominant in democratic systems in the West. According to the views of both authors, the existing hegemony of liberal and conservative values had to be toppled, to become subsequently replaced with a new hegemony of leftist values and ideologies. They considered the political discourse in liberal Western democracies as, in essence, subordinated to conservative and liberal values which, in the name of individual freedom and individual rights, legitimize the inequalities and the hierarchy of the bourgeoisie's (elites') power over society, and notably over the broadly defined proletariat (that is, persons subject to multiple categories of exclusion and inequality) [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 176]. Therefore, they rejected the demands of those politicians or thinkers encouraging the search, by social democratic groupings, for a third way, i.e., measures to accommodate centrist positions in terms of programme and electorate preferences [Mouffe 2013: 163]. They also rejected any compromise with other ideological formations or trade-off politics, considering it as the product of an agreement with competing political forces. Instead, they proposed a fundamental shift in public perception towards leftist values, a redefinition of hitherto existing notions and values within liberal democracy, and subsequently, the imposition of the said leftist values upon society as a whole and upon the political elites. The public discourse, or in fact the offensive by the radical left, was to subjugate the entire spectrum of public debate. In this manner, Laclau and Mouffe encouraged the construction of a new society, and hence: a revolutionary change. This "new society" should internalize the values of the extreme left, and even profess them to be the only legitimate ones. These are essentially the postulates that have accompanied European civilization since at least the time of the Enlightenment [Burke 2009].

Another left-wing thinker, Claude Lefort, pointed out how a “democratic revolution” should be carried out in Western societies [Lefort 1986]. In so doing, he drew heavily on how totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe had operated prior to 1989. In his belief, the hegemony of the leftist narrative should be radical and totalitarian in nature. It must therefore include only the values of the extreme left, which will be imposed on society. It should also ideologize all spheres of social life and thus subordinate to leftist values not only new areas of social life, but also public policy and regulation, which will submit to the primacy of these ideas, even when this would contradict pragmatism or generate social costs.

All these ideas are also reflected in Laclau and Mouffe. In fact, they were urging the rejection of liberal democracy, that is, of a system based on the pluralism of different political values, and thus of the coexistence of those on the Left, with liberal or conservative values. Indeed, such action would compel tolerance of respective viewpoints and of the right to present them in public discourse. This kind of tolerance was rejected by both authors, and they also concluded that “the logic of democracy cannot be sufficient for the formulation of any hegemonic project” [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 188]. For the “logic of democracy” thus understood did not allow for an effective reconstruction of the social fabric, towards a definitive rejection of right-wing and liberal values in favour of socialist thinking.

Liberal democracy is based on majority voting, as well as compliance with the verdicts of the electorate within a plurality of divergent political ideas and values. Meanwhile, the aim of socialist strategy was hegemony and thereby exclusion from the discourse of values other than those of the Left. This entails the necessity to reject political pluralism and the associated tolerance of opponents. Moreover, “radical democracy” excludes the concept of political community as a basis for a politically diverse democratic order. The new community was not to be based on a diversity of views, but on their unification and totality, and hence on encompassing within the sphere of the political a broad spectrum of social phenomena, including those hitherto remaining essentially outside electoral politics.

This is the reason Laclau and Mouffe proposed a radical politicization of public discourse [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 181] and, more precisely, a broadening of the interests of the Left beyond the traditional problems of the proletariat, notably those pertaining to redistribution. The Left should take a greater interest in the realms of ecology, climate, feminism, ethnic and regional inequalities, and should politicize the private sphere of human life, especially the sexual domain, which

may constitute the most important arena in the struggle against discrimination and inequality [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 159]. This was of fundamental importance for the implementation of the postulate of the totality of action. Laclau and Mouffe mention the imperative of progressive homogenization and totalitarian ideology [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 174]. Essentially, the idea was to envelop as wide a range of social life as possible with leftist ideas. The aim was to politicize the private sphere, which had hitherto belonged to the realm of ethics or religiosity. The radical left thus aspired to the role of a “secular religion”, extending its values onto as many aspects of life as possible.

The Left’s classic concerns regarding social and economic inequalities lost relevance in the twentieth century since, particularly in rich Western societies, the proletariat became not only relatively wealthy but, most importantly, permeated by a culture of consumerism [Bell 1973]. This, in turn, made it difficult for leftist circles to construct a narrative that invoked a critique of capitalism and class struggle. Therefore, according to Laclau and Mouffe, the traditional Marxist narrative should have been expanded to include ideas of combating inequality and social hierarchy in other spheres of life. Thus, on the one hand, this is an example of the politicization of these new spheres, including the private realm or those hitherto regulated by religions rather than the state. On the other hand, it points to a strong ideologization. For it signifies the domination of left-wing values not only over all other axiological approaches (including an attempt to impose its own supremacy on churches and religious associations), but also aims at subordinating successive areas of public policy to the dominant left-wing values. It thereby – like any ideology – introduces the primacy of values over pragmatism or even common sense.

According to Antonio Gramsci, Western culture was synonymous with ideology, because it had a monopolistic position vis-à-vis other ways of thinking and was therefore essentially hegemonic in character. It also used an ideological apparatus that imposed on the proletariat a way of thinking that was in line with the interests of the bourgeoisie [Lukes 2021: 7]. Thus, for Gramsci’s mode of thinking, the omnipotence of capitalist ideology and its associated liberal democracy, on the one hand, was essential, but so was the adoption of these ideas and values by the public and their strong internalization. This is somewhat reminiscent of Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence. It consists in the dominant classes influencing society in such a way that the subjugated perceive reality, including the very relationship of domination of which they are victims, in accordance with

the interests of the dominant classes. In this way, the subjugated perceive their situation as natural or indeed advantageous, or even as desired by themselves. This implies a very deep internalization of specific values, ways of perceiving the world, as well as basic values such as justice and democracy, as Bourdieu viewed it – to internalize them deep underneath the threshold of consciousness [Bourdieu 2000: 37]. In this manner, dominated individuals perceive social reality in terms created by the dominant classes for the purpose of legitimizing their dominant position.

Another feature of ideology, that of comprehensive interpretation and transformation of the world, is also of great importance. In other words, ideology not only provides a coherent account of acquiring cognition and understanding of historical processes, and social, economic, and political phenomena that are at times complex and diverse. It also becomes a vehicle for the enactment of a specific vision of changing the political order, subordinated to specific goals and values. It is intended to lead to the realization of social justice, of an ideal or even utopian reality. This is why the concept of ideology spread thanks to Marxism, in which ideology was responsible for the phenomenon known as “false consciousness”. It was about a set of views, whose function was to legitimize the capitalist economic and political order. These views were accepted as true by the people living within this order, although they were, in fact, created by ideological manipulation and against the interests of the oppressed classes dominated by the capitalist elite. Thus, ideology did not so much mask the actual relations between the elite and the dominated but created a false consciousness among the subordinated classes according to which they, as it were, voluntarily submitted to oppression and exploitation. This feature of ideology was seized by Michel Foucault, who pointed out that ideology did not create a screen or an obstacle to seeing the truth about social relations, but was rather a mechanism for creating knowledge, concepts, and values that created a new kind of truth for society [Foucault 1994 (2000): 15]. Thus, ideology was a formidable political weapon, or more precisely: an instrument of power.

In this context, another consequence of ideology is worth noting. According to Foucault’s interpretation – it creates a new kind of social knowledge, including that which refers to scholarly authority, confirmed by research, as Karl Marx did in his works. Simultaneously, ideology subordinates this knowledge to the achievement of social change, and sometimes even to the realization of utopian goals, not only the great ones, but those possessing moral significance, as they are meant to make humanity happy. It is hardly surprising that such a concoction of value goals

underpinned by scholarly validation must also generate specific guidelines for public policies. The ideologization of these policies tends to lead to downplaying the costs and to mobilizing for sacrifices, in the name of the realization of political ambitions which, after all, have a moral dimension. In this way, public policies cease to be rational, i.e., subject to the calculation of inputs, costs, and potential to achieve an appropriate effect, and become the object of missionary and progressive actions, that is, those aimed at social modernization and the progress of humanity.

Even though Laclau and Mouffe fought against liberal and conservative hegemony and aimed to abolish hierarchy and inequality, it is difficult not to conclude that their demands lead to a new form of enslavement and exclusion. For it is essentially a project of Marxist revolution, aimed at replacing the existing power elites with new ones drawn from among the hitherto excluded, disempowered, or stigmatized. The introduction of equality is therefore largely illusory, and serves to construct a new, much more acute form of exclusion, inequality and hierarchization.

The projected leftist strategy was based on three important modes of operation [Laclau, Mouffe 2014: xii-xiii]. Firstly, it was based on the introduction of relativism of concepts and the removal of objectivity, for example, in relation to basic concepts or socially functioning values. The aim was to undercut the unquestioned foundations of political life, notably those on which morality or the liberal democratic order had hitherto been based. Of considerable importance here was the questioning of references relating to Europe's traditions, culture, and religious heritage. Subsequently, the aim of the political action was to redefine basic concepts and values to introduce the hegemony of leftist discourse into the public debate. Laclau and Mouffe, for example, referred to "radical democracy" or "democratic revolution" [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 193], but, at the same time, rejected the foundations of liberal democracy in place to date. The authors recalled pluralism in the context of new areas of politicization, while challenging traditional pluralism understood as respect for different political views and values. They redefined certain fundamental rights, including those of women and sexual and ethnic minorities. In so doing, they were actually privileging some social groups over others, or denying the majority of society the ability to decide the extent of freedom and privilege of minority groups. They were thus altering the understanding of equality and social justice, as well as placing some categories of rights above others. Traditional approaches to security were losing their meaning, including yielding to the norm of equality and emancipation of minorities. The category of citizenship – which is closely linked to the political community and democracy

– was also losing its importance. What was more important, in fact, were human rights defined on a global scale and thus not privileging the citizens of a given territorial community. There was no consent in this reasoning to the democratic regulation of the scope of rights granted to immigrants, i.e., to persons from the outside of a given political community.

The second *modus operandi* of leftist strategists was the pursuit of universalism and internationalism. A manifestation of this tendency was the stretching of values and human rights to a global scale, and thus beyond the borders of a given political community. This is precisely why the categories of citizenship and national democracy, which were essential for defining public policy towards, for example, persons originating from outside a given community, were losing their significance. By the same token, communitarianism, including membership in a political nation and a specific state, was also being depreciated. National identifications, the tradition and culture of a particular political community, its basic political identity, were also losing importance. This specific uprooting was to serve the construction of a new, egalitarian society, united around leftist values and ideology, and therefore no longer based on national tradition.

Let us note the change in the way the categories of justice and equality were understood. The former was no longer so strongly related to the distribution of taxes collected within a given community or, more broadly, to the distribution of national income and wealth. The narrowing of the distribution of taxes primarily within a given democratic community could therefore be considered unjust. Moreover, the new understanding of equality transcended the boundaries of that community. Henceforth, not only citizens, but also non-citizens, were deemed equal among themselves. This was fundamental for the discourse on democracy, the national community, and even security – understood as providing protection first and foremost for the citizens of a given political community. The cosmopolitanism is central to the construction of the ethos of the global left, which also has a huge space for action in the course of European integration, namely the construction of a new society in the EU and building associated EU values. In the Marxist tradition, internationalism is used to defeat capitalism, while the obstacle consists of national identities, i.e., a stronger loyalty to one's own political or ethnic community than to one's class affiliation. Therefore, the effect of introducing a progressive strategy of the Left can be to undermine the foundations of the state, not just the cultural ones of a given society. Furthermore, in Marxist thought, the proletariat does not form a political community with the capitalist class but is to



encompass a strong antagonism towards the latter and thus seek its overthrow, replacement, and elimination.

Hence, the third postulate concerning the methodology of action was the introduction of strong social antagonism, which was to lead to political polarization. This is in line with the Marxist tradition, which called for class struggle and therefore for extreme, if not murderous, antagonism between the classes. The aim would be, *inter alia*, to weaken the political community links found in society and thus to destroy the traditional ties that sustained the previous political order. Laclau and Mouffe's designing of radical conflict and political division served to eliminate political opponents and remove competing values from legitimized discourse [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 165]. Opponents were to be excluded from politics as populists, fascists, autocrats, and supporters of totalitarianism [Laclau, Mouffe 1985: 168]. In essence, however, the leftist method of polarization was in its very nature thoroughly populist. Indeed, a manifestation of this is Laclau and Mouffe's introduction of the category of the "people", of which both authors are the true defenders, as well as the designation of elites who defend traditional values and freedoms and refer to objectified natural laws that are meant to be supreme in social life. Essentially, the proposed polarization was intended to be transitional. Once the left-wing values had gained a hegemonic position, there was to follow a restoration of social unity and even the total applicability of the sole legitimate values in all areas of life and in all social groups.

### **Political practice in Europe**

An integrating Europe provided ample scope for putting the idea of "democratic revolution" into practice. Laclau and Mouffe pointed out in their book that with the development of the integration project, proponents of Euro-communism grew active [Laclau, Mouffe, 2014: vii]. Thus, the socialist strategy could be used in constructing a new identity for Europeans, while at the same time breaking down the national identifications as well as the state structures that were impeding the progress of integration. For the emergence of a new European society, it therefore seemed necessary to deconstruct the old national societies while mobilizing the electorates around new values, under the noble slogan of furthering the integration.

This became particularly important in the face of successive European crises, which began with the problems of the Eurozone in 2010. These threatened the stability of the EU and even yielded clear disintegration phenomena, among which Brexit was perhaps the most significant. For left-wing politicians and intellectuals,



such an existential threat was also posed by conservative groups invoking tradition and national sovereignty, as well as demanding respect for the sovereignty of member states. These were perceived as an outbreak of Euroscepticism that could lead to the break-up of the Community. As one of the Canadian intellectuals put it: “Europe was treating the nations that compose it like conquered provinces, like rotten human timber, like the rubbish of history summoned to self-dissolve” to make room for the development and entrenchment of a new leftist regime [Bock-Côté 2021b]. Conservatives, meanwhile, considered themselves Europeans, while simultaneously recognizing that it was the liberal and left-wing circles that were abandoning traditional European values, such as the Christian-democratic ones, or the attachment to a national political community [Nowak 2021]. They considered that the sin against the notion of Europe lay in the notion that one could belong to Europe somehow directly, bypassing one’s belonging to a particular national collective, bypassing one’s duty to work on those issues that were pressing for that collective. It was thus the sin of a-historicity, of lacking a sense of history, that is, of depriving oneself of a genealogy, without which the concept of Europeanism became idle snobbery, a fashion, or a whim [Hertz 1997: 100].

The phenomenon of social mobilization against European integration has been aptly depicted by post-functional theory [Hooghe, Marx 2009, 2019]. In the wake of the crises, or more precisely the dysfunctional response to them on the part of the EU institutions – societies ceased to unreservedly trust the hitherto existing pro-European elites, and likewise to give tacit consent to further advances in integration. This marked the end of what academics call the “permissive consensus”. It signified a consensus of European nations for the elites to decide on further advances in integration “in the dark”, as it were – that is, with the tacit approval from the electorate. During the successive crises, we entered a new phase, which is referred to as the period of the “constraining dissensus”, i.e., a growing Euroscepticism of the voters, who exerted pressure to limit integration. It can also be described as a time of mobilization of a significant part of the electorate against the previous formula of integration, exercised by the mainstream elites and based on increasingly strong centralization, thus taking competences away from the democracies in the member states, especially in the smaller ones or those less influential in the EU.

For the proponents of earlier integration processes, this represented voter mobilization by radicals, mainly on the Right. It was largely directed against groupings traditionally playing a major role in political processes. These new groupings thus

posed a serious threat to the power of the hitherto dominant formations, which constituted something akin to a pro-European cartel at the EU level. According to Peter Mair [2007], the hallmark of this cartel was a strong approximation in terms of programme, as well as a solidary defence of the power wielded in integration processes. It may be added that this programmatic consensus involved a largely similar view of the issue of EU values, while the defence of institutional self-interest resulted in the formation of a united front vis-à-vis factions perceived as Eurosceptic. Therefore, I propose to call this next phase of social mobilization in Europe an “excluding constraint”, as the integration increasingly moved towards the exclusion of certain forces from legitimized politics and limited the scope of discussion about the future of the EU to the political mainstream’s preferred orientations and values.

The counter-offensive of the pro-European milieus from the political mainstream was intended to mobilize in favour of integration emotionally and ideologically, and to exclude adversaries from the debate. This was particularly the case for opponents of the hitherto existing integration path from Central European countries, as well as for those from conservative and Christian Democrat groupings who held a different vision of the future of the Union. Within the framework of their vision, integration was to be more flexible, decentralized and subsidiary, i.e., supportive towards weaker states and their democratic communities. It was to give them back their voice in Europe. It was thus meant to limit EU centralization, which was increasingly occurring at the expense of the interests of weaker states, and by limiting the rights of their democratic communities to take independent decisions, not only in the EU but even in their own countries. A conservative vision of the future of Europe drew on the tradition of republicanism present in Central Europe, which linked a sense of citizenship with a duty to be active towards the good of a given political community [Nowak 2020: 302-381]. This constituted a markedly different tradition from the practice of “permissive consensus”, and thus in essence from the encouragement of civic passivity and the maximum separation of democratic communities in the member states from influencing the course of European affairs.

Criticism of conservatism mainly referred to this current’s preference for national interests. It equated the defence of the interests of a given political community with xenophobia, although it would be difficult to expect a democratically elected government to defend in the EU arena any interests other than its own constituents. It is also worth pointing out that the condemnation of nationalism had to

be confined only to the smaller states; those that were easiest to criticize, or those that blocked the political consensus established amongst the dominant forces. These forces included the largest states, which, after all, influenced the integration processes in accordance with their own national preferences.

Conservatism was particularly criticized in the case of the new Central European member states, as it assumed a political emancipation of the region from the traditional supremacy of Western Europe. Accordingly, pro-European mobilization increasingly took place at the behest of leftist and liberal values. These were gaining dominance in mainstream political discourse in Western Europe. Some Central European parties who wanted to curry favour with Western European decision-makers followed this example. Even occasionally extreme left-wing (or downright Marxist) views were thus granted a label of official pro-European ideology. On the other hand, groups attached to Christian Democratic or conservative values were labelled anti-European, populist, authoritarian, or fascist. The left-wing political offensive was increasingly and in a systemic manner, restricting the rights of right-wing voters, especially those from Central European countries, which bore all the hallmarks of actions incompatible with the standards of democracy.

It is difficult to say unequivocally to what extent the socialist strategy outlined by Laclau and Mouffe was consciously used by the European left for its counter-offensive intended to defend the integration against Eurosceptics. Many politicians in the European Parliament – like the German Green faction member Daniel Cohn-Bendit – grew out of the 1968 social revolt. They were probably familiar with the tenets of the “democratic revolution”. Yet, regardless of the extent to which the project of introducing a hegemony of left-wing values inspired policymakers, it is startling how much it has in common with the reality of EU politics.

Representatives of the Left present, *inter alia*, in the European Parliament sought to dominate the political narrative by imposing their own ideals and values on other political forces as the most pro-European. They thus pursued, consciously or not, the concept of the hegemony of left-wing ideology which was to dominate public and media discourse and thereby shape public perception in the direction of left-wing values. It was essential to brand left-wing values as European and thus accepted by all pro-integration circles. For example, the issue of women’s right to abortion, or the rights of sexual or ethnic minorities became a pro-Europeanism benchmark. Shifting the discussion about the future of the EU to the level of values

was a success for the Left, as it allowed to focus in essence on left-wing axiology and to equate it with support for integration.

A special role in promoting leftist values under the label of “European” was played by the European Parliament. It passed resolution after resolution defending the rights of women or sexual minorities, treated as universal human rights and therefore not subject to political or world-view discussion. As an example, the possibility for homosexual couples to marry and adopt children was recognized as such a fundamental right. It was also prohibited for member states to restrict these types of freedoms [European Parliament 2021a]. Another resolution referred to the availability of unlimited abortion as a human right [European Parliament 2020]. There was also an attempt to broaden the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union to include a woman’s right to abortion, thus seeking to regulate at EU level an issue that had hitherto been the exclusive competence of Member States [Sánchez Nicolás 2022a]. In both aforementioned resolutions, MEPs referenced a number of documents from other international organizations that took a similar position. This demonstrates the influence of the global left, which has been promoting its own ideas in various fora for many years. Interestingly, the resolutions in question were adopted by all the mainstream parties in the European Parliament, including the right-wing parties, which only a few years earlier had described themselves as Christian Democrat.<sup>1</sup> The “cartelization” of the European Parliament facilitated the imposition of left-wing values on the entire political mainstream. An additional factor aiding this process was the fact that the main opponents to such an approach to EU values, who were generally Eurosceptic politicians, were pointed out at every opportunity. The European Parliament was thus encroaching on the competences the treaties had entrusted to national democracies. This was an expression of expansionism or even a total stance on the part of Euro-enthusiastic circles, but also an example of a breach of the rule of law, even if motivated by concern over the future of integration.

The European Commission has often been left-wing MEPs’ ally. In 2020, it adopted a strategy in which it stood up for the rights of – as it was termed – the “rainbow family” [European Commission 2020b]. As the EU has no competence to regulate the extent of these rights in the member states, the Commission therefore intended to broaden the standards for the rights of sexual minorities

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<sup>1</sup> I refer here to the European People’s Party, which as recently as in 2015 was still invoking Christian values. See: *Protecting the Union* [2015].

in relation to the treaty-based freedom of movement in the internal market. It is difficult not to see this as a creative bypassing of the treaties. In another communication, the commission proposed to member states to expand the catalogue of crimes listed in Article 83 TFEU [Consolidated version 2012] that could be prosecuted at the initiative of the EU. These have so far included terrorism, trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of women and children, illicit drug trafficking, illicit arms trafficking, money laundering, corruption, counterfeiting of means of payment, computer crime and organized crime. In 2021, the Commission proposed to broaden this catalogue to include actions (including verbal) directed against the LGBTQ+ community, as well as those of a racist and xenophobic nature [Goujard 2021]. The Left equated xenophobia with nationalism, and opposition to mass immigration with racism. The criminalization of certain behaviours or narratives may thus have facilitated for the Commission to push its own solutions in sensitive EU policies. This was also an example of a tendency to eliminate from the political discourse the arguments or values different from those of the Left. Greater sanctions for violations of European values, especially the rule of law, also served this purpose [Grosse 2022]. In this manner, the EU came dangerously close to de-legalizing the groupings that would hold political convictions different from those of the Left. Such a possibility had already been predicted by lawyers following the discussions on the infringements of EU values.<sup>2</sup>

Simultaneously, the method proposed by Laclau and Mouffe was used, namely: political polarization, i.e., antagonizing those supporting integration who invoked left-wing political values against those referring to other values, primarily conservative or Christian Democrat. The latter were labelled enemies of Europe. Polarization thus served to identify a clear opponent or even enemy of integration, who should be excluded from democratic processes, discarded outside the margins of legitimized views and positions. This conduct rallied most of the Brussels elite, as well as the existing political mainstream, around the Left. Even for liberal or centre-right politicians, the weakening of the forces described as Eurosceptic appeared to be a tempting idea. It was for this reason that the Liberal faction in the European Parliament proposed that politicians from Eurosceptic parties should not be allowed to take up any functions in the EU institutions, including those

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<sup>2</sup> The possibility of such a development was predicted by, *inter alia*, Anne-Marie Le Pourhiet [2020].

in the Parliament.<sup>3</sup> In turn, decision-makers with a more cosmopolitan mindset saw a threat in nationalism as an obstacle to the building of a European identity or the pursuit of federative ideas.

This was the way to realize the ideals of “radical democracy”, which excluded all those political forces which held a different from leftist view on values. A special place among Europe’s enemies was accorded to conservative governments from certain Central European countries that sinned not only with Euroscepticism but, even worse, had political convictions that differed from those of the Left. Jarosław Kaczyński, Viktor Orbán and Janez Janša acquired a status in EU politics described by sociologists as a “scapegoat” [Girard 1986]. It allowed the Left to dominate the discussion of EU values by its own axiology. Such stigmatization and systematic exclusion of opponents from the debate on the political future of the Union violated fundamental standards of democracy, above all pluralism guaranteeing different social and political groups the right to express their views and participation in public life [*Encyclopaedia Britannica* 2008].

The stigmatization of Central European conservatives was understandable from the point of view of left-wing circles in pursuit of “weak links” among the European right, i.e., political groupings originating from countries that could be most easily attacked. The violation of the rule of law, along with other EU values, was a particularly catchy accusation. What was offensive was the lack of tolerance regarding the attitude towards political difference and cultural sensitivity on the part of some new EU members in comparison to the attitude towards other culturally different groups, including non-European immigrants. While immigrants were treated as descendants of exploited colonies and as representatives of exotic cultures deserving of respect, quite a different attitude was adopted towards the inhabitants of the new member states, who, after all, belonged historically to the inner European periphery that had been subjected to frequent economic exploitation and geopolitical domination. At least since the Enlightenment, the backward peripheries of central and eastern Europe have been disregarded by the elites of the western part of the continent as inferior in terms of civilization. According to Larry Wolff [Wolff 1994], the idea of civilization originated in the 18th century Western Europe, and it was this part of the continent that was recognized among

<sup>3</sup> “The liberal group Renew in the EP wants a cordon sanitaire-exclusion from EP posts of the ID group and part of the ECR i.e., @pisorgpl, contrary to d’Hondt representation, and puts this as a condition for the agreement of the 3 mainstream groups on the position of EP President”. Cf. [Saryusz-Wolski 2021].

its intellectuals as its destined model. Opinions about the Eastern part of Europe, obviously backward and peripheral, were formed in relation to this model. In the opinion of Andrzej Nowak, Central and Eastern Europe was not exotic enough for Western Europe. It was simply treated as an inferior Europe, not as interesting and different as the Chinese, Persian, Japanese, or New World Indian worlds. As such, those worlds deserved tolerance, while the territory of Central and Eastern Europe needed to be civilized from without, if not by good word, then by force [Nowak 2020: 258].

Promoted as European values, leftist ideas referred to universalism and internationalism, which is yet another parallel to the methodology designed by Laclau and Mouffe. It was universal human rights that were to be central in the approach to EU values, which signified that they had supremacy over national constitutions or the decisions of democratic communities in member states. This is precisely why some referred to the European Union as a cosmopolitan empire [Bibo 2012: 79], while others considered the dispute between imperialism and nationalism to be the most portentous in the EU [Hazony 2018].

A singular example of the phenomenon of placing universal principles above national law was the defence by left-wing politicians of the rights of economic migrants and refugees, who often crossed the EU borders illegally. At the time, reference was made to universal human rights, rather than to local law concerning the protection of national borders or to legal provisions setting the framework for migration policy. The value of security, hitherto held supreme by most national communities, thus had to step aside in favour of universal human rights, which are not constrained by national or even European borders. This was evident during discussions on the crisis surrounding the situation on the EU's eastern border with Belarus. In 2021, Alyaksandr Lukashenka used immigration pressure to gain political concessions and funds from the EU side. During the debate on this issue in the European Parliament, representatives of the Left and liberal factions focussed their attention on the issue of migrants' rights to asylum, rather than on the geopolitical context or on the responsibility of the authorities of Belarus for destabilizing the eastern border of the Union [European Parliament 2021b].

This universalism accorded well with the expansion of the powers of the EU, and thus provided an excellent argument for the proponents of the advancement of integration. For it allowed successive national competences to be transferred to the EU level, while systematically deprecating the rights of local communities to



decide the fate of foreigners on their own territory. Moreover, it enabled the realization of leftist ideals of equality between citizens and non-citizens, as well as the weakening of national identities and democratic communities at the national level.

Further similarities with Laclau and Mouffe's concepts involve the relativization of discourse and the redefinition of pre-existing terminology. As mentioned earlier, leftist values were equated with European values. Traditional European values – including the Christian values referred to by the founding fathers of the European Communities – have been marginalized. “European democracy” was not bound by the democratic standards known from the member states, as the EU was neither a state nor a federation. Therefore, it could question pluralism of views, and systematically exclude politicians labelled as Eurosceptics, even if they supported further integration, albeit thinking about it differently from the mainstream. Gradually, a leftist understanding of the categories of equality, justice, and other concepts relevant to the functioning of the EU was introduced. The left-wing offensive in the EU also ushered onto the agenda a broad spectrum of topics encapsulated by politicization, which were subordinated to new interpretations of EU values. In line with the demands of Laclau and Mouffe, the interest of policymakers extended to the environment, climate, feminism, ethnic inequality and migrants' rights, as well as the private domain of EU inhabitants' lives, notably sexuality. These became important areas of EU policy, irrespective of the treaty provisions which, at least in some of these areas, granted exclusive competence to member states and national democracies. To change this situation in the name of EU values became fundamental for the political offensive of the Left; therefore, the EU institutions increasingly boldly encroached upon these national competences, and, interestingly, often under the guise of defending the rule of law.

All the areas of European policy mentioned above became examples of growing ideologization, i.e., the subordination of public policy to the influence of left-wing values. The domination of ideas over political practice was most evident in the case of EU climate policy, which disregarded the practical feasibility of the implementation of its objectives and their social costs. This was particularly visible on the benches of the European Parliament. One example was the EP's response to the European Commission's legislative proposals for a new border tax or the so-called Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. The very idea of introducing this tax was already controversial, as it could lead to a trade war with the EU's largest trading partners (especially the US and the PRC). Nevertheless, MEPs were in favour of tightening this legislation, including the widening of the scope of



EU imports covered, i.e., extending the list of sectors covered by the new climate tax, as well as the shortening of the transition period for the mechanism under discussion. The parliamentarians' demands obviously received strong support from environmental think tanks [Sánchez Nicolás 2022b].

The ideological commitment to saving the climate, but irrespective of the costs of such a policy, became a major issue during the energy and food crisis triggered by Russian aggression against Ukraine on 2022. It raised doubts, especially among conservative politicians, who watched with concern the offensive of the Left in successive domains of public affairs. One of the Polish MEPs summarized the mainstream arguments in the European Parliament in the following manner. "In many circles, a dogma reigns that energy prices, especially prices of energy derived from fossil fuels, ranging from coal to gas, should rise because this will cause people to use less of this energy and energy producers will try to generate it from other sources. For many, especially the Greens, the Liberals, and the Socialists, the more expensive the better. And this is the opinion that persists in the European Parliament. (...) This is utopia. (...) Climate policy in the European Union is being proposed and pursued not by sensible people, but by those who have been seduced by theories claiming that by not burning coal in Europe we will reduce global temperatures, which is of course a nonsense" [wPolityce.pl 2021]. The above opinion is corroborated by academic research, which shows that the European Parliament's discussion of the climate agenda was framed in the context of pro-Europeanism. This fostered climate ambitions and reinforced the demands of the Left, especially the position expressed by the Greens' groups [Buzogány, Četković 2021]. Opposition to the Union's climate ambitions was increasingly treated as a manifestation of populism and anti-European attitudes, even in academic research [Huber et al. 2021].

The phenomenon of the ideologization of EU energy and climate policies was highlighted by Professor Francisco Contreras of the University of Seville. "Another new primitive religion consists of believing in the environment as something most important. Our planet is an object of worship, it becomes more significant than the human race. We fight against fossil fuels, saying that their elimination will bring us salvation. (...) Those who claim that global warming is anthropogenic should promote nuclear power, but this is not the case. Europe's carbon dioxide emissions are only 9 per cent of the global total, while China's reach 30 per cent. Europe has reduced its emissions by 25 per cent since 2000. In that time, China has tripled its emissions, but it is Europe that suddenly has the Green Deal that will make energy

even more expensive. Germany currently pays the most for electricity, which will affect its growth potential. Europe is contradicting itself, which could lead to its self-destruction” [Przyszłość europejskiej prawicy 2021: 13].

Other conservative intellectuals also pointed out the ideologization of the said EU policy. “Our share, the EU as a whole, of emissions is below 10 per cent, so creating a zero-carbon economy will hit the Union countries hard, but globally it will not contribute much to decarbonization. The rationale behind this policy is insane – it claims the EU needs to teach the whole world a lesson in ecology. We are putting ourselves in a position of a “top student”, something that is frivolous and foolish. None of the important EU politicians will dare to put the brakes on this process. It is impossible to have a substantive conversation on this issue because the ideological pressure is so strong. There are also interests involved – if we are aiming for a carbon-free economy across Europe, we need to remember that only few companies can supply this market with technology” [Warzecha 2021].

Ryszard Legutko’s remarks resonated with the political correctness surrounding the discussion on EU climate policy, which has exerted overwhelming pressure on policymakers, actually hindering them from undertaking rational actions that adjust climate ambitions to the opportunities and particular conditions in individual sectors or member states.

Increasingly, the Left has pursued total politics in the EU. This included the systematic expansion of the powers of the EU institutions into further areas hitherto falling within the remit of the Member States. It also encroached more and more boldly into private life, sometimes depriving the right of moral judgment to religious organizations, which were further pushed onto the margins of social and political life by the promoted principle of secularism. A telling example of this tendency was the attempt by the Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, to eliminate Christmas from the language of political correctness in the EU. Earlier, she had already promoted a left-wing agenda, including by proposing the Gender Equality Strategy [European Commission 2020a] and supporting the Union’s accession to the Istanbul Convention. Amidst the wave of criticism of the Commission’s proposals, perhaps the loudest voice was that of Pope Francis, who considered such conduct to be the offshoot of the secularism of the EU institutions. He likened such actions to past practices of authoritarian regimes attempting to curtail religious life in Europe. Furthermore, he warned Brussels not to follow the path of ideological colonization regarding countries attached to Christian

values. In his view, the Union should respect the tradition and culture of individual countries, as well as their domestic historical and legal circumstances; otherwise, it could easily turn into a dictatorship or a supranational empire [Roberts 2021].

### Conclusion

Immanuel Wallerstein propagated the thesis that the offensive of the global left launched with the 1968 revolution was doomed to failure [Wallerstein 2021: 19-28; Wiewiorka 2021: 91-94]. His main argument was that, as an anti-systemic movement, it was eroding the foundations not only of American globalization, but also of the geopolitical order created by the West after the Second World War. In other words, it was undermining the geopolitical structures of the US and EU world supremacy and thus paving the way for a change in the global order in favour of powers competing with the West for leadership, most notably the PRC.

Indeed, it is difficult not to notice that the demands of the Left contained in the socialist strategy were weakening nation-states, including both in North America and Europe. The policy of fostering the hegemony of universal leftist values negated the previous foundations of the political order relating to national tradition and culture, which had to impact the state structures. Thus – at least in relation to some countries – Alan Milward’s thesis that European integration helped to strengthen nation-states was compromised [Milward 2000]. Additionally, left-wing values provided a tenuous axiological basis for EU structures, including legitimizing the growing power of EU institutions and the supremacy of EU law over national constitutions. The lack of trust in left-wing ideas was particularly evident in the new member states from Central Europe, which had endured communism after the Second World War.

It is difficult, moreover, to build integration upon actions that are essentially nihilist in character. The Left in the West harboured a loathing for the very foundations of Western civilization. It essentially rejected liberal standards of democracy, adopting instead a fundamentalist progressive stance, seeking to negate the West’s previous cultural foundations [Bock-Côté 2021a]. It attempted to weaken national identities, which was particularly evident in the EU and which was a difficult task to achieve. According to Matthieu Bock-Côté, instead of abolishing national identifications, ethnicity- and race-related consciousness was stimulated and, accordingly, so were the social divisions arising between the indigenous population and the inflowing immigrants. This created an explosive mixture and a serious destabilization factor, notably in Western Europe.

The cultural nihilism of the progressive left is mentioned by scholars looking at the transformations of Western civilization in terms of a culture war. While in the past wars were mainly waged in Europe between different religious denominations, at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, a conflict was mounting between a conservative approach represented by different religions and a leftist approach that was hostile to religiousness and which focused on the construction of new social relations [Hunter 1992]. Left-wing intellectuals rejected not only religious tradition, but also historical experience and previous culture, a phenomenon that has sometimes been termed a “cancel culture”. As Renato Cristin, professor at the University of Trieste, pointed out:

“The European Union has suffered a kind of atrophy because for a very long time it has been governed by the politically correct anti-European leftist thought, which leftist intellectuals have imposed on public opinion in Europe. The European mind today suffers from a disease whose primary cause is the desire to erase historical identity. This will for spiritual annihilation is demonstrated by the EU institutions in everything they undertake” [Przyszłość europejskiej prawicy 2021: 12].

It is impossible to succeed geopolitically, both in the process of European integration and in extra-European relations, while denying one’s own culture and rejecting the roots of one’s own civilization, which was based, to an immense extent, on the traditions of European nations. As it seems, such a strong radicalism of the Left extended beyond a simple dichotomy between a national and a universal approach. Rather, it was a source of serious weakness, as it deprived the European Union of the foundations of civilization, which are of vital significance for the geopolitical success. The basis for social mobilization in favour of the European project was thus undermined within the Union itself, and the attractiveness of the Union’s values was diminished externally.

In addition, European universalism based on the social revolution proposed by the Left was destroying the rationalism and authority of science, which, since the Age of Enlightenment, were supposed to be one of the most important mechanisms providing legitimacy for Europe’s external expansion. Left-wing circles encroached ever more boldly on the humanities and sciences by treating them in an ideological manner and exploiting them as a tool for the reconstruction of society, including the liberation of enslaved minorities [Lee 2004]. Most active in this field were constructivist sociologists, creating radically new perceptions of the world and social relations. Academics involved in remaking the social world took a similar missionary approach

to, *inter alia*, history, political science, medical science, etc., essentially denouncing rationality and scientific methodology [Lee 2004: 197]. Thus, universities became some of the most important fronts of the culture war, and academics became hostages to political correctness, which increasingly made it impossible to present arguments and research that negated a progressive way of interpreting reality. A similar phenomenon was also present in European studies, in the framework of which criticism of integration processes was being received ever less favourably. Instead, academics were getting increasingly committed ideologically to promoting this project, while seeming to overlook the manifold costs it entailed.

Moreover, the universalism of the human rights of immigrants promoted by the Left, as well as the ambitious climate agenda, impacted on the interests of the proletariat, i.e., the traditional social base for leftist groupings. The massive influx of immigrants into the EU strained the states', even the richest ones', redistribution capacity, which led to the pauperization of the poorest strata of society, and to the debt crisis that plagued southern European countries. This was one of the structural causes of the vulnerability of the eurozone. Furthermore, climate policy pushed the costs of transitions primarily onto the poorest, above all due to the rising energy prices and increased inflation (this was evident, *inter alia*, in 2021 and 2022). This may have eroded voter support for left-wing parties and their proposed integration model. It could also have led to support for those right-wing parties that combined European policy with appeals to national identity and with a broad programme of social benefits.

The methodology of the “democratic revolution” undermined the existing standards of democracy binding in both the United States of America and the European Union. The weakening of national democracy in the EU was not sufficiently counterbalanced by the democratization of political procedures and institutions at the EU level. Thereby, the strategy of the leftist forces was turning the EU into an increasingly less democratic system. The lack of political pluralism manifested in the conduct of the European elites was summed up powerfully by Francisco Contreras.

“Postmodern Marxism has become the official new pseudo-religion of the European Union, an ideology of an ever more totalitarian nature. Of course, it is not the same totalitarianism as communism or fascism. It is a new kind of totalitarianism that brings with it new strategies, new forms. Nevertheless, it is just as intolerant” [Przyszłość europejskiej prawicy 2021: 13].

Referring to the thought of the ancient philosophers, above all Plato and Aristotle, it is worth recalling that a democratic system – not held in very high esteem by either of these two thinkers – could easily turn into tyranny. This could be the case notably in a situation of a major internal conflict, which was stirred up by – as Plato phrased it – the “drones”, that is, the equivalent of today’s politicians. Their overarching purpose of action was to polarize and to incite the poor against the rich, for example, on behalf of some group of their own choosing deemed to be persecuted. Andrzej Nowak concluded that we are facing such turmoil in Europe.

“We are wondering whether a soft tyranny is preferable, one which flows from ideologues in Brussels deciding on the curve of the cucumber, though also on many much more important matters, concerning, for example, upbringing, human nature and human life and its boundaries, trying to control and change reality. Or will there arrive an immediately tangible, hard tyranny in the form of Sharia law, which will be incorporated over large swathes as an effective, efficient, and proven tool of Islamic civilization?” [Nowak 2020: 258].

An additional factor of destruction was the strong ideologization of the actions of left-wing politicians, which was shared by other pro-European mainstream decision-makers. As a result of the alignment of European values with left-wing norms, groupings representing other perspectives were also permeated by the spirit of revolutionary change in Europe, or subjected to normative pressures or self-censorship that suppressed the voices of common sense. Hence, several European policies have been guided more by the logic of emotion and ideology rather than by a pragmatic assessment of the capacities for change and the calculation of costs that can be shouldered by the EU and the member states. As the redistributive capacity in the EU was limited, primarily due to the organization’s relatively modest fiscal potential, the costs of ambitious projects often had to be carried by the most vulnerable social groups and the least prosperous countries. Moreover, in numerous instances, EU values were far more important to decision-makers than the effectiveness of the Union’s ability to counteract the mounting problems. Examples of this tendency included, *inter alia*, the migration crisis (of 2015) and the energy crisis (as of 2021).

All these processes did not serve European integration well. According to the assumptions of the leftist elites, which were also supported by other pro-European forces, the offensive relating to EU values was supposed to mobilize voters in Europe in favour of the centralization of power in the EU, as well as to limit the

influence of Eurosceptic circles, i.e., those who had other ideas concerning the future of the integration project. In so doing, they failed to notice the deterioration of democratic standards (or the growth of the so-called democratic deficit in the EU [Follesdal, Hix 2006]) stemming from the policies that were being pushed. Thus, a feature of the political system was the phenomenon I refer to as “exclusionary constraint”, i.e., a simultaneous exclusion of certain political forces from legitimized electoral discourse and the restricting of the political correctness of this discourse predominantly to left-wing values.

The intended ideological cohesion within the Union proved to be ephemeral, as instead of building a united front in the face of successive crises, another crisis was, in fact, triggered: one relating to the rule of law and EU values. This resulted in powerful internal tensions within the EU, which were even more perilous, as they touched upon axiological issues and national sovereignty. For many citizens of the Union, these were of fundamental importance and hence not subject to compromise. Therefore, this created a subsoil of mistrust in the EU and between the Member States, and thus threatened to reinforce disintegration tendencies in Europe.

The model of ideological hegemony pushed by the Left was part of a vision of integration, which had strong centralizing, undemocratic and even totalitarian tendencies. It was a “democratic revolution” of an anti-systemic nature, in keeping with the tradition of the 1968 revolt, and with the earlier tenets and political practice of Marxism. Not only did it strike at liberal democracy, at the hitherto dominant culture and religion in Europe – it also eroded the structures of nation-states. This anti-systemic overtone of the actions of the radical Left may, unfortunately, contribute to the destabilization, and indeed the collapse, of the European project. The more so because, as practice shows, the concepts, and ideals of the Left have gained fertile ground among other electoral alliances constituting a pro-European cartel at the EU level. In other words, the success of the Left in implementing a socialist strategy in the EU may prove to be short-lived. For it heralds, not so much the creation of a new European order, but rather an additional undermining of the geopolitical system, based on the primacy of Western Europe and the USA on a global scale.



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## *On Central European Identity*

**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to indicate the specificity of the identities of Central European nations and religious communities, both in terms of *sameness* and *distinctiveness*. This purpose is served by the structure of the article, which consists of four parts. The first part defines the concept of collective identity. The second shows the geographic, geopolitical, and geo-cultural profile of Central Europe. The third part indicates the importance of religion in the process of building and strengthening national identities in the Central European region. The fourth and final part analyses the cultural and world-view differences between Central Europe and Western Europe, drawing on the results of empirical research. As a result of the analyses carried out, the main culture- and civilisation-related differences are indicated, with particular emphasis on the religion, between Central Europe and the Asian East on the one hand (in a historical perspective) and Western Europe (in a contemporary perspective).

**Keywords:** Central Europe, identity, religion, victimhood, sovereignty

**Abstrakt:** Celem niniejszego artykułu jest wskazanie na specyfikę tożsamości środkowoeuropejskich narodów i wspólnot religijnych zarówno w wymiarze *sameness* (swojskości) jak i *distinctivness* (odrębności). Służy temu struktura artykułu, składającego się z czterech części. W pierwszej zdefiniowano pojęcie tożsamości zbiorowej. W drugiej części wskazano na kształt geograficzny, geopolityczny i geokulturowy Europy Środkowej. W części trzeciej wskazano na znaczenie religii w procesie budowania i umacniania tożsamości narodowych w regionie Europy Środkowej. W części czwartej – ostatniej – przeanalizowano różnice kulturowe i światopoglądowe pomiędzy Europą Środkową a Europą Zachodnią, odwołując się do wyników badań empirycznych. W efekcie przeprowadzonych analiz wskazano na podstawowe różnice kulturowo-cywilizacyjne, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem sfery religijnej, występujące między Europą Środkową a azjatyckim Wschodem z jednej strony (w ujęciu historycznym) oraz Europą Zachodnią (w ujęciu współczesnym).

**Słowa kluczowe:** Europa Środkowa, tożsamość, religia, wiktymizm, suwerenność

## Introduction

The concept of identity made a dizzying career in public discourse and in the field of social sciences at a time of great postmodern deconstruction and of the widespread questioning of certainties. It emerged, as it were, in response to a series of doubts, uncertainties, and difficulties in defining one's own or someone else's identity, based on characteristics considered essential for a given entity: an individual or a social group (nation, ethnic group, regional group, religious group, etc.). There exists a fundamental consensus that identity is attributed to a specific person or group of people rather than to nature, space, or artefacts. Therefore, the term "Central European identity" should be understood in terms of a certain mental shortcut referring to the "social substrate" that constitutes Central Europe – a space with a turbulent history and controversial borders (this will be discussed in more detail later, in a separate section). This primarily refers to the peoples formed from similar historical experiences, who lived in a "compressed zone" (of civilizations, empires), which Central Europe had been since the late Middle Ages. Besides nations, one should also point out supranational religious communities. It is not possible, though, to identify a relevant supra- or trans-national group, which could be called "the Central Europeans".

The objective of this article is to point out the singularity of the identity of Central European nations and religious communities, both in terms of sameness (*swojskość*) and distinctiveness (*odrębność*), in relation to both Russia and Turkey and to the West. For this purpose, the article is structured in four parts, which consider certain historical and contemporary variables that differentiate the identity of Central Europe from that of its two neighbouring regions: Western Europe and the broadly construed East. In the first part, the concept of collective identity will be delineated in more detail. In the second part, I will endeavour to answer the question of the geographic, geopolitical, and geo-cultural profile of Central Europe, by portraying the region in terms of a geopolitical chessboard and a space where the impossibility of political autonomy and the experience of loss of sovereignty are a universal experience, resulting in a centuries-old perception of victimhood. Within the third part, I will point to the importance of religion in the process of building and strengthening national identities in the Central European region. I intend to show the importance of the idea of *antemurale christianitatis* in shaping one's own portrait and image in relation to the nations of Western Europe, as well as to elucidate the significance of ecclesiastical institutions, patron saints, and religious leaders in the construction of collective identities. In the fourth and final part, I intend to show the cultural and world-view differences between Central

and Western Europe, drawing on the results of empirical research, carried out on a representative sample of the inhabitants of the respective European countries.

I am fully aware of the fact that I am describing the phenomena and processes, which are fundamentally unmeasurable and unquantifiable (especially in relation to the second and third parts of this article) and thus require further, more in-depth (comparative on a regional scale) empirical research. Of key importance here is the analysis of the historical determinants of the emergence of distinctness of Central Europe, overlaid with the results of contemporary empirical research regarding Central European societies.

### 1. What is (collective) identity?

The subjects of national identity can be both individuals and groups, although subjects of the former type appear to be significantly privileged and primary. The distinguishing feature of their position is their ability to reflect, which the collective subject is deprived of, for it constitutes its identity in an intermediated manner [Ścigaj 2004: 155, 167]. The identity of a nation can therefore be realized solely in the members of the collective in question. Thereby, it is necessary to have the active commitment of these individuals and their constant renewal of a choice once made. Piotr Mazurkiewicz states that such a national identity can last “only as long as its participants refer to it *en masse* in the process of self-definition. Otherwise, it is in danger of turning into a sort of fiction officially sustained through propaganda activities” [Mazurkiewicz 2001: 43]. Samuel Huntington also notes that group identity is essentially more enduring than individual identity, showing less susceptibility to change [Huntington 2007: 33]. This nature of collective identities, Paweł Ścigaj observes, does not imply, however, “that they can be reduced to the identities of individuals”. In his view, collective identities, including national identities, can be treated in a manner similar to Karl Raimund Popper’s “third world” [Ścigaj 2004: 155, 167; Popper 1992: 148-149]. They are initiated and constructed by individuals; however, while undergoing objectification, they exceed the perceptual capacities of particular individuals. In this perspective, national identity can be considered in terms of a symbolic space, objective with respect to individuals, whose “shape, however, depends on the choices made by individuals identifying themselves with selected elements of this symbolic space constituted by the conscious designs of political subjects” [Ścigaj 2004: 155, 167].

National identity appears to function in two different dimensions. The question “Who are we?” implies both the question “Who are we in or of ourselves?” and

the question “Who are we in relation to OTHERS?”. The process of identity formation can be seen in both positive and negative terms. On the one hand, it is about becoming aware of one’s own characteristic traits; on the other hand, it is about contrasting oneself with others, “stigmatized” in various ways [Bauman 1995: 99nn]. Both axes, – writes the sociologist Bronisław Misztal – “when they become the actual determinants of social action and behaviour (...) contribute to the contemporary phenomenon of identity” [Misztal 2005: 24]. In the academic literature, one can find neat and fitting terms for both approaches: *sameness* and *distinctiveness* [Jacobson-Widding 1983: 159; Taboada-Leonetti 1981: 137-167; Rembierz 1999: 14; Peterson-Royce 1982: 27]. For collective identity, including national identity, is determined both by a sense of continuity and cohesion, as well as a sense of distinctiveness in relation to other groups [Bokszański 2006: 37; Ricoeur 1992: 33nn]. It should be pointed out that both categories render it possible to define (a) the nation as a social group in its distinctiveness, and (b) the nation as part of a broader (supranational) community. In the literature, the latter option is much less frequently explored and described, yet it is beyond doubt that being part of a supranational community is accompanied by both a sense of sharing the same values and by a perception, shared with the other nations, of distinctiveness in relation to other supranational communities.

And finally, it should also be mentioned that there are ongoing discussions in the social sciences regarding the question whether national identity is an expression of the self-awareness and self-knowledge of individuals identifying with a given national community, or an expression of mediated self-awareness of the national group. Or – perhaps – should it be judged based on the observation of some, often hidden and invisible to the “naked eye” through cultural codes and “lifestyles”? In other words, should national identity be reconstructed by referring to the opinions about itself by the majority of the representatives of a given national group (or – by referring to the views of its “spokespersons”, e.g., political and cultural elites), or – disregarding the declarations of awareness – should attention be devoted to the analysis of a given national culture, to the modes (prevalent patterns) of behaviour, to objective indicators of national identity? This dilemma reflects the tension between sociological and anthropological paradigms.

## **2a. Where does the centre of Europe lie? Problems with defining Central Europe**

The discussion of where Central Europe lies and what its boundaries are goes back essentially to the period when thinking about Europe in terms of a division into a civilized South and a barbaric North was abandoned, to be replaced by thinking in

terms of a division into the West and the East. Piotr Wandycz observes: “although there existed two Roman empires, the Eastern and the Western, contemporaries did not think in terms of an East-West division” [Wandycz 2003: 12], although Andrzej Nowak traces the beginnings of the formation of the East-West polarity to the early ninth century – the coronation of Charlemagne as emperor of the renewed Western Roman Empire (in opposition, as it were, to Constantinople as the full-fledged heir to Rome) [Nowak 2022]. Until the twilight of the Middle Ages, the main dividing line was defined ‘roughly’ by the former Roman *limes*, which were not accompanied by extensive borderlands on either side that could be considered a separate cultural entity. The division into the East and the West, taking shape in the final two or three centuries of the waning Middle Ages, initiated by the Great Schism (1054), entered a decisive phase with the so-called grand geographical discoveries and with the industrialization of the West [Samsonowicz 1999]. The aforementioned North-South axis began to lose its significance along with the progress of the Muslim conquests – at that time, Europe (in the cultural sense) lost its South (first in Spain and Southern Italy, then in the Balkans), and simultaneously, the Christianisation of the Germanic tribes shifted the ‘centre’ of Europe towards the North.

The end of the Middle Ages, i.e., the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, marked the beginning of a new era in the history of Europe, which was accompanied by the emergence of Central Europe (from the Western perspective – Eastern Europe) as a reaction to the onslaught from the East. The first “Asian thrust” was the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, which laid waste to the lands of the Kingdom of Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Hungary. The second “thrust” was the Ottoman invasion of the lands of the present-day Balkans, which began in the mid-14th century and was only stopped at the gates of Vienna in 1683, while the Turkish yoke was finally cast off by the Balkan nations as late as at the turn of the 20th century. The third “Asian thrust” is linked to the establishment of the Russian Tsardom in the 16th century, after three centuries of subjection of the Rus’ nobility to the Mongol rule (with all its corresponding civilizational consequences). While the threat from the Ottoman state had gradually diminished since the late 17th century, the threat from Moscow was increasing. Just as the Turkish march towards the Atlantic was stopped at Vienna, the Russian-Bolshevik march to the West was halted and pushed back outside Warsaw (Radzymin) in 1920.

The last two “thrusts” in particular, which constituted a radical negation of European civilization, resulted in the formation of a front line, several hundred



kilometres wide, in defence of the Judaeo-Christian, Greek, and Roman values. At the same time, protected from the East by the joint efforts of the Poles, Lithuanians, Ruthenians, Hungarians, Wallachians, Bulgarians, Serbs and Croats, the Western Europeans – the English, Spanish, Italians, Portuguese, and Dutch – were beginning their conquest of the New World and rapid enrichment through numerous expeditions and the development of intercontinental trade. It could be said that the process of the formation of Central Europe was, on the one hand, a response to the thrust from the East and, on the other hand, the result of the inability to join Western Europe, especially in the socio-economic domain (the formation of an early capitalist economy, the dynamic development of cities and their “interconnectedness through networks”), either because of the involvement in the fight against the Tartars, Turks and Muscovy, or because of the progressive economic underdevelopment of this part of Europe, which was not afforded the benefits of early industrialization. Finally, the frontier between Central and Western Europe was based on the line of two rivers: the Elbe and the Leitha [Szűcs 1995].

Thus, a rather broad geopolitical zone was created between Russia and Turkey on the one hand, and Austria and the Italian and German states on the other. Without entering into a debate with the numerous paradigms of Central Europe, it should be noted that there are **two fundamentally different ways of understanding the region** present in contemporary scholarly and political discourse.

The first one, let us call it **inclusivist**, postulates the inclusion in the region of all those ethnoses and religious communities that are situated within the broad geo-cultural spectrum between Russia and Turkey to the East and Germany and Italy to the West (the status of Austria remaining problematic). This approach to Central Europe presupposes an internal religion-civilizational pluralism, for a region thus delineated, described by Karol Wojtyła, influenced by the Russian theologian and ecumenical activist Vladimir Solov’ev, as a “Europe of two lungs” [Wojtyła 1994; Zenderowski 2003: 26-30; Mazurkiewicz 2004], includes national cultures shaped in both Latin and Byzantine civilizations (but not in the Moscow version!). Central Europe, thus defined, comprises of 19-20 countries: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia (North), Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. The status of Kosovo, which is not recognized by as many as seven countries in the region: Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine, remains problematic. In this approach, Greece and Austria are very rarely included in the



Central European region. The leading representative of this current of conceptualization of Central Europe, which includes the Balkan region and the former western Soviet republics, is the eminent Polish historian Oskar Halecki, who divides the region of Central Europe into two areas: Central-Eastern Europe (as outlined above) and Central-Western Europe comprising the German-speaking countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) [Halecki 1950, id. 2000]. This mode of thinking about Central Europe is also close to Bohdan Cywiński [Cywiński 2003].

The second manner of defining Central Europe, which we can call **exclusivist**, entails restricting the boundaries of Central Europe to those national cultures from the geographical space described above that have strong links with Latin culture, formed on the foundation of Catholicism and later also Protestantism. This kind of understanding of Central Europe in a sense “pushes out” of the region, into the depths of an undefined East, those ethnoses which were formed based on the Orthodox civilization, albeit at the same time not incorporated into the Russian or, earlier, Byzantine civilization; on the contrary, they resisted such incorporation in numerous uprisings and revolts. Central Europe, in this sense, encompasses ten countries: the Baltic republics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, or also Austria, as well as parts of Belarus, Romania, Serbia, and Ukraine. Such an interpretation of Central Europe’s identity and borders is proposed by Krzysztof Dybciak [Dybciak 2001; Dybciak 2004], as well as by the influential Polish historian Piotr S. Wandycz, who, by using the term “East Central Europe”, limits its coverage to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, while taking into consideration the changing borders of these states over the course of history [Wandycz 2003: 11].

In the present text, I argue for the inclusivist definition of Central Europe, the primary feature of which is the division into the Latin (Catholic-Protestant) and Byzantine (Orthodox) parts – the two traditions that have both competed against each other throughout history and created a space for cooperation and cultural diffusion.

## **2b. Central Europe as a geopolitical chessboard.**

### **Problems with political autonomy and Central European victimhood**

After the loss of sovereignty by Serbia at the end of the 14th century, Hungary at the beginning of the 16th century, Bohemia at the beginning of the 17th century, and – finally – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 18th century, Central Europe was progressively becoming a geopolitical chessboard for

external powers. One can say that **from the end of the fourteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century, there a process of disempowerment of Central Europe** that had different origins and causes, which would have to be discussed in a separate article. First Turkey, then Austria, Russia and, in the 18th century, also Prussia, the nucleus of the later German Reich, laid claim to specific parts of Central Europe, dividing them among themselves either by military conflict (the Balkans) or diplomatic arrangements not involving the launching of a war (partitions of the First Polish Commonwealth). It is worth noting at this point that the aforementioned states represented different religious domains: Catholic, Islamic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant.

The situation where the Central European nations were deprived of real political autonomy (sovereignty), the trauma caused by the loss of their own state or living in circumstances of permanent threat to their national existence, significantly shaped the identity of the inhabitants of the region (see the table below). Poles, one could say, were in a rather privileged position, as they had been without their own state for “merely” 123 years, and if one counts the time of existence of the Principality of Warsaw and the Kingdom of Poland, even a shorter period. Among the peoples of Central Europe who possessed their own states in the Middle Ages, those who were deprived of their own statehood for the longest time were the Slovenes (1169 years) and the Slovaks (1085 years, if we consider Czechoslovakia as a state in which the Czech people possessed political sovereignty),<sup>1</sup> the Croats (766 years), the Ukrainians (751 years),<sup>2</sup> the Montenegrins (626 years), the Albanians (520 years), the Bulgarians (510 years), the Serbs (419 years), the Lithuanians – 349 years (or 123 years counting the state community with Poland), the Hungarians (326 years), the Czechs (298 years, if one considers Czechoslovakia as a state in which the Czech nation enjoyed political sovereignty).

<sup>1</sup> The early medieval nuclei of Slovenian and Slovak statehood, present in the historiography of both nations, are quite commonly contested due to the ephemeral nature of these state entities and the fact that it is difficult to unambiguously identify these with the (exclusively) Slovenian and Slovak ethnicities.

<sup>2</sup> In this case, the problem is the ongoing dispute between Russia and Ukraine over the heritage of the Kievan Rus’.

**Table 1. Traditions of statehood of the nations of Central Europe**

Country	Loss of independence	Independence (19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> century)
<b>Albania</b>	1392 <sup>(1)</sup>	1912
<b>Belarus</b> (n-XX)	--- <sup>(2)</sup>	1991*
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> century <sup>(3)</sup>	1992**
<b>Bulgaria</b>	1018 / 1398 <sup>(4)</sup>	1908 <sup>(5)</sup>
<b>Croatia</b>	1102 <sup>(6)</sup>	1868 <sup>(7)</sup> / 1918-1941 <sup>(8)</sup> / 1941-1945 <sup>(9)</sup> / 1991
<b>Czech Republic</b>	1620 <sup>(10)</sup>	1918 <sup>(11)</sup> / (occupation 1939-1945) / 1993 <sup>(12)</sup>
<b>Estonia</b> (n-XX)	1940 <sup>(13)</sup>	1918-1940, od 1991
<b>Hungary</b>	1541 <sup>(14)</sup>	1867 <sup>(15)</sup> / 1918
<b>Kosovo</b> (n-XX)	--- <sup>(16)</sup>	2008 <sup>(17)</sup>
<b>Latvia</b> (n-XX)	1940 <sup>(13)</sup>	1918-1940, od 1991
<b>Lithuania</b>	1940 <sup>(13)</sup>	1918-1940, od 1990
<b>Macedonia (North)</b> (n-XX)	---	1991**
<b>Moldova</b> (n-XX)	---	1991*
<b>Montenegro</b>	1170 <sup>(18)</sup>	1796/1878-1918; since 2006 <sup>(19)</sup>
<b>Poland</b>	1795 <sup>(20)</sup>	od 1918 (occupation 1939-1945)
<b>Romania</b>	---	1878 <sup>(21)</sup>
<b>Serbia</b>	1389/1459 <sup>(22)</sup>	1878-1918, since 2006 <sup>(23)</sup>
<b>Slovakia</b>	833 <sup>(24)</sup>	1918 <sup>(25)</sup> / 1939-1945 <sup>(26)</sup> / 1993 <sup>(27)</sup>
<b>Slovenia</b>	822 <sup>(28)</sup> / 1941-1945 (occupation)	1991**
<b>Ukraine</b> (n-XX)	1240 <sup>(29)</sup>	1991*

Source: Own compilation based on publicly available data on the periodization of state systems.

- 1) The Kingdom of Albania (*Regnum Albaniae*) was created by Charles of Anjou in the western part of the Balkan peninsula from the Albanian territory he conquered in 1271 at the expense of the Despotate of Epirus. Starting in 1272, Charles began to use the title of the King of Albania.
- 2) The Russian boyars participated in the construction and development of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and its history and traditions are considered by Belarusians as an integral part of their historical-cultural identity.

- 3) Bosnia constituted an autonomous political unit in the 10th century, falling under the control of Byzantium and subsequently Serbia and Hungary in the 11th century. Bosnia regained its independence for a brief period at the end of the 14th century. The years 1377-1391 mark the reign of the first Bosnian king, Tvrtko I of the House of Kotromanić dynasty. In the first half of the 15th century, Bosnia split into smaller feudal principalities that recognized the supremacy of Hungary, while in the second half of the 15th century, the Turkish conquest of Bosnia begins and lasts until the second half of the 19th century.
- 4) Bulgaria was established in 681, founded by Asparuh. A powerful state was formed with its capital in Pliska (from 895 in Preslav) and lasted until 1018, when it was conquered by Byzantium. Bulgaria regained sovereignty in 1185, only to lose it again in 1398, this time to the Ottoman Turks.
- 5) Bulgaria was a principality from 1878 but became fully independent only in 1908. In 1878, the Congress of Berlin established two Bulgarian states dependent on the Ottoman Empire – the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia. Bulgaria captured Rumelia as early as 1885, which was officially recognized with Bulgarian independence in 1908.
- 6) The Kingdom of Croatia became an integral part of the Crown of St. Stephen (Kingdom of Hungary).
- 7) Croatia enjoyed political autonomy within the borders of Hungary (1868-1918).
- 8) From October to December 1918, a state of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs existed on the rubble of Austria-Hungary, which eventually, together with Serbia and Montenegro, became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (SHS), and from 1929 – of Yugoslavia.
- 9) Between 1941 and 1945, a so-called Independent State of Croatia existed, dependent on the Third Reich. In addition to most of present-day Croatia, the new state included Bosnia and Herzegovina and Srem. The easternmost part of the state was Zemun, one of the districts of Belgrade.
- 10) In 1515, the Jagiellonians concluded the Vienna treaty with the Habsburgs, concerning the succession of the Bohemian throne to the Austrian rulers in the event of the extinction of the Bohemian line of the Jagiellonians. In 1516, the son of the deceased Vladislav II, Louis the Jagiellonian, succeeded to the throne but died in battle, childless, in 1526. Henceforth, the Catholic Habsburgs sat on the Czech throne without interruption, although formally they did not possess the right to inherit the throne, as each candidate for king had to be first approved by the assembly of the Czech states. This situation changed after the Czechs lost the battle of White Mountain (1620) between Czech Protestant forces and the coalition troops of the Catholic Habsburgs.
- 11) Between 1918 and 1939, Czechia (Bohemia, Moravia, part of Silesia) was part of the Czechoslovak Republic, in which the Czechoslovak people were the state nation. In the opinion of most Czechs, Czechoslovakia constituted the Czech national state. In 1969, Czechoslovakia was transformed into a federation, as a result of which the Czech Socialist Republic was created from the lands of Bohemia, Moravia and Czech Silesia.
- 12) Because of the division of Czechoslovakia, on 1.1.1993, the Czech Republic was created as a new entity in international law.
- 13) Incorporation into the USSR under the status of a union republic.

- 14) Hungary's might collapsed after 1526 as a result of the defeat in the battle against the Ottoman Empire at Mohács. After a civil war between Ferdinand Habsburg, the pretender to the throne, and John Zapolya, the King of Hungary elected by the Hungarian nobility, the entire area of present-day Hungary was captured by Turkey. Part of the territory of the previous kingdom was granted to the Habsburg dynasty as an ancestral domain in consequence of the Vienna Agreement (1515) between the Jagiellonians and the Habsburgs. The Duchy of Transylvania was formed from part of it, whose first ruler was John Sigismund Zapolya, grandson of the Polish King Sigismund the Old (Zygmunt Stary); while the central part with Buda was ruled directly (as a Turkish province) by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. These provisions were included in the 1541 peace treaty between the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Empire.
- 15) Hungary was a nation-state (within the Austro-Hungarian Empire) from 1867.
- 16) Kosovo remained formally under Serbian rule until 1455; subsequently, the Turks took control of this territory. As a result of the May 1913 Treaty of London, Kosovo, and southern Metohija became part of Serbia, and northern Metohija became part of Montenegro.
- 17) Despite the declaration of independence on 17 February 2008, some countries consider that, from a legal standpoint, Kosovo is still part of Serbia.
- 18) In the 6th century, Slavs – the Dukljans – settled in Montenegro, creating an independent country, first called Duklja, then the Kingdom of Zeta, and then the Principality of Zeta dependent on Byzantium; from 1170, the lands of Montenegro were incorporated into the Serbian state.
- 19) Montenegro, politically dependent on Turkey since the end of the 15th century, in 1796 gained *de facto* independence, confirmed at the Congress of Berlin almost a century later (1878). After the First World War, Montenegro became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (SHS). During the Second World War, an attempt was made on Montenegrin territory in 1941 to create an Independent Montenegrin State modelled on Croatia, but its creation and functioning was quite successfully paralysed by partisans and the Chetniks. After World War II, Montenegro became one of the union republics of communist Yugoslavia. In consequence of the secession of Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia (1991) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992) from Yugoslavia, Serbia, and Montenegro formed a new federation, which initially also operated under the name Yugoslavia and since 2003 as Serbia and Montenegro. Over time, the federation became increasingly weak, and Montenegro began to pursue a wholly independent policy. In 2006, Montenegro became a fully independent state.
- 20) Following the loss of the Commonwealth of Poland's independence as a result of the partitions, and the subsequent collapse of the Principality of Warsaw (1807-1815), politically and militarily dependent on France, pursuant to the provisions of the Congress of Vienna, the Kingdom of Poland was established, bound by a union with the Russian Empire. Its autonomy was gradually reduced and, in the wake of the January Uprising (1863-1864), abolished. Formally, however, the Kingdom of Poland existed until 1918 – until 1916 as part of the Russian Empire, and subsequently, between 1916 and 1918, as a protectorate of Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire (despite a certain degree of autonomy, the Kingdom was an occupied land).

- 21) The Wallachian and Moldavian Hospodaries had been fief lands of Hungary, Poland and eventually Turkey since the Middle Ages, although prominent *voivodes*, or *hospodars* (such as Stefan the Great or Vlad the Impaler) remained *de facto* independent rulers. What is notable is that the Hospodaries, despite being dependent states, continuously constituted a limited form of Romanian statehood. In 1856, the Treaty of Paris, while preserving Turkey's formal authority, placed the Hospodaries under the protectorate of the great powers. In 1859, the Hospodaries were united by a personal union as the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, and in 1861 – by a genuine union as the United Principalities of Romania. Thus, Romania evolved from a union of two states into a unitary state. It gained formal independence in 1878 and became a kingdom in 1881.
- 22) In 1389, at the Battle of Kosovo Polje, the Turks defeated the Serbian-Bosnian coalition. Serbia fell under Turkish authority and part of the population moved to Hungary. The defeat of the Turks at the Battle of Ankara in 1401 briefly allowed Serbia's reconstruction, but it fell again during the successive Ottoman campaigns between 1454 and 1459.
- 23) From 1815, a Turkish-dependent Principality of Serbia existed, which gained formal independence in 1878, while from 1881 Serbia was already a kingdom. Separate Serbian statehood ceased to exist with the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (SHS, 1918) and, from 1929, Yugoslavia, a *de facto* emanation of Greater Serbia. In communist Yugoslavia, Serbia had the status of a union republic. Following the secession of Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia (1991) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992), Serbia and Montenegro formed a new federation, which initially also functioned under the name Yugoslavia, and since 2003 – as Serbia and Montenegro. Over time, the federation grew increasingly weak and Montenegro started to pursue a fully independent policy. Since 2006, following the secession of Montenegro, the Republic of Serbia has been in existence. In addition, a constituent part of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the *Republika Srpska* (which proclaimed independence in 1992, and subsequently became the union republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995, by virtue of the provisions of the Dayton Agreement) that pursues, often in defiance of the central government in Sarajevo, a relatively independent policy.
- 24) In the 8th century, the Principality of Nitra was established in the territory of present-day Slovakia. In 833, the principality was conquered by Mojmir I and, from then onwards, until 906, this area, together with Bohemia and Moravia, formed the Great Moravian state.
- 25) Between 1918 and 1939, Slovakia, as the former Upper Hungary (*Felvidék*), was part of the Czechoslovak Republic, with Czechoslovaks designated as the state nation. In 1969, Czechoslovakia was converted into a federation, resulting in the creation of the Slovak Socialist Republic as part of the Czechoslovak federation.
- 26) Between 1918 and 1939, Slovakia was part of the Czechoslovak Republic, in which Czechoslovaks were the state nation. Between 1939 and 1945, Slovakia was formally a sovereign state (the Slovak Republic); however, it was politically and militarily dependent on the Third Reich. In 1969, Czechoslovakia was transformed into a federation, resulting in the creation, from the Slovak lands, of the Slovak Socialist Republic.

- 27) Following the division of Czechoslovakia, as of 1.01.1993, the Slovak Republic was established as a new entity under international law.
- 28) The Slav ancestors of today's Slovenes arrived in the lands of what is now Slovenia in the 6th century. In the 7th century, the Slavic Principality of Karantania was formed on today's Austrian territory. In the middle of the 8th century, the Karantanians adopted Christianity, and in 822, Karantania lost its independence (it was incorporated into the Frankish Empire).
- 29) In Ukrainian historiography, the medieval feudal state in Eastern Europe, ruled by the Rurikovich dynasty of Varangian origin – the Kyivan Rus – is considered a manifestation of Ukrainian statehood. Russian historiography, on the other hand, seeks to prove that Kyivan Rus represents the beginning of Russian statehood. Therefore, it is emphasized that the origins of this state should be sought in Great Novgorod.

<sup>(n-XX)</sup> – nations that gained their statehood only in the 20th century.

- \* Mention should be made of the existence of ephemeral states under the names: the Moldavian Democratic Republic (1917-1918) (which, however, existed more as a transitional form before the unification of Bessarabia with Romania), the Ukrainian People's Republic (1917-1920), the West Ukrainian People's Republic (1918-1919), the Kuban People's Republic (1918-1919) (Ukrainians also refer to the tradition of Kyivan Rus IX-1240, but a direct link between Kyivan Rus and present day Ukraine is rather difficult to prove) and the Belarusian People's Republic (1918-1919). The status, as subjects, of the Belarusian and Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics, which, although they had separate membership within the framework of the UN, were dependent on the Kremlin to the same extent as the other Soviet republics, is problematic.
- \*\* In 1991, some Yugoslav republics proclaimed independence: Slovenia (25 June), Croatia (25 June) and Macedonia (17 September). On 1 March 1992, following a referendum, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence as the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the case of Central European nations, the long periods (sometimes spanning several centuries) of not possessing their own statehood raises the question of how the individual nations of Central Europe managed to survive. There are, it would appear, two answers to this question.

Firstly, unlike Western Europe, especially France as an important point of reference, the empires ruling over respective swathes of Central Europe (Ottoman, Russian, Austrian) did not pursue any consistent assimilation policy, remaining satisfied with the relative obedience of their subjects, who were left quite broad autonomy in the spheres of culture, religion, and language. The empires did not strive to create, based on the conquered ethnoses, modern nations based on a single language, a unified culture and, finally, a whole set of political symbols



requiring the renunciation of one's own cultural identity and the memory of lost independence.

Secondly, religious communities, especially the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, played a particular role in the preservation of the memory of the lost state and in the cultivation of national culture and a sense of distinctiveness vis-à-vis other ethnoses. Both became a depository of sorts for the national spirit, not only by sacralizing, in their own way, individual national communities, but by fulfilling "down-to-earth" social, economic and, finally, also political functions that normally constitute the domain of the state.

In numerous cases, a feeling of trauma, "celebrated" in a certain manner, is associated with the loss of statehood. Across the region, this takes the form of widespread **victimhood**. Croatian writer Dubravka Ugrešić writes that:

"What made the people of the East (in their own mind) better was the experience of humiliation. Only on humiliation could they put their copyright, it was their internal legitimacy, a unique product of Made in Eastern Europe... The unhappiness resulting from humiliation is an enormous space for manipulation, so Eastern people made their unhappiness an institution" [Ugrešić 2006: 376-377].

The quoted author uses the term the "East" in the sense of the Cold War paradigm, in which there was no room for any "middle ground", as the "Iron Curtain" prevented the existence of any zone "in between". Victimhood, writes the American psychologist Peter Wolson, is about a particular kind of compensation for lost self-respect, resulting from some spectacular national calamity [Wolson 1999]. In Central Europe, "fantasies of salvation" are being created, as Vladimir Tismaneanu has termed them [Tismaneanu 2000]. The prerequisite for salvation is, *inter alia*, the demonstration of one's moral superiority, which, in contrast to the aggressor, the victim possesses by definition. It is therefore important not only to demonstrate one's own suffering in the most heart-wrenching way possible, but also, and perhaps above all, the wickedness of the aggressors and their moral deprivation. The greater the gap between the victim's innocence and the aggressor's barbarity, the greater the chance of victory in the subconsciously imagined "race". Daniel B. MacDonald puts forward a very interesting thesis that since the Holocaust, the icon of the Golden Age has lost its pre-eminent position in the construction of national identities [MacDonald 2006: 99]. It has been replaced by the icon of the national hecatomb, something Dubravka Ugrešić aptly, albeit



perhaps too bluntly, describes as the “pornography of misfortune” [Ugrešić 2006: 269]. Central Europe appears to be a special place on the Old Continent where grievances and bitterness, claims and resentments culminate. We are dealing here with many still unresolved ethnic issues, long-standing disputes: over land, over property, over cultural assets, over compensation, and finally: the most difficult ones – over memory, over honour, and over prestige. From the perspective of the discourses held in the individual states of the region, Central Europe may appear to an external observer solely as a civilization of victims and persecuted nations. This can be seen, for example, in the texts of national anthems, which emphasize the difficult and sorrowful fate, as well as the spectre of death of an entire nation: “Poland has not yet perished, so long as we still live” (Poland); “Ukraine has not yet perished” (Ukraine); “Long torn by ill fate, bring upon [Hungarians] a time of relief, they who have suffered for all sins of the past and of the future” (Hungary); “God of Justice; Thou who saved us when in the deepest bondage cast, hear Thy Serbian children’s voices, be our help (...) On our sepulchre of ages breaks the resurrection morn, from the slough of direst slavery Serbia anew is born” (Serbia); “There is lightning over the Tatras, thunderclaps wildly beat. Let us stop them, brothers, for all that, they will disappear, the Slovaks will revive” (Slovakia); “Wake up, Romanian, from your sleep of death into which you have been sunk by barbaric tyrants (...) Priests, lead with your crucifixes, for our army is Christian, the motto is Liberty and its goal is holy, better to die in battle, in full glory, than to once again be slaves upon our ancient ground” (Romania). Most nations also nurture the idea of a “greater homeland” extended to include the parts of their neighbours’ territories that they “lost” or that were “seized”.

### 3a. *Antemurale christianitatis* as a constitutive element of Central Europe’s identity

Another important element constituting the identity of Central European nations, alongside the experience of the trauma of losing one’s own state, the experience of the prospect of death of a nation as a result of some traumatic event, and a permanent sense of threat to its existence, is the widespread **awareness of remaining on the fringes and borderlines of European and Christian civilization**. This experience of being *antemurale christianitatis*, moreover, meant far more than the defence of the interests of one’s own nation. The motif of the “Christian bulwark” [Cywiński 1994: 65] in the culture and identity of individual Central European nations appears in two variants: (a) a literal one – illustrating the **struggle between the Christian world and Islam** over the course of several centuries (from the 14th century onwards), and (b) a modified one

– illustrating the **strife between the two Christian denominations dominant in Europe: Catholicism and Orthodoxy**. The idea of *antemurale christianitatis* is particularly pronounced in the national identity of Catholic Poles, Lithuanians, Hungarians, Croats, but also Orthodox Romanians, Cossacks (*ex post* identified with Ukrainians), or Serbs. The idea of *antemurale christianitatis* manifests itself in a much weaker manner in the national identities of Bulgarians and Slovaks [Krakovska 2005: 40; Vambery 1944: 82; Erdősi 2006: 141-158; Ceh, Harder 2005: 409-417; Rapacka 1995: 18; Dąbrowska-Partyka 1998: 74; Boia 2003: 198-200; Zenderowski 2007: 501; 555-558]. Given the as yet unfinished process of nation-building, it is difficult to explicitly define the position of the Macedonians. However, there is much to suggest that the motif of the Christian bulwark could become an important element of national identity. Suffice it to juxtapose the high percentage of those declaring attachment to religion with the smouldering Macedonian-Albanian conflict, oft interpreted in terms of an Orthodox-Muslim conflict. Among Albanians, the germ of such thinking about the role of their nation in European history may be the legend of Skanderbeg (Gjergj Kastrioti), first designated as *Athleta Christi* by Pope Paul II in 1457. Having returned to the Christian faith in 1443 (and having gained, in 1444, the support of local Albanian leaders who, like him, had re-embraced Christianity as their religion), Skanderbeg fought for twenty-four years against the Muslim Turks, defending, according to the well-known Albanian poet Naim Frashëri, the whole of Europe [Ramet 1998: 209; Berend 2003: 71; Szczepański 2007: 76-80; Lubonja 2005: 71]. The myth of the *antemurale* failed to find fertile ground in principle only in the case of the Slovenes and Czechs, who are rightly regarded as the Slavic nations most imbued with Western culture. Instead of the myth of the “bulwark of Christianity”, the myth of the “vanguard of European culture” against “Balkanism”, “Orientalism” and “Byzantinism” has been present in Slovenia. However, it is not as pronounced as in the case of Croatia [Velikonja 2003: 247]. For obvious reasons, it is almost absent among Latvians and Estonians (at least in the sense of defending Christian civilization against Islam).

In the case of the Polish *antemurale christianitatis*, it was initially about defending Europe and Christianity against the Tartars and Ottoman Turks (the Battle of Legnica in 1241, the Victory of Vienna in 1683), while, in the 20th century, it was against the godless Bolsheviks (the Battle of Warsaw in 1920 as one of the chords of this tradition) and the home-grown communists. It should be remembered that in Polish tradition, the motif of the “bulwark” also appears in another, “small” variant – the “bulwark of the Latin and Catholic world”. After all, in the struggle against

the Protestant Swedes and Prussians (unhappily identified with the Germans in general), and finally against the Orthodox Muscovytes, the Poles see themselves, and thus present themselves to Catholic Europe, as the invincible defenders of Catholicism. Already in post-communist, free Poland, one can sometimes hear calls for the defence of Christian civilization against the secular and anti-Christian West. This implies a fundamental geo-political and geo-cultural reorientation of the “bulwark” [Dabrowski 2003: 397-416; Zarycki 2004: 610-614; Davies 2001: 163-198]. For centuries, the Christian religion was understood in Poland, first and foremost, as the most obvious sign of membership in the family of European nations, in the West [Terlecki 1947: 46-47].

In Central Europe, Christian faith, however superficial or demonstrative, had long been regarded as the surest legitimization of belonging to Europe. The respective nations recognized their being European not through political or economic institutions, but through culture, and notably through religion [Gacesa 2006: 403]. And through a ceaseless willingness to sacrifice themselves for the sake of European civilization. At the same time, it should be noted that this perception of their role in the history of Europe was (and still is) accompanied by a sense of ingratitude on the part of the West, which was enriching itself through the expansion of its colonies, while the East was defending European borders with great sacrifice [more: Zenderowski 2011: 100-111]. Bohdan Cywiński observes that “this experience brought into the European consciousness a theme unknown in the West since the Spanish *Reconquista*: the real familiarity with the threat posed to Europe – by non-Europe”, adding, however, that ultimately “the issue of the bulwark” turned out to be “an element of Europe’s disintegration: the nations carrying out their rescue mission felt let down and betrayed when the West treated the non-Europe that was oppressing them as a political partner contributing to the continental balance of power” [Cywiński 1985: 11-12].

### **3b. Religion as the “golden thread” of European identity**

One can speak of at least **four important reasons for the significant influence of religion upon the formation of the respective national identities** in Central Europe. These are namely: **(a)** the substitutive role of the Churches with regard to the statehood, non-existent for a long period, **(b)** the competition of the Churches with the communist authorities for the “reign over the souls” (and/or their competition with parts of the political elite to fill the “ideological vacuum” after the fall of communism), **(c)** the role of the Churches in the life of national minorities (sustaining identity) and **(d)** the fact that, in principle, religion plays a greater

role in denominational borderlands, which is Central Europe as a whole [more: Zenderowski 2011: 61-111].

**(a) The substitutive role of the Churches with regard to the non-existent statehood.** The individual nations of Central Europe had long been deprived of their respective states. In this situation, the lack of national state (political) institutions often resulted in the integration of the *ethnos* around a single Church (less frequently two Churches) as an institution that organized social life to a degree that went beyond the standard priestly service. As a result, the Churches, not infrequently *nolens volens*, were becoming institutions of, simultaneously, religious and national life, which, especially in the case of the universalist Catholic Church, gave rise to important identity dilemmas (between religious universalism and national particularism). This resulted, *inter alia*, in various attempts to legitimize and justify nationalism, e.g., through the ideology of “Christian nationalism” [Gołembski 2001: 72-73; Grott 2006: 79-83]. Grzegorz Babiński draws attention to the fact that, in Central Europe, religious territorial structures proved to be generally more durable than political structures. The author notes, for example, that:

“the political history of the Hungarians or the Czechs is replete with periods of the breakdown of statehood, while the reference to the lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen or the Crown of Saint Wenceslas was enduring throughout history and had a significant impact on the formation of Hungarian and Czech national consciousness” [Babiński 2003: 13; Vrnrt 2003: 1,4].

It is no coincidence that the ideologues of Greater Bulgaria and Greater Serbia draw maps in which the borders of their “greater homelands” largely coincide with those of the medieval Bulgarian and Serbian ecclesiastical administrations in the Balkans. In general, the issue of ecclesiastical territorial organization, in practically every corner of Central Europe, was primarily a political one, and the aspirations to establish a specific ecclesiastical administrative order were one of the most important objectives of the national-emancipation movements. An excellent example of this can be seen in the contemporary Balkan countries of Macedonia and Montenegro, countries in which the establishment or attempts to establish an autocephalous Orthodox Church are treated as a condition *sine qua non* of political independence. Numerous controversies among autocephalous Orthodox Churches were stirred up by the demand to recognize the Autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. At the end of 2018, the Synod of Bishops of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople affirmed the canonicity of the

Ukrainian Orthodoxy, denied Moscow's supremacy over Kyiv, and conclusively confirmed that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church would soon gain Autocephaly (full autonomy) [Olszański 2018]. The official act of recognition (*tomos*) was issued in January 2019 by the Patriarch of Constantinople. This recognition was subsequently adhered to by the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Cypriot Orthodox Church, and the Greek Orthodox Church [Kałużny 2020].

**(b) Competition of the church with the communist state for the “reign over the souls”.** In the second half of the twentieth century, communist oppression and the increasingly widely felt national enslavement through communism and the hegemony of the Soviet Union proved to be a significant political, cultural, and moral problem. In some countries, and notably in Poland, the church was at that time virtually the only space within which it was possible to manifest freely national identity and the will to regain lost sovereignty. Hence, all the communist regimes, without exception, sought to expunge the Churches from public life and even, as in the case of Albania, to annihilate them utterly and outlaw them unconditionally. In this context, it should be mentioned that the communists' hostility towards the Church had a twofold justification. Firstly, it was a doctrinal, ideological hostility, towards religion understood, in Marxist terms, as “opium for the masses”. Secondly, the hostility towards religion and the Church had its pragmatic dimension – for the Church was seen in terms of a quasi-political power competitive in respect of the official, state centre of authority. The Church's existence effectively prevented the monopolization and centralization of power by the communists.

Whereas in the case of the Catholic and Protestant Churches, we were dealing with a more or less open confrontation with communist ideology (it is probably no coincidence that the most significant centres of anti-communist resistance appeared in countries with a Catholic or Protestant tradition: in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and in Romania – among Hungarian and German Protestants and Catholics of both rites) [Flora, Szilagyi, Roudometof 2005: 41; Elliott 2009; Pope 2009; Karpat 1992: 7-12; Czyżewski 2008: 183-192]), the Orthodox Churches adopted the tactic of “waiting out” or cooperating with the communist authorities. Lucian N. Leustean notes that what distinguishes Orthodoxy from Catholicism and Protestantism in terms of the nation–religion (church)–state relation is the concept of “symphony” (*symphonia*), which dates back to the Byzantine period. It is based on the conviction that religious and secular authority are equal and, moreover, have many common goals and tasks to fulfil (including the preservation

of the unity of the nation). The church is a structure parallel to the state, but there is no clear separation between the two [Leustean 2007: 717].

**(c) The importance of churches for the identities of national minorities.**

Individual churches in Central Europe have played and continue to play a momentous role in consolidating and sustaining the ethnic identity of national minorities.

“For numerous ethnic or national minorities, religion often forms the foundation of national identification, distinguishes these groups from other groups, separates them from ‘strangers’ and integrates them with ‘their own’.

Frequently, religious and national or ethnic identification are based on a set of the same values” – writes Halina Rusek [Rusek 2002: 24]. A key role in the process of forming and sustaining a national identity falls in the present case to parishes as territorial units. Elżbieta Pałka states that:

“[a]n ethnic parish is characterized, *inter alia*, by the awareness of its members’ common ethnic origin and language, and by the fact that it satisfies all the same religious and non-religious needs that a ‘normal’ territorial parish attends to, in addition to meeting a broad range of needs resulting from this ethnic awareness and from the fact that its members live in an ethnically dissimilar environment” [Pałka 2007: 34].

Parishes very often became not only centres of religious life, but also centres of national life, of national culture. They are the places where:

“activities and initiatives may spring up that not only motivate parish members to intensify their own religiousness and practices, but also integrate the community, offer an asylum of sorts, and facilitate adaptation in the environment, something that members of minority communities at times find difficult to cope with. A parish operating in a minority community frequently constitutes a centre of conviviality, provides an opportunity to speak the native language, gathers members around specific ceremonies and traditions, and is often an organizer of participation in culture, of leisure activities and entertainment”, notes Halina Rusek [Rusek 2002: 26].

**(d) Religion in denominational borderlands.** Religion plays a greater role in a denominational borderland, which is, it should be clearly noted, Central Europe

in its entirety. We are referring to two types of borderlands: Catholic-Orthodox (to a much smaller extent Catholic-Protestant and Protestant-Orthodox) and Christian-Islamic (mainly Orthodox-Islamic) [Huntington 2005: 54-60; 454-463]. This topic has already been discussed in principle in the previous section. It is only worth adding that professing a particular religion in a borderland, in a situation of permanent threat (be it real or imaginary) from members of other faiths, tends to constitute more than mere honouring of a certain tradition or prayerful contemplation. In the borderlands, religion signifies not only a belief in God, but also a belief in the integrity of one's own ethnic community, and often even more, a community of civilization. Furthermore, it should be remembered, religion allowed its adherents to "swallow" many a political defeat, serving a significant consoling function. It enabled the preservation of "psychological equilibrium" in the face of the numerous national calamities regularly experienced by the nations of the borderlands. Closely linked to national identity, writes Ina Merdjanova, religion constituted an emotional "catalyst" of sorts [Merdjanova 2000: 234]. By any measure, in Central Europe, religion is (was) neither a private matter (it is, after all, about the nation and its existence) nor, still less, one of indifference. It should also be remembered that professing the Christian religion in the religious borderland, on the fringes of the Christian world, entailed a far greater "cost" compared to the West of the continent. Often, the cost of life or the loss of all property. Bohdan Cywiński, writing about a particular kind of religiousness of borderland people, states that life on the frontier of the Christian world teaches:

"a life wisdom typical of every borderland, proclaiming that material and civilization accomplishments never last, that what we build will one day burn down, but – that it is necessary to keep on building. They teach that at the time of trials, the institutions vanish, and from amongst people – some perish, others disperse, yet others betray, while the rest remain in poverty and humiliation, but endure and can preserve what is most important" [Cywiński 1994: 67].

#### **4. Central Europe *versus* Western Europe: an axiological perspective**

It is worthwhile to conclude with a reference to selected results of empirical social research, to show those dimensions of the identity of Central European nations that clearly distinguish them from the majority of nations in Western Europe, notably its Northern part. Particular attention should be paid to: (a) the attitude towards history and collective memory; (b) culture as a relevant component of European identity; (c) the already mentioned religion, manifested in the intensity



of spiritual experiences and religion as an integral part of a given national identity; (d) the attitude towards the issue of the legality of abortion.

(a) **History**, or more specifically **collective memory**, seems to be of crucial importance for understanding the specific respective national and regional identities in Central Europe. In the 2007 Eurobarometer research, carried out within the framework of the project entitled *European Cultural Values* [European Cultural Values, Special Eurobarometer 278], respondents from EU countries were asked to identify up to three key values (from among nine<sup>3</sup>), that need to be “preserved and reinforced” in society. “Respect for history and its lessons” ranked sixth on the EU-wide scale.<sup>4</sup> This value was indicated by 17% of EU citizens. However, it is important to note a major difference in the perception of the historical factor among citizens of the so-called “old” and “new” EU. In the so-called old EU (excluding Greece, which in civilization terms is part of Central Europe), the conviction that history and collective memory should be nurtured is shared by 13% of the population, while in Central Europe it is nearly twice as high, at 23%. Among Western societies, the United Kingdom leads in this respect (26%), while in the central part of the European continent, Estonia (29%), Poland and the Czech Republic (27% each), and Latvia (26%) stand out. At the other end of the scale, there are respectively: Finland (7%) and Spain (9%), and Slovakia (15%), Slovenia and Romania (16% each).

<sup>3</sup> Respect for nature and the environment; social equality and solidarity; entrepreneurship; cultural diversity; peace; progress and innovation; freedom of opinion; tolerance and openness to others; respect for history and its lessons.

<sup>4</sup> *Peace* – 61%, *Respect for nature and the environment* – 50%, *Social equality and solidarity*, *Freedom of opinion*, *Tolerance and openness to others* – 37% each, *Respect for history and its lessons* – 17%, *Progress and innovation* – 14%, *Cultural diversity* – 12%, *Entrepreneurship* – 10%.



**Table 2. Percentage of inhabitants of the countries of the European Union who declare “respect for history and its lessons”**

EU 27	17%		
Czech Republic	27%	Belgium	12%
Estonia	29%	Denmark	12%
Hungary	23%	France	14%
Latvia	26%	Germany	14%
Lithuania	25%	Ireland	13%
Poland	27%	Italy	16%
Romania	16%	Luxemburg	14%
Slovakia	15%	Netherlands	14%
Slovenia	16%	Spain	9%
		Austria	10%
Average	23%	Portugal	12%
		Finland	7%
		Sweden	12%
		United Kingdom	26%
		Average	13%

Source: Special Eurobarometer 278 (2007), Annex.

**(b) Culture.** The statement that “Europe is clearly the continent of culture” (not merely a geographic concept) was an element of the 2007 EU-wide survey carried out as part of the previously mentioned project on *European Cultural Values*. At the time, this belief was shared by 67% of the European Union population. In the so-called “old” European Union countries, the figure was 64%; in the so-called “new” EU countries, it was as high as 85%! The opposite view was held by respectively: 27% and 7% of the inhabitants of each of the two informal parts of the Union. In the former group, the inhabitants of the Netherlands (39%), Denmark (41%) and Sweden (46%) attach the least importance to culture as a constitutive element of Europe, while the greatest importance is attached to culture in Finland (84%) and Italy (82%). In the case of Central Europe, the two groupings include respectively Romania (74%) and Lithuania (80%) for the lowest scores, and Slovakia (92%), the Czech Republic (89%), Poland and Slovenia (88% each) for the highest percentages. It is worth noting at this point that, while the belief that culture is crucial to Europe’s identity is shared by Central Europeans at a similarly high level (the difference between the extremes in this case stands at 18 percentage points), a significant divergence of opinion can be observed in the case of Western European

nations (the difference between the extremes in this case is 45 percentage points) [European Cultural Values, Special Eurobarometer 278].

**Table 3. Percentage of inhabitants of European Union countries answering ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the statement: “Europe is clearly the continent of culture”**

	YES	NO		YES	NO
EU 27	67%	24%	EU 27	67%	24%
Czech Republic	89%	8%	Belgium	68%	29%
Estonia	85%	7%	Denmark	41%	52%
Hungary	83%	13%	France	63%	28%
Latvia	87%	8%	Germany	52%	44%
Lithuania	80%	6%	Ireland	66%	10%
Poland	88%	5%	Italy	82%	12%
Romania	74%	8%	Luxembourg	70%	22%
Slovakia	92%	5%	Netherlands	39%	56%
Slovenia	88%	7%	Spain	70%	14%
Average	85%	7%	Austria	73%	17%
			Portugal	82%	8%
			Finland	84%	13%
			Sweden	46%	43%
			United Kingdom	54%	33%
			Average	64%	27%

Source: Special Eurobarometer 278 (2007), Annex.

(c) **Religion** is by far the most distinctive value that differentiates Central Europe (as a whole) from Western Europe, although it cannot be overlooked that some of the Central European peoples, in terms of their attitude towards religion, fit more closely with Western Europe. Research conducted by the Pew Research Center between 2015 and 2017, on a sample of 56,000 adults (18 and over) in 34 European countries, shows that almost one-third of Central Europeans (29.1%) and fewer than one-fifth of Western Europeans (16.4%) consider themselves to be deeply religious. For the Central European region, four countries with a markedly dominant position of Orthodoxy and two countries with an equally markedly dominant position of Catholicism ranked above the average. In the case of Western Europe, these included four countries with a dominant position of Catholicism and one with a clear predominance of Protestantism.

**Table 4. Percentage of persons in Central and Western European countries who consider themselves to be deeply religious**

<b>Central Europe</b>	
<b>Romania</b>	55%
<b>Moldova</b>	47%
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	46%
<b>Croatia</b>	44%
<b>Poland</b>	40%
<b>Serbia (without Kosovo)</b>	32%
<b>Ukraine</b>	31%
<b>Slovakia</b>	29%
<b>Belarus</b>	27%
<b>Lithuania</b>	21%
<b>Bulgaria</b>	18%
<b>Hungary</b>	17%
<b>Latvia</b>	15%
<b>Czech Republic</b>	8%
<b>Estonia</b>	7%
<b>Slovenia</b>	n.a.
<b>Average</b>	<b>29.1%</b>

<b>Western Europe</b>	
<b>Portugal</b>	37%
<b>Italy</b>	27%
<b>Ireland</b>	24%
<b>Spain</b>	21%
<b>Netherlands</b>	18%
<b>Norway</b>	17%
<b>Austria</b>	14%
<b>Finland</b>	13%
<b>Germany</b>	12%
<b>Switzerland</b>	12%
<b>France</b>	12%
<b>United Kingdom</b>	11%
<b>Sweden</b>	10%
<b>Belgium</b>	10%
<b>Denmark</b>	8%
<b>Average</b>	<b>16.4%</b>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/05/how-do-european-countries-differ-in-religious-commitment> (last access: 18.04.2022)

As part of the same survey, respondents were also asked about the importance of religion for a given national identity. Half of the inhabitants of Central Europe (49.3%) believed that religion rather or strongly influences the shape of a given national identity. In the case of Western Europe, this was one third of the respondents (34%). In Central Europe, five Orthodox and three Catholic countries ranked above the regional average. In Western Europe, on the other hand, five Catholic countries ranked above their respective regional average.

**Table 5. Importance of religion for national identity, 2015-2017 (% of “rather yes” and “definitely yes” responses)**

<b>Central Europe</b>	
<b>Serbia (without Kosovo)</b>	78%
<b>Romania</b>	74%
<b>Bulgaria</b>	66%
<b>Poland</b>	64%
<b>Moldova</b>	63%
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	59%
<b>Croatia</b>	58%
<b>Lithuania</b>	56%
<b>Ukraine</b>	51%
<b>Belarus</b>	45%
<b>Hungary</b>	43%
<b>Slovakia</b>	35%
<b>Czech Republic</b>	21%
<b>Estonia</b>	15%
<b>Latvia</b>	11%
<b>Slovenia</b>	n.a.
<b>Average</b>	<b>49.3%</b>

<b>Western Europe</b>	
<b>Portugal</b>	62%
<b>Italy</b>	53%
<b>Ireland</b>	48%
<b>Switzerlands</b>	42%
<b>Austria</b>	39%

Western Europe	
Spain	38%
Germany	34%
United Kingdom	34%
Finland	32%
France	32%
Netherlands	22%
Norway	21%
Belgium	19%
Denmark	19%
Sweden	15%
<b>Average</b>	<b>34.0%</b>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2018/10/29/eastern-and-western-europeans-differ-on-importance-of-religion-views-of-minorities-and-key-social-issues/> (last access: 18.04.2022)

To further supplement the picture of the “religious landscape” of Central Europe, it is worth examining what proportion of the overall population of each country were believers of the four dominant religions (Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Protestantism, and Islam) at the beginning of the 1990s and in the early 20th century. Catholics constitute over half of the population in five countries, Orthodox Christians in eight, Muslims in three, while Protestants are not in the majority in any of the Central European countries. The process of secularization of Central European societies is also evident.

**Table 6. The percentage of Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants and Muslims in individual Central European countries**

Country	Catholicism*		Orthodoxy**		Protestantism***		Islam	
	year	year	year	year	year	year	year	
	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011
Albania	10,0	10,03	20,0	6,75	•	0,14	70,0	56,7
	1991	2020	1991	2020	1991	2011	1991	2020
Belarus	•	6.7	•	83.3	•	•	•	0.5

	1991	2013	1991	2013	1991	2013	1991	2013
Bosnia and Herzegovina	17.65	15.2	30.10	30.7	0.04	n. a.	42.78	50.1
	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011
Bulgaria	•	0.85	•	59.4	•	0.85	•	10.02
	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011
Croatia	76.6	86.28	11.1	4.44	•	0.34	1.2	1.47
	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011
Czech Republic	39.0	10.4	0.2	0.2	4.0	1.0	•	•
	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011
Estonia	0.51	0.41	13.02	16.39	14.11	16.56	•	•
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	•	2011
Hungary	54.51	38.9	0.15	0.1	18.9	13.8	•	•
	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011
Kosovo	•	2.21	•	1.49	•	•	•	95.61
	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011
Latvia	•	25.1	•	19.4	•	34.3	•	•
	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011
Lithuania	•	77.2	•	4.9	•	0.8	•	•
	•	2002	•	2002	•	2002	•	2002
Macedonia (Northern)	•	0.35	•	64.78	•	0.03	•	33.33
	•	2014	•	2014	•	2014	•	2014
Moldova	•	0.1	•	90.1	•	2.0	•	0.1
	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011
Montenegro	4.19	3.44	69.61	72.07	•	0.16	10.98	19.11
	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011	•	2011
Poland	•	87.68	•	0.41	•	0.25	•	•
	1992	2011	1992	2011	1992	2011	1992	2011
Romania	6.07	5.08	86.81	81.0	5.65	6.04	0.25	0.32
	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011
Serbia (without Kosovo)	6.4	4.97	81.8	84.59	1.12	0.99	2.89	3.10

	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011	1991	2011
Slovakia	63.8	65.8	0.7	0.9	8.3	7.9	•	•
	1991	2002	1991	2002	1991	2002	1991	2002
Slovenia	71.6	57.8	2.4	2.3	0.9	0.8	1.5	2.4
	•	2015	•	2015	•	2015	•	2015
Ukraine	•	8.9	•	73.7	•	0.9	•	•

\* Roman Catholic Church and Greek Catholic Church.

\*\* Including the Old Believers.

\*\*\* Protestantism and neo-Protestant denominations.

Source: Own compilation based on census results from the respective countries.

(d) The last relevant variable, of the four cited in this section of the analyses, that significantly differentiates Central European and Western European societies (with some notable exceptions) is the **attitude towards legal abortion**. As many as 37.7% of Central Europeans in the Pew Research Center study discussed earlier believe that abortion should be “mostly or entirely illegal”. In the case of Western Europe, this view is shared by only 19% of the region’s population, half as many as in Central Europe. For Central Europe, four Orthodox and two Catholic countries ranked above the average, while in the case of Western Europe, it was four countries with a dominant position of Catholicism and none with dominant Protestantism.

*Table 7. Abortion should be prohibited in all or almost all cases (percentage of positive answers in the respective countries)*

Central Europe	
Moldova	79%
Ukraine	55%
Belarus	54%
Poland	52%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	47%
Lithuania	41%
Romania	40%
Croatia	37%
Latvia	37%
Serbia (without Kosovo)	31%
Hungary	25%

Central Europe	
Slovakia	23%
Bulgaria	15%
Estonia	15%
Czech Republic	14%
Slovenia	n. a.
<b>Average</b>	<b>37.7%</b>

Western Europe	
Portugal	34%
Italy	32%
Ireland	30%
Switzerland	26%
Austria	25%
Germany	22%
Spain	19%
United Kingdom	18%
Norway	17%
France	17%
Netherlands	14%
Belgium	13%
Finland	9%
Denmark	6%
Sweden	3%
<b>Average</b>	<b>19.0%</b>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2018/10/29/eastern-and-western-europeans-differ-on-importance-of-religion-views-of-minorities-and-key-social-issues> (last access: 18.04.2022)

## Conclusion

From the analyses carried out, it emerges that Central Europe, viewed in terms of nations experiencing oppression since the twilight of the Middle Ages – both from “non-Europe”, in the form of the three “Asian thrusts”, and from the West with its disempowering post-colonial narrative and its treatment of Central Europe only from the perspective of a “geopolitical chessboard” – has developed its own identity, which, however, is not a transnational identity, but a “grammar” of sorts, common to the respective national cultures. For the nation, understood primarily



in terms of “cultural sovereignty”, is still the most important reference point in the formation of collective identities in Central Europe. What remains open is the question of the willingness and the ability to combine individual identity narratives into a single transnational Central European discourse in response to emerging threats (both from the East and from the West) to not only the identity, but to the very existence of individual Central European nations. This distinctiveness of Central Europe has been demonstrated both in the dimension of certain historical processes – notably in the context of the relationship between national identity and religion: the sacralisation of the ethnos vs. the ethnicization of religion – and within the dimension of contemporary empirical research into the axiological attitudes of the inhabitants of Europe.

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*“Hungary is the place to be right now”:  
Hungarian post-liberalism and its influence  
on American conservatives*

**Abstract:** This paper examines emerging post-liberalism on the American political right, and its relationship with the Hungarian post-liberalism associated with Viktor Orbán and his ruling Fidesz party. The electoral success enjoyed by Viktor Orbán in Hungary, and his transformation of Hungary into a post-liberal ‘Christian democracy’, has inspired interest in Hungary among many social conservatives in the United States. For Americans who belong to the post-liberal right, Orbán’s government is a ‘model’ insofar as they believe the Hungarian Prime minister has done what American right could not do: prevent liberals and progressives from ‘capturing’ state institutions and major corporations.

American post-liberals’ interest in Orbán has led to several visiting him, and the decision to hold the CPAC conference in Budapest in 2022. This paper examines why so many Americans conservatives have come to admire Orbán’s ‘post-liberal’ regime in Hungary, what they have learned from Orbán, and investigates whether American conservative activists and politicians are now putting Orbán style illiberalism into practice in American politics.

The paper thus first examines the writings of post-liberal, pro-Orbán, American conservative journalists, intellectuals, and activists, and explores the reasons behind their antipathy to liberalism, admiration of Orbán, and desire to bring to America Orbán style post-liberal government. Second, to determine whether Orbán style post-liberalism is now being practiced by American conservative politicians and activists, the paper examines the activities of conservative activist Christopher Rufo, the legislation passed by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, and the rise of post-liberal, populist Republican candidate Blake Masters, who are sometimes alleged to be inspired or influenced by Viktor Orbán.

The paper finds that American post-liberals have different reasons for rejecting liberalism, and different ideas about what a post-liberal society might look like.



Some believe that the foundations of liberalism are problematic and make a kind of 'false god' out of liberty, and, in doing so encourage behaviour antithetical to the common good. What they share, however, is a belief that the politically and religiously neutral liberal democratic state is collapsing, that future Western governments will therefore be illiberal, and this being so, that state institutions and corporations will either be dominated by 'woke' progressives or social conservatives.

Equally, the paper finds that American post-liberals know little about Hungary and its culture and are not attempting to replicate Orbán style rule in the United States. However, the paper also finds that Orbán is an inspirational figure on the post-liberal right, and that an increasing number of Republican politicians are embracing a post-liberal style of rule in which they use the power of the state to pressure their perceived corporate enemies, and to remove progressives from positions of power within state institutions.

**Keywords:** Hungary, Viktor Orbán, postliberalism, American conservatives

**Abstrakt:** Niniejszy artykuł analizuje postliberalizm wyłaniający się na amerykańskiej prawicy politycznej i jego relację z węgierskim postliberalizmem powiązanim z Viktorom Orbánem i jego partią rządzącą – Fidesz. Sukces wyborczy, jaki odniósł na Węgrzech Orbán, i przeprowadzona przez niego transformacja Węgier w postliberalną „chrześcijańską demokrację” obudziły zainteresowanie tym państwem wśród wielu społecznych konserwatystów w USA. Dla Amerykanów należących do postliberalnej prawicy rząd Orbána jest wzorem w tym sensie, że ich zdaniem węgierski premier dokonał tego, czego nie potrafiła dokonać amerykańska prawica: uniemożliwił liberałom i postępowcom zawłaszczanie instytucji państwowych i wielkich korporacji. Zainteresowanie amerykańskich postliberałów Orbánem doprowadziło kilku z nich do złożenia mu wizyty, a także do podjęcia decyzji o zorganizowaniu konferencji Conservative Political Action Conference w 2022 r. w Budapeszcie. Niniejszy artykuł przygląda się powodom, dla których tak wielu amerykańskich konserwatystów zaczęło podziwiać postliberalny reżim Orbána na Węgrzech, czego się od niego nauczyli i czy amerykańscy konserwatywni działacze i politycy wprowadzają obecnie w życie nieliberalizm w stylu Orbána na amerykańskim gruncie. Artykuł analizuje wypowiedzi postliberalnych konserwatywnych dziennikarzy, intelektualistów i aktywistów amerykańskich opowiadających się za Orbánem, badając przyczyny ich antypatii do liberalizmu, podziwu dla Orbána i pragnienia sprowadzenia do Ameryki postliberalnych rządów w stylu Orbána. Aby ustalić, czy węgierski postliberalizm jest obecnie praktykowany przez konserwatywnych polityków i aktywistów amerykańskich, artykuł bada działalność konserwatywnego aktywisty Christophera Rufa, ustawodawstwo uchwalone przez gubernatora Florydy Rona DeSantisa, oraz rosnącą popularność postliberalnego, populistycznego kandydata republikanów Blake’a Mastersa, co do których niekiedy uważa się, że inspirują się Orbánem.

Amerykańscy postliberałowie mają różne powody odrzucenia liberalizmu i różne pomysły na to, jak miałyby wyglądać postliberalne społeczeństwo. Niektórzy są zdania, że problem tkwi w podstawach liberalizmu, które czynią z wolności „fałszywego boga”, a tym samym zachęcają do zachowań antytetycznych wobec dobra wspólnego. Łączy ich przekonanie, że neutralne politycznie i religijnie państwo liberalno-demokratyczne upada, więc przyszłe rządy zachodnie będą nieliberalne, zaś instytucje państwowe i korporacje zostaną zdominowane przez „przebudzonych” postępowców albo konserwatystów społecznych. Artykuł konkluduje, że amerykańscy postliberałowie niewiele wiedzą o Węgrzech i ich kulturze i nie próbują powielać w USA rządów w stylu Orbana. Mimo to premier Węgier jest postacią inspirującą dla postliberalnej prawicy, a coraz większa liczba republikańskich polityków przyjmuje postliberalny styl rządzenia, w którym wykorzystują oni siłę państwa do wywierania presji na tych, których uważają za swoich wspólnych wrogów, oraz do usuwania postępowców ze stanowisk w instytucjach państwowych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Węgry, Viktor Orbán, postliberalizm, konserwatyści amerykańscy

## Introduction

In 2021, a group of prominent North American social conservatives, including journalists, politicians, lobbyists, and political commentators, converged on Hungary [Zerofsky 2021]. Their purpose was to understand how the country's right-wing populist Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán, had managed to not merely win government, but established an “illiberal democracy”, or a post-liberal regime based on Christian values, Hungarian nationalism, and traditional notions of the family and gender [Bíró-Nagy 2017; Plattner 2019; Zerofsky 2021]. The post-liberals who visited Hungary were not part of the elite of the Republican Party, nor were they neoconservatives enthusiastic about the projection of American power, nor libertarians who wish for nothing more than the diminution of the state and its institutions.

Neither can this group be placed within the ‘alt-right’ that was broadly supportive of Donald Trump, or within the ‘paleo-conservatism’ or American nativism of Republican Presidential candidate Patrick J. Buchanan, which serves as an inspiration for the alt-right. Both the contemporary alt-right and Buchanan are significantly more concerned with the racial demographics of the United States than the post-liberals. And while many alt-right activists – like the post-liberals – are increasingly abandoning neoliberal economics [Cooper 2021;

Esposito 2019), the alt-right is primarily concerned with constructing a “white ethno-state” in the United States [Cooper 2021: 42]. The post-liberals, however, contain within them non-white Americans such as Ahmari, and focus more on the religious demographic problem within the United States, especially the decline of Christianity.

Moreover, the election of Trump – celebrated by the alt-right – was met with a mixed reaction by post-liberals such as Rod Dreher, who, in 2016, cautioned Christians against embracing Trump, who he claimed would eventually “stain “everyone who stood with him” [Twitter 2016], and J.D. Vance, who admitted in an interview that he both “loved” and was “terrified” of Trump, who he said spent too much time “appealing to people’s fears, and ...offered zero substance for how to improve their lives” [Dreher 2016].

These post-liberals were, rather, sceptical of the goodness of America’s role in the world, and who no longer believed that the pro-corporate, neoliberal policies of the Republican Party served the interests of the American people. Moreover, many of them were religious conservatives who were becoming increasingly concerned by the decline of Christianity in North America, and who believed this decline was responsible for a crisis of civilizational proportions in the United States, and which threatened Western civilization with extinction. In particular, the manner in which many large American corporations had, throughout 2010s and 2020s, embraced Black Lives Matter, LGBTQI+ jargon, or promoted or lobbied on behalf of other progressive initiatives, disturbed many on the post-liberal right, who perhaps believed that the corporate world would remain a conservative or right-wing dominated space, and were shocked by how quickly the corporate world embraced – at least at a rhetorical level – progressive discourses [Douthat 2018; The Heritage Foundation 2021; Dreher 2021].

In response to the growing power of progressives throughout American public life, a group of disparate conservatives began arguing that the policies of the Republican Party, especially its advocacy of small government, non-intervention in most aspects of people’s public and private lives, freedom of expression, and neoliberal economics, were mistaken [O’Sullivan 2014]. This set of liberal-conservative policies had, they argued, allowed the progressive left to dominate America’s elite spaces, including many corporations and educational institutions [Douthat 2018; The Heritage Foundation 2021; Dreher 2021]. In Viktor Orbán, these conservatives believed they had found a model – if an imperfect one – of

a conservative leader who had defeated the left and found a way to retain power over long periods by constructing a post-liberal regime [Zerofsky 2021; O’Sullivan 2014; Dreher 2022; Caldwell 2019].

Thus, over a period of several years in the 2010s and 2020s, American conservatives, and conservatives from the broader Anglophone world – including opinion journalists Rod Dreher and Tucker Carlson, professor of political science at Notre Dame University Patrick Deneen and Harvard law professor Adrian Vermeule, political writer Douglas Murray, late British philosopher Roger Scruton – began making a sort of pilgrimage to Budapest to study Orbán’s successes [Bloodworth 2022; Bherer 2022]. Equally, in 2018, Canadian psychology professor and cultural commentator Jordan Peterson met privately with Orbán in Budapest [Levitz 2022]. Former *National Review* editor John O’Sullivan moved to Budapest, where he serves as the leader of the Hungarian government sponsored pro-Orbán Danube Institution [Tait 2022]. These attempts were largely made on an individual basis until 2021, when a curious sort of study tour was organized. Influential Christian conservative opinion journalist Rod Dreher [2021a], who declared “Hungary is the place to be right now”, provided the impetus for the 2021 Hungarian trip by encouraging popular Fox News television host Tucker Carlson to take an interest in Orbán’s achievements, claimed that Fidesz appears to have achieved what was thought impossible: they had prevented their nation’s elites from capturing the state and driving conservatives from the public sphere [Zerofsky 2021]. Academic Patrick Deneen separately met with Orbán, while Law professor and Catholic integralist Adrian Vermuele and writer Sohrab Ahmari – both recent Catholic converts – approve of Orbán’s ability to fight his enemies on the left and preserve Christian culture in Hungary [Zerofsky 2021]. Republican Congressional candidate for Ohio and author J.D. Vance has also praised elements of Orbán’s rule in Hungary, especially his attempts to increase natural population growth rather than rely on immigration [Vance 2021; Pengelly 2021].

For the American conservatives who have visited Hungary, and who feel as if they have for decades merely watched on as progressives transformed their society – legalizing same-sex marriage, increasing rights and protections for trans people, and most importantly dominating public discourse on issues involving race, gender, and sexuality – Orbán’s apparent political success made Hungary worthy of their interest. Hungary was thus a place worth studying because it was there – under Fidesz’ right-wing populist regime – that conservatives had apparently found a way to stop the left winning culture wars and dominating the public sphere, and

where a new post-liberal order appeared to be taking shape. The journeys made by American conservatives to Hungary have understandably attracted some negative media attention, particularly from left-wing publications. To their liberal and left-wing critics, these conservatives are either the naïve, who do not understand the dark reality of Orbán authoritarian regime, or knowingly embracing a far-right dictator. Moreover, critics have consistently accused American post-liberals of attempting to bring Orbán's allegedly far-right authoritarianism to the United States [Beauchamp 2022; Kim 2022]. Among these critics was neoconservative Bill Kristol [2021], who, in a tweet, claimed that "DeSantis" was "following Orbán's lead", illustrating the growing divide on the right between those who support liberal democracy and those who either believe it has failed or find it antithetical to their political ideology. What is often missing from this discussion is an examination of conservatives' statements about Orbán and Fidesz, and a more thoughtful consideration of what Orbán means to American conservatives, and what they seek to learn from his governing style and political ideology. At the same time, it is also important to examine whether American conservatives have begun to put into practice what they have learned from Orbán. This paper examines why so many American conservatives have come to admire Orbán's 'post-liberal' regime in Hungary, what they have learned from Orbán, and investigates whether American conservative activists and politicians are now putting Orbán style illiberalism into practice in American politics.

This article examines a group of 'post-liberal' public intellectuals and political figures in the United States, who share both a rejection of liberalism, which they believe has become an existential threat to Western Civilization, and a belief that Viktor Orbán's government in Hungary provides a model for a successful transition from a liberal to a post-liberal society. The article cannot study all post-liberal intellectuals and political figures, but rather discusses several of the most prominent, including journalists and writers Rod Dreher, Sohrab Ahmari, Gladden Pappin, Tucker Carlson, and John O'Sullivan – all of whom have developed institutional ties to Hungary and Orbán. For example, Dreher and Pappin were visiting fellows at Hungary's Mathias Corvinus Collegium (MCC), a private college for advanced studies, which is closely associated with Orbán and funded in part by his government [Kalan 2020; MCC Website 2021]. Carlson is also associated with the MCC and gave a speech at its conference "MCC Feszt" in 2021 [Youtube 2021]. Dreher, moreover, was also a Visiting Fellow at the Danube Institute. There are close financial and institutional ties between these writers and the Orbán government, although this does not mean that they should be considered mouthpieces

of the government. Rather, it shows a level of transnational organisation and commitment to the post-liberal cause. The article also studies the examples of political activist Christopher Rufo and Republican politicians Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, and Senate candidates Blake Masters and J.D. Vance, all of whom are increasingly influenced by post-liberal thought and are extending it into the American political realm.

The paper limits the study to the years 2016-2022, a period which began with the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States and ends with the appearance of Viktor Orbán at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) conference in Dallas, Texas, in November 2022, and during which the influence of post-liberals over the Republican Party and wider American right appears to have increased.

### **Orbán's appeal to American social conservatives**

Perhaps the key reason behind North American conservatives' interest in Orbán is his opposition to liberalism and attempts to build a post-liberal or non-liberal regime in Hungary. If one idea animates this group of American social conservatives, it is a shared antipathy to or disillusionment with liberalism. Liberalism is a somewhat complex and contested term [Bell 2014], and therefore it is best to try to understand how the term is understood by post-liberals. Indeed, on the surface, it may appear that American post-liberals who have visited Hungary – and in some cases met with Orbán – perceive social progressives associated with identity politics-based movements (particularly on issues related to gender, race, and sexuality) as their primary political enemies. This is only partially true. While conservatives may abhor the social changes driven by the far-left, liberalism and liberals also serve as their movement's antagonists. This is not because conservatives believe liberals are ultimately pushing for a redefining of gender and sexual norms; rather, they believe that liberalism has created the grounds for a dangerous left-wing movement to achieve political success.

At the same time, it is not easy to describe post-liberalism. There is no single post-liberal doctrine. What post-liberals share, however, is a belief that liberalism has failed and that while elements of the ideology are efficacious, liberalism's eroding of traditional forms of identity, culture, and its homogenizing effects are deleterious and ought to be combated. Post-liberalism is largely therefore a conservative phenomenon, though usually nationalist in orientation, wary of the power of neo-liberal capitalism to disrupt societies, and unsympathetic toward American

foreign policy. Conservative post-liberal political thinker Patrick J. Deneen – who has met and spoken at times favorably of Orbán – [Kaszás 2019] argues that many of today’s problems, including the rise of a new global elite, a “deracinated, unplaced, dehistoricized people, who flock to cities like New York and London”, are the products of the inherent flaws of liberal ideology [Hogan 2018].

“Liberalism has failed”, Deneen [2018: 3] writes in *Why Liberalism Failed* “not because it fell short, but because it was true to itself. It has failed because it has succeeded.” Liberalism, “a political philosophy that was launched to foster greater equity, defend a pluralist tapestry of different cultures and beliefs, protect human dignity, and . . . expand liberty”, he argues, “in practice generates titanic inequality, enforces uniformity and homogeneity, fosters material and spiritual degradation, and undermines freedom. [Deneen 2018: 3].

Deneen [2018: 5] describes liberalism as “more insidious” than its “curler competitor ideologies” insofar as compared with other ideologies. In contrast to its crueler competitor ideologies, liberalism is more insidious insofar as “it pretends to neutrality, claiming no preference and denying any intention of shaping the souls under its rule. It ingratiates by invitation to the easy liberties, diversions, and attractions of freedom, pleasure, and wealth. It makes itself invisible, much as a computer’s operating system goes largely unseen—until it crashes. Far from creating free environments, “the ‘limited government’ of liberalism today,” he writes, “would provoke jealousy and amazement from tyrants of old, who could only dream of such extensive capacities for surveillance and control of movement, finances, and even deeds and thoughts. The liberties that liberalism was brought into being to protect—individual rights of conscience, religion, association, speech, and self-governance—are extensively compromised by the expansion of government activity into every area of life. Yet this expansion continues, largely as a response to people’s felt loss of power over the trajectory of their lives in so many distinct spheres—economic and otherwise—leading to demands for further intervention by the one entity even nominally under their control” [Deneen 2018: 7].

The result of liberalism is an “anti-culture” in which we are able to live the same everywhere: a homogenized, standardized, monoculture” [Hogan 2018]. This, however, causes great alienation within society among the “losers” of globalization, who suffer in this new environment of great wealth and income inequality and the destruction of culture [Deneen 2018, 9-10]. In our liberal age the losers of globalization, Deneen [2018: 9-10] writes, “are consoled with the reminder that



they are wealthy beyond compared to even the wealthiest aristocrats of an earlier age”. Yet while “material comforts are a ready salve for the discontents of the soul”, the alienation of the rich from the poor generates a cultural gulf between the two groups, and “as the reactions in the urban centers to the outcome of the Brexit vote and the election of Donald J. Trump evince, those same leaders are shocked that the terms of the social contract appear not to be acceptable to Walmart shoppers “ [Deneen 2018 9-10].

This homogenized world is perhaps what many social conservatives protest against and why they feel drawn to what they believe is occurring in Poland and Hungary, and to other places in which governments appear to be defending traditional identities, cultures, and ways of life from liberalism. The core aim of the liberal powers, Deneen claims, is to turn religious, family, and geographic identity from key aspects of personal identity into “one option among many”, and moreover to diminish the power of these forms of identity [Hogan 2018].

Atomized, poorly socialized millennials who produce few or no children, do not attend religious services, and no longer identify with a religion or nation, Deneen suggests, may lack ontological security, and may in response choose to assume a primarily political identity linked to a despotic leader or authoritarian movement [Hogan 2018]. The rise of the Trump movement, then, may be comprehended as a product of liberalism’s tendency to diminish traditional forms of identity and replace them with a political identity, or perhaps even liberalism’s tendency to replace religion with politics. Equally, this perspective suggests that other forms of identity politics may also be understood as surrogate religions, or at least alternative belief systems, that give individuals the identity and ontological security they otherwise lack in a world dominated by liberalism. Thus, liberalism generates out of its flaws unhappy and unmoored individuals, who rejected traditional forms of identity and meaning, and who thus attempt to replace these with new forms of community and identity based on political, or sexual, or gender affiliation. In other words, liberalism unchecked produces by accident its own “successor ideology”, to use American social commentator Wesley Yang’s term for the progressive discourse that swept the Anglophone world in the 2010s, and which Yang describes as a form of “authoritarian utopianism” based on concepts such as intersectionality, anti-racism, and race, gender, and sexuality-based identity politics [West 2020].

Yang appears to believe that it is largely a lack of courage that prevents liberals from defending their system from proponents of the successor ideology. Post-liberal



thinkers, however, argue that liberalism's inherent flaws – in particularly the wealth and income inequalities it creates, and liberal's indulgent attitude toward illiberal 'social justice' activists – are primarily responsible for the retreat of liberalism throughout the West and rise of authoritarianism. Dreher, for example, writes that while he still believes “in liberal democratic ideals like free speech and freedom of religion”, American liberals have failed to protect these values from the authoritarian left [Dreher: 2021a]. He therefore claims it is necessary for conservatives to examine the success right-wing populist politician Viktor Orbán has experienced fighting his culture wars, and perhaps “learn some lessons from ...Orbán and make them work in our American context” [Dreher: 2021a].

Despite Orbán's illiberal actions, which Dreher admits trouble him, Hungary and Poland, he writes, are places to which conservatives must look toward with hope and as examples of how conservatives can beat the progressive left [Dreher: 2021a]. What, then, is Viktor Orbán's critique of liberalism, what kind of post-liberal regime is he constructing in Hungary, and why does his rule serve as a model for so many American post-liberals?

### **Orbán's critique of liberalism**

Fidesz (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége – Alliance of Young Democrats) has its beginnings in an anti-communist student movement in the 1980, and transformed into a political party in 1989, participating in the National Roundtable talks of that year [Bozóki 2000: 245; Ádám and Bozóki 2016: 132]. During this period Fidesz “advocated liberal reforms and were quick to condemn nationalist and antisemitic undercurrents in the governing coalition” [Kenes, 2020], but turned toward the social conservative right after 1995. In the period that followed, Fidesz leader Viktor Orbán and his party began call for the protection of Magyar traditions, and traditional values rooted in Christianity [Lendvai 2019]. The party briefly took power in 1998, but it was not until the 2010 elections that Fidesz, now an illiberal, nationalist, right-wing populist movement, solidified its domination over Hungarian politics. [Ádám and Bozóki 2016: 130-131; Buzogány 2017]. Fidesz relies heavily on Christian identitarian and civilizationalist (or ‘clash of civilizations’) rhetoric [Fekete 2017], and has implemented illiberal policies, purported to defend Hungary's traditional values, including the removing of official accreditation of Gender Studies as a university subject [Szubori 2018].

Orbán has described contemporary Hungary under his party's rule as an “illiberal state” [Website of the Hungarian Government 2014]. However, he has also claimed

that his illiberalism does not “reject the fundamental principles of liberalism such as freedom” [Website of the Hungarian Government 2014]. What, then, is Orbán’s argument against liberalism if he, too, defends basic liberal ideals?

While Orbán might call himself a non-liberal, his major quarrel with liberals appears to be their insistence on dominating the public sphere. Indeed, he claims he is “fighting liberals for freedom”, and moreover claims that he is “on the side of freedom” whereas liberals are “on the side of the hegemony of opinion”. [Orbán 2021]. Furthermore, Orbán claims that liberals have abandoned democracy and instead embraced “liberal non-democracy” [Orban 2021]. The problem with liberals, Orbán argues, is that they attempt to control all public and private discourse, chiefly by “stigmatising conservatives and Christian Democrats and sidelining them” [Orbán 2021].

Orbán argues that liberal democracy is “shipwrecked” and has a superior alternative in “Christian democracy” [Reuters 2018]. The key difference between the two lies in the way the latter protects the “freedom” and “security” of the people, “supports the traditional family model of one man and one woman, keeps anti-Semitism at bay, and gives a chance for growth” [Reuters 2018]. Christian democracy, according to Orbán, “is not liberal. Liberal democracy is liberal, while Christian democracy is not liberal; it is, if you like, illiberal” [Nyyssönen, Metsälä 2021]. Where liberalism is dominant, Orbán claims, democracy has disappeared. “Liberal non-democracy”, he says, “includes liberalism, but doesn’t include democracy” [Orbán 2021].

When in power, liberals, Orbán appears to be arguing, will encourage or permit multiculturalism, mass immigration, and the disrupting of the traditional family model through the promotion of alternative types of families [e.g. families with two mothers, or two fathers, in homosexual relationships]. At its most extreme, this ‘liberalism’ permits the ‘successor ideology’ to take root, and thus allows the cementing of a set of beliefs and practices that, once dominant, create an environment in which heterodox views are often no longer tolerated, and the wants and desires of the majority group in a society are disregarded by an elite that prefers to centre the rights and interests of minorities.

Orbán’s illiberal Christian democracy, however, rejects multiculturalism and minority rights in favour of the hegemony of a single Christian set of values, opposes mass immigration and instead encourages Hungarians to have more children, and, in

an effort to increase the Hungarian population, seeks to discourage homosexuality and instead encourage heterosexual marriage and the nuclear family [Szikra 2014]. Nations that become dominated by ‘liberalism’, such as Germany, welcome mass immigration that ultimately, Orbán claims, leads to the diminishing of Christian values and identity and the creation of parallel societies and social strife, problems he did not “wish ...on my own country” [Orbán 2021]. Moreover, once these new liberal, post-Christian multicultural societies are established in Western Europe, he claims, it is entirely possible that they will not be capable of maintaining any kind of internal stability. Central Europe, Orbán argues, which is increasingly illiberal, will not become destabilised. Rather, in nations like Hungary, he claims, “our children will live much better than us. Indeed, under Christian illiberal democracy, he says, there will be “a great central European renaissance in terms of the economy, demography, security policy and culture” [Orbán 2021].

It is not difficult to comprehend why American post-liberals approve of Orbán’s critique of liberalism. Dreher [2020], for example, argues that liberalism has pushed America into its own ‘Weimar’ period of extreme decadence. Ahmari [2019] appears to agree with this assessment and blames liberals and liberalism for a variety of different problems facing the United States, including the nation’s ever decreasing fertility rate and its problem with mass shootings. In place of liberalism, Ahmari calls for a return to classical Christian philosophy and to a “politics of limits”, which would “tame Big Tech and tax well-endowed elite universities, to re-enact Sunday trading bans, guarantee paid family leave”, and “shield children from LGBT indoctrination” [Ahmari, 2019]. Moreover, Ahmari calls for the “public square” to be “reoriented to “the common good and ultimately the Highest Good” [Ahmari, 2019]. Unlike Dreher, who appears to mourn the death of liberalism, and believe that American liberals are either unable or unwilling to defend what they perceive to be core American and Christian values, Ahmari claims liberalism’s core principles (which he describes as confused) an antithetical to a healthy society [Ahmari, 2019].

“*Progressive* liberals”, Ahmari writes, “are quite open about their aim: to raze all structures that stand in the way of an empire of autonomy-maximizing norms” [Ahmari 2019]. “*Conservative* liberals and libertarians”, he continues, “share in this view of the highest good: The unfettered life is the best life. Most recognize the need for some limits, at least against freedoms that harm others. But the regulative ideal remains always operative: an ideal of ever-greater autonomy won through the removal of limits” [Ahmari 2019].

Liberal's desire for freedom, Ahmari writes, has led to many of America's deepest problems, which liberals now struggle to solve. For example, the liberalism of the sexual revolution created a generation of "caddish men", who abused women and created a backlash more recently in the form of the "#meeto" movement [Ahmari 2019]. Despite the different perspectives on liberalism and its problems, both Dreher and Ahmari agree liberals allow the far-left to mainstream a wide variety of social practices contrary to the traditional Christian values of Western civilization. Thus, for both Dreher and Ahmari, though for slightly different reasons, Orbán's concept of 'Christian democracy' holds enormous appeal.

For Dreher, Orbán's post-liberal regime does not entirely do away with the aspects of liberalism he holds dear (such as freedom of speech) yet prevents the progressive left from dominating the public sphere. For Ahmari, however, Orbán is to be praised because, like Poland's leaders, he promotes "the economic well-being" of Hungary's people, reverses the nation's demographic declines, and is restoring Hungary's Christian culture [Ahmari 2019a]. Indeed, Ahmari approvingly observes that "to reverse demographic course, the Orbán government introduced a series of reforms in the tax code aimed at encouraging larger families: Women who have at least four children are exempt from income taxes for the rest of their lives; families with at least three children receive cash assistance toward the purchase of vans; the government also offers them low-interest loans toward housing expenses." This resulted, Ahmari writes, in Hungary's fertility rate rising from "1.4 in 2010" to 1.8 in 2019 [Ahmari,2019a].

Writing in *The American Conservative*, Rod Dreher [2022] admits that he "would prefer the flawed liberal democracy that we had in our country until about thirty years ago, to the illiberal secularist democracy now coming into existence ...that renders people like me into enemies of the people". "We all seem to be barrelling towards a future that is not liberal and democratic, but is going to be either left illiberalism, or right illiberalism," Dreher [2022] writes. "If that's true, then I know which side I'm on: the side that isn't going to persecute me and my people."

Indeed, Dreher's problem is not so much with liberalism per se, but with liberals' inability to stop the left's capturing institutions within the once liberal and thus open public sphere. Progressives, he writes [Dreher 2022] echoing Orbán, "don't want democracy" but rather prefer "illiberal leftism". The "illiberal left" having "completed their march through the institutions" are now "consolidating"

their power “in part by making cultural and religious conservatives into pariahs” [Dreher 2022].

Dreher’s post-liberalism is thus not exactly an attack on the foundations of liberalism, but rather a response to what he perceives to be the collapse of the liberal centre in American politics, and the rise of extremes. Yet rather than try to defend liberalism, which Dreher no longer believes is worthwhile or possible, he calls for conservatives to follow the lead of Orbán and the Law and Justice Party in Poland and embrace centralisation of power in the hands of a conservative government. Thus Dreher [2022] claims that the “Standard GOP right-liberalism is a dead end that is resulting in the subjugation of the unwoke.” In other words, conservatives, in his view, should no longer advocate for the neutral state, because this neutral state no longer has any genuinely liberal defenders. Rather, most of the state’s institutions have been captured by non-liberal leftists, who use it to spread their anti-Christian ‘woke’ agenda and create a “civilizational crisis” which threatens the existence of the Christian West [Dreher 2022]

Dreher [2021] also calls on conservatives to stop accepting “unbridled corporate power” and “to repent” that they ever allowed corporations the power to harm the common good”.

A similar point is made by another influential post-liberals, deputy editor of American Affairs, Gladden Pappin. Pappin claims that the United States federal government should make it their policy to “enable the traditional family” and allow it to “flourish at the heart of society” [Sargent 2022]. He calls for the defence of the “traditional” family through the creation of a “nationally instituted family wage” and contends that “while family must by natural law mean that of a husband, wife and children, legislators must positively use state power to make family life possible and choice-worthy” [Sargent 2022].

These ideas are not confined to opinion journalists. Republican senate candidate Blake Masters, inspired by this notion, runs advertisements declaring that it his belief that “In America, you should be able to raise a family on one single income” [Masters 2021].

Anglo-American conservative writer and Danube Institute leader John O’Sullivan, who has vocally supported Orbán in *National Review*, further explains Orbán’s appeal to American post-liberals. He describes how populist conservatives, like

Orbán, believe that liberals have increasingly abandoned democracy to protect liberal values and mores. He claims that liberals “cannot trust democracy to pass the laws that would achieve universal liberation” and thus they “seek to constitutionalize the rights of oppressed minorities and to limit the power of democratic majorities to object to the consequences” [O’Sullivan 2014].

O’Sullivan [2014] furthermore argues that as these liberal rights “multiply, democracy exercises less and less control over government and law”. Instead, he suggests, bureaucracy and the judiciary assume greater powers over society, and in doing so stifle democracy and the will of the majority [O’Sullivan 2014]. Thus, unlike liberals in previous generations who called for a marketplace of ideas, free expression, and supported democracy, contemporary liberals, O’Sullivan argues, despise democracy because they simply do not trust the majority population to make the ‘correct’ political decisions [O’Sullivan 2014]. Orbán, according to O’Sullivan [2014], has recognized this problem, and has consequently sought to stand up for the democratic rights of the majority by using illiberal means to prevent liberals from achieving hegemony over Hungarian society. American post-liberals, too, O’Sullivan [2014] observes, increasingly recognize that liberals no longer support the democratic part of ‘liberal democracy’, and therefore look to Orbán to provide them with a model with which they too can push back against liberal hegemony.

Thus, Orbán shares with these American post-liberals an enmity with liberalism born not so much out of a hatred of key liberal ideals, but out of what liberalism permits and the manner in which liberalism is often unable to curtail the rise of far-left movements inimical to both liberal ideals but also traditional Christian values. Equally, both American post-liberals and Orbán share a concern that the democratic will of the majority is being curtailed by an increasingly anti-democratic liberalism, which seeks to centre the interests of minority groups through the constitutionalization of rights and constrain the power of the majority population to object to these changes.

### **Orbán’s post-liberal regime**

In place of liberalism, then, Orbán seeks to create what he calls Christian democracy in Hungary. His government, however, is best described as right-wing populist.

Populism, particularly European populism, is most commonly described as “an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which

argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people [Mudde 2004: 543]. Mudde [2017] admits that “several ideologies are based upon ...opposition between the people and the elite”, including socialism. However, unlike socialism, which is based upon class distinctions between people and elite, populism, Mudde claims, is “based on the concept of morality” [Mudde 2017]. In populism, “the people” and “elites” are morally distinct insofar – he argues – as the people are pure and authentic and good, and elites are inauthentic, and therefore impure and corrupt [Mudde 2017].

However, this essential purity is not at its core ethnic or racial, but moral [Mudde 2017]. Indeed, Mudde writes, populists believe that elites come from ‘the people’ but have chosen to abandon the morals of ‘the people’ and betray their interests. Elites, instead, he argues, put their own interests above those of ‘the people’ and live according to a different set of morals [Mudde, 2017]. Because Mudde argues, the distinction between ‘the people’ and ‘elites’ is based on morality and not class or ethnicity, millionaires and members of ethnic minorities “can be considered more authentic representatives of the people than leaders with a more common socio-economic status” or who belong to the majority ethnic group” [Mudde 2017].

At best a thin-ideology or loose set of ideas, populism is a relatively empty concept, which must be combined with other ideas or a ‘thick’ ideology (e.g., socialism, neoliberalism, religion) to become coherent. Fidesz and its leader Viktor Orbán have been described as a right-wing populists [Ádám, Bozóki 2016; Yilmaz, Morieson 2021] insofar as they combine populism with a right-wing political programme.

Like many other European right-wing populists, Orbán posits that the ordinary people of his nation suffer from two threats. One of these threats come from the top of society, that is from Hungary’s ‘elite’, whom Orbán charges with corruption, and who he claims support liberal policies that undermine the sovereignty of the people, and ultimately threaten the existence of Christian and Western civilization in Hungary, and therefore constitute an existential threat to Hungary’s people and culture [Yilmaz, Morieson 2021] The second threat comes not from the top, but horizontally from different groups of people within Hungary and from abroad. This horizontal threat includes LGBT activists and Muslim immigrants [ibid.]. Orbán, furthermore, claims that Hungary’s elite would, due to their liberal ideology, permit mass immigration from Muslim majority nations, and in doing so flood Hungary with people from a foreign civilization incompatible with Hungarian culture and the broadly Christian civilization to which his nation belongs [ibid.].



Much of Orbán's success lies in his ability to construct this populist division, which combines Hungarian nationalism and clash of civilizations rhetoric, and portray himself as the saviour of the people, and the one person who can stand athwart history and prevent the destruction of Christian civilization in Hungary. Orbán has achieved a measure of success in his culture war against progressivism and liberalism. His Fidesz party has dominated Hungarian politics since 2010, and his brand of right-wing populism has proven popular with a large segment of the electorate. During Fidesz' time in power, and as part of his attempt to create a 'Christian democracy' in Hungary, Orbán has actively replaced liberal and progressive 'elites' within Hungary's political system, bureaucracy, and media, and sought to either remove them or replace them with his own supporters and acolytes [Bozóki 2012; Lamour 2021; Szikra 2014].

Describing his rule as "subtle" compared with the "vulgar" and violently repressive authoritarian regimes of the 20th century, Aris Roussinos describes Orbán as "a product of George Soros's attempt to nurture an elite governing class in Central Europe", and describes the Fidesz leader as a "disaffected liberal reformer" who "adopted and inverted the same methods that produce liberal hegemony towards distinctly post-liberal ends" [Roussinos 2022].

There is some truth to this. However, Fidesz' populism leads them to embrace a form of democracy at odds with liberalism. For example, Western liberals have mostly strengthened the rule of law and increased the power of the judiciary in attempts recognize gay rights, trans rights, and women's rights. Fidesz, in a typically populist manner, has weakened the rule of law in Hungary, and altered the constitution in ways that strengthen the party's centralized rule, diminishing the traditional checks and balances on government power [Bugarcic, Kuhelj 2018]. Equally, Fidesz' populism allows the party to hold 'national consultation surveys' [Pócsa, Oross 2022] on issues such as LGBT education in Hungary's schools, and on immigration, which would never be permitted in other Western nations due in part to the possibility that the public would vote the 'wrong' way. Fidesz has also legislated to "remove accreditation from Gender Studies MA programs in Hungarian universities" [Kováts 2020: 76].

Orbán [Website of the Hungarian Government 2019], in a speech to the 2nd International Conference on the Persecution of Christians, held in Budapest in November, 2019, remarked that "the only thing that can save Europe" from Islamization and religious persecution at the hands of Muslims is for Europe to



find “its way back to the source of its true values: to Christian identity”. Orbán [Website of the Hungarian Government 2019] furthermore claimed that by giving persecuted Christians “homes, hospitals” and “schools” in Hungary, Europeans receive in return what the continent “most needs: Christian faith, love and perseverance”.

His words echo the founder and *de facto* leader of Poland’s ruling Law and Justice Party Jaroslaw Kaczyński’s stated desire to save Europe through re-Christinization [Prończuk 2019]. However, Orbán appears less interested in converting Hungarians and other Europeans to Christianity. Rather, he says believes that even atheists in Europe are Christian in a cultural sense, and therefore desires only that Hungarians adhere to traditional Hungarian values and social mores derived from Christian teachings [Walker 2019].

It is difficult, then, to claim that Orbán is a religious populist, insofar as he does not chiefly encourage Christian belief, Christian spirituality, or churchgoing among his supporters or wider Hungarian society, though he does appear to believe these are indeed good things [Website of the Hungarian Government 2019]. Equally, his value system never supersedes his nationalism, and desire to protect Hungarian sovereignty. To his genuinely religious Christian conservative supporters abroad, however, Orbán’s brand of right-wing populism is protecting Christianity and Christian identity in Hungary, making Hungary a bastion of Christian civilization within Europe, and preventing the eradication of Hungary’s unique Christian based culture and identity – actions they wish to emulate within their own polities. Orbán’s post-liberalism and apparent post-secularism – at least insofar as he attempts to inculcate Christian identity and conservative social values (if not religious belief and practice) within ordinary Hungarians – greatly impresses many American social conservatives, and many are more than willing to either overlook or indeed embrace Orbán’s non-liberal political practices if it means finding a way to combat progressives.

For example, Ahmari and Vermuele argue that a strong Christian oriented state is required to prevent the destruction of Western civilization, and that the United States must abandon liberalism to save itself and the West [Ahmari 2019; Vermuele 2020]. Ahmari, for example, claims that liberalism tolerates events such as ‘Drag Queen Story Hour’, in which a female impersonator is invited to a library to read a book to small children [Wallace-Wells, 2019]. Such an event, Ahmari says, ought not to be tolerated, because they have the potential to damage children [Youtube

2019]. Yet his animus is not so much applied against the Drag Queen in question, nor towards the progressives who set up such events, but rather with the liberal ethos of American society which demands the toleration of this ‘aberrant’ behaviour. It hardly requires saying that Drag Queen Story Hour is near impossible in Hungary, which is perhaps one reason Ahmari rejects criticism of Hungary and its Prime Minister by “Western elites” [Ahmari 2019a].

Thus, for post-liberals, Hungary is to be studied because its government would not, despite the pressure applied by the European Union and United States, legalize same-sex marriage [although such marriages performed elsewhere in the European Union are recognized in Hungary], allow gay couples to access IVF treatment, or adopt children, or allow trans people to serve in the military. Equally – and perhaps more importantly to many of the American post-liberals drawn to Hungary – Fidesz would not permit progressive American political and social discourse to become normalized in Hungary’s educational institutions including its universities. Indeed, the party curtailed the teaching of Gender Studies on the grounds that it was an “ideology” and not a true “science” that sought to normalize notions such as gender fluidity [Apperly 2019]. Hungary would not permit large scale immigration which rapidly altered Hungarian identity. Nor would the Orbán led government promote Critical Race Theory and teach that all material differences between racial groups were the product of white supremacy.

At the same time, Orbán was declaring that the Christian values of Europe were threatened by liberalism, and that he would defend Hungary’s Christian values – and indeed Europe’s Judeo-Christian civilization – from progressives who sought to destroy Christianity and the family in the name of social justice. Globalization, according to Orbán, was homogenizing the world, destroying the sovereignty of smaller nations like his own, and replacing unique national cultures with a single cosmopolitan culture based on progressive American culture and values. As we have seen, in place of a liberal ideology that discourages people from having children, Orbán has sought to create a pro-family environment in Hungary, in which couples that have children are financially rewarded by the government]. Orbán, furthermore, has sought to bring together Church and state, and under his rule Christianity has become the “unifying force of the nation” that gives “the inner essence and meaning of the state” [Ádám and Bozóki 2016, 137]. His Fidesz party has sought to institutionalize Christianity by financing Church administered hospitals and universities [Ádám, Bozóki 2016: 142-143].

Of course, American post-liberals are not particularly interested in Hungarian culture and its revival *per se*. Rather, as conservative New York Times columnist Ross Douthat explains, Orbán's "interventions in Hungarian cultural life, the attacks on liberal academic centres and the spending on conservative ideological projects, are seen [by American conservatives] as examples of how political power might curb progressivism's influence" [Douthat 2021].

### **Bringing Orbán style post-liberalism to the United States**

American post-liberals believe there is much they can learn from Orbán's relative success in preventing liberal hegemony over the public sphere, and moreover from his long rule over Hungary and establishing of an illiberal democracy. Carlson, for example, has described Hungary under Fidesz' rule as "a small country with lots of lessons for the rest of us" [New York Times 2021]. According to the Fox News host, while the American "elite ...hates the American people", Orbán "is defending democracy against the unaccountable billionaires, the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and certain western governments. He is fighting for democracy against those forces which would like to bury it." [BBC 2021].

Dreher, in a similar way, tells conservatives to go to Hungary and learn for themselves how they can end the left's hegemony over public life. "If Americans want to see the conservatism of the future," he writes, "they should go to Budapest and learn how and why to use state power for conservative ends. You and I as American conservatives might prefer to live in a world of "small government," but that ideology is no match for powerful culturally left-wing institutions (like, incredibly, major corporations) that aim to subjugate and destroy the ideals and institutions we conservatives value" [Dreher 2022a].

According to Dreher [2022a], the United States suffers under "woke capitalism", in which "every institution in American life" has been captured "by woke ideologues". He asks, rhetorically, "if not for the state stepping in to protect families and institutions from the predation of entities like the Walt Disney Company, who will?" [Dreher 2022a]. Dreher [2022a] describes the hegemonic power of the left in American life by relating an anecdote in which a Christian man, who works for an "woke" liberal American technology firm, describes how he must "lie" every day about his personal beliefs just to keep his job.

With this in mind, he declares that in order for Christians to feel comfortable expressing their opinions in the workplace political change is necessary. Therefore,

he advocates electing big government conservatives such as Josh Hawley and J.D. Vance and, especially, Florida governor Ron DeSantis, a Republican, who take coercive action against corporations that try to force ‘woke’ or excessively left-wing opinions on their staff [Dreher 2022b].

It is not merely opinion journalists who are supporting these big government post-liberal candidates. Billionaire Peter Thiel, for example, donated \$13.5 million to Vance’s campaign, and gave \$10 million to help elect Arizona senate candidate Blake Masters [Niquette 2022]. The backing of not merely influential opinion makers but billionaires make post-liberal right candidates – especially if they can also secure the rhetorical support of Donald Trump – a powerful group within the Republican Party.

Thus, whether or not they are influenced directly by Orbán’s behaviour, there is evidence that post-liberal American conservative politicians and activists are abandoning their ‘small government’, automatically pro-corporation policies, and beginning to use their institutional power to attack corporations that promote a left-wing progressive or ‘woke’ agenda. Ron DeSantis’ actions as governor of Florida provide another example of the post-liberal, big government agenda. DeSantis’ “Stop WOKE act”, his “Parental rights in Education” bill, often derided by Democrats as the “Don’t say gay” bill, and his attacks on the Disney Corporation following their sharp criticism of the bill, are examples of a conservative using the power of the state to attempt to remove left-wing hegemony over institutions of state and corporations.

DeSantis’ bill [House Bill (1557) 2022], which made illegal the teaching of gender identity and sexuality issues in kindergarten to third grade, was criticized for being hostile to gay and trans students and teachers by Disney [Oshin 2022]. In response, DeSantis brought the power of the state against the Disney corporation, revoking their partial tax exemption and suggesting he would end their copyright extensions in the state of Florida [Faughnder 2022]. Moderate Republicans including Maryland governor Larry Hogan were generally not supportive of DeSantis’ actions, and many criticised the Florida governor for punishing a corporation for merely exercising freedom of expression [Shapero 2022]. Here lies an important difference between the ‘liberal’ and moderate Republicans and the ‘new’ post-liberal right. Where the previous generation of conservatives assumed that big government was the key progressive force in American life, the nationalist conservative right has recognised that corporations, too, can be a progressive force, and

that far from being an enemy, big government is often the only force capable of pushing back against the power of progressivism in the public sphere.

Left-wing writer Zach Beauchamp [2022] claims that, by taking this action against Disney and against the teaching of Critical Race Theory in schools, DeSantis “has steadily put together a policy agenda with strong echoes of Orbán’s governing ethos — one in which an allegedly existential cultural threat from the left justifies aggressive uses of state power against the right’s enemies”.

He further observes that DeSantis has given Florida’s “state regulators the power to fine social media companies if state authorities determined they improperly ‘deplatformed’ a political candidate for office” [Beauchamp 2022]

Yet DeSantis’ signature pieces of legislation were in part the work of a relatively young conservative activist who has appeared several times on Tucker Carlson’s Fox News show, Christopher Rufo. Rufo, more than any other activist, has brought the nationalist conservative right into the national spotlight through his successful campaigning against the teaching of Critical Race Theory in schools. He supports DeSantis’ anti-woke initiatives and attacks on Disney and calls for further action against other corporations that do not serve the “common good” or the “country” [Joyce 2022].

At first, Rufo’s chief concern was so-called anti-racism training based on Critical Race Theory in schools, which he argues are often divisive and themselves a form of racism. Having convinced DeSantis to ban anti-racism efforts based on Critical Race Theory, Rufo began to complain about corporate efforts to advance a progressive agenda in the United States. He used an internal Disney video to argue that the corporation was filled with progressive who were attempting to insert material into their films and television shows that would “fundamentally change the relationship between kids and sexuality in the United States.” [Joyce 2022].

When Disney began to criticise DeSantis’ “Parental rights in Education” bill, Rufo began claiming progressives were “grooming” children to become “social justice warriors” [Rufo, 2022]. Rufo continued to use terms such as ‘groomer’ and ‘grooming’ and began to describe on Twitter the many cases in which public school teachers had been convicted of sexually abusing children, in an effort to show that this “grooming” was indeed taking place and required decisive action [Chait 2022].

Rufo is spearheading a new and more formidable conservative movement, one comfortable with claiming that the Disney corporation is “grooming” children, and with using the power of the state to attack corporations and public institutions dominated by progressives, or what he calls progressive “cartel organizations, ideological and economic cartels, dictating the terms from up on high down to the average citizen” [Joyce 2022]. Indeed, Rufo has declared that conservatives must lay “siege to the institutions” of the left [Rufo 2022a].

It is important to note, however, that Rufo has not visited Hungary, or expressed admiration for Orbán, and therefore whether he draws any inspiration for concrete action from Orbán is unknown. Equally, there is no reason to believe that Ron DeSantis is attempting to emulate the rule of Viktor Orbán, despite some important similarities. Rather, all three men are perhaps reacting to the same core problem in their polities: the dominant position of the progressive left in education, entertainment, the bureaucracy, and increasingly within large and multinational corporations. Equally, all are concluding that there is only one solution to this problem: the centralisation of power in state hands, and the punishing of institutions and corporations that do not serve their conception of the common good. In other words, whether or not Rufo and DeSantis are directly influenced by Orbán, they too are embracing a post-liberal form of politics.

At the same time, many American conservatives -- particularly journalists such as Dreher and Carlson -- are directly influenced by Orbán and are impressed by his ability to wield state power to assist conservative causes. While these conservatives, even if they have visited Hungary, may not understand the intricacies of Hungarian politics, or particularly care about several of the issues which most concern Orbán (including his desire for increased Hungarian sovereignty within the European Union, his attempts to prevent Muslim immigration -- an issue which no longer appears to animate the American right -- and promotion of Hungarian ethnic identity) the mere example of Orbán as a strong leader who defeated the left serves to inspire and invigorate American post-liberals. Equally, they share with Orbán a discourse that emphasizes the existential nature of the challenge of the left. For Orbán and America's post-liberals, the progressive or 'woke' left is a threat to the Christian derived values that underpin Western Civilization, insofar as progressives seek to overturn the traditional ideas of sexuality and gender, and attempt -- through Critical Race Theory -- to demonize Europeans and ultimately make them minorities groups within the nations they founded or in which they are indigenous. And because Orbán is perceived to have 'saved' his nation from

Muslim invasion and from progressive domination, American post-liberals see in his post-liberal centralisation of power and domination of the public sphere a method by which Christian based Western civilization in the United States might also be saved. Equally, American conservatives see in Orbán not an anti-democratic, authoritarian dictator, but a true democrat, who fights for his nation and its people, and against progressives who, having begun to dominate the once neutral liberal public sphere, now seek “to constitutionalize the rights of oppressed minorities”, and attack democracy and the will of the people by limiting “the power of democratic majorities” [O’Sullivan 2014].

### Conclusion

It is possible, based on this brief study, to make three tentative findings. First, American post-liberals are a relatively diverse group, but share important features in common. Most of the American post-liberals who have visited Hungary or claimed inspiration from Viktor Orbán possess different reasons for rejecting liberalism, and different ideas about what a post-liberal society might look like. In addition, some also believe that the foundations of liberalism are problematic and make a kind of ‘false god’ out of liberty, and in doing so encourage behaviour antithetical to the common good. What they share in common, however, is a belief that the politically and religiously neutral liberal democratic state is collapsing, that future Western governments will therefore be illiberal, and this being so that state institutions and corporations will either be dominated by ‘woke’ progressives or social conservatives.

Having made this judgement, post-liberals believe that in order for ‘traditional’ – as they understand them – values and identities to remain salient, social conservatives must dominate public institutions and push progressives out of public life where possible. Indeed, they believe that progressive domination of Western institutions and corporations will cause not merely the exclusion of traditionalist conservatives from public life but precipitate the extinction of Western civilization. American post-liberals share with Orbán a professed belief that the West is experiencing a civilizational crisis, in which its traditional Christian values and beliefs about gender and sexuality are being overturned by progressives. All oppose, in a similar way, ‘woke capitalism’ – or the way progressives have used positions in management within corporations to further the broader progressive social agenda – and appear to believe that small government ‘liberal’ conservatism permitted the growth of progressive power and the capture of corporations and the state by progressive activists. There is division between conservatives, however, over the



question of whether liberals encourage or permit the replacing of the majority white population of Western nations with non-white immigrants, a deeply taboo notion often associated with anti-Semitic neo-Nazi movements.

Second, although post-liberal Americans have made efforts to create links with the Orbán government and to study his apparent successes in transforming Hungary into a post-liberal ‘Christian democracy’, American post-liberals appear to possess little knowledge of Hungarian culture and society and are not attempting to replicate Orbán’s rule in the United States. In Viktor Orbán, then, American post-liberals see a politician who has done what a generation of American right-wing politicians could not do: stop the progressive ‘march through the institutions’. Orbán, beyond any other contemporary politician, seems to act as an inspiration for American post-liberals, as both the 2021 visit of a number of prominent political commentators to Hungary, the decision to hold the May 2022 CPAC conference in Budapest, and to invite Orbán to speak at the subsequent August 4, 2022 CPAC conference in Dallas, Texas demonstrates [CPAC 2022].

However, we should be careful not to overstate Orbán’s influence over American post-liberals. American post-liberals often admit they do not know much about Hungarian politics and society – often due to a language and cultural barrier – and at times acknowledge misgivings about Orbán’s anti-democratic tactics. For example, post-liberals praise Hungary’s support for the family and traditional values yet are puzzled by the country’s relatively liberal abortion laws and support for abortion internationally. When, in September 2022, Hungary and Poland sponsored a UN resolution which, among other things, called for “safe abortion where such services are permitted by national law” [United Nations Digital Library 2022], Rod Dreher responded by saying that he didn’t “understand this” but that there “might be a reasonable explanation” [ACI Africa 2022]. However, he also added, “even if this vote is unjustifiable, we Americans must not lose track of how strong both governments have been on these issues — Poland more than Hungary on abortion, because abortion rights are, sadly, popular in Hungary, limiting what the government can do,” Dreher explained [ACI Africa 2022].

Furthermore, Orbán caused some trouble for his American post-liberal right allies when and the post-liberal right when, shortly before arriving in Dallas, he was reported in the American press as having spoken against the creation of ‘mixed race’ nations [The New York Times 2022]. This was a particular problem for the post-liberal right, which encompasses people of varying ethnicities including



Iranian born Sohrab Ahmari, and who are married – in the case of Christopher Rufo – to a non-white person. On the other hand, Orbán’s appearance at CPAC was, according to the New York Times [2022], well received by attendees.

One reason for this was that Orbán’s Dallas speech sought to unite his political agenda with the political agenda of the Republican Party, and especially with the agenda of the post-liberals within the Republican Party. For example, in his speech to CPAC attendees Orbán attacked the Democratic Party and President Obama, calling them globalists who sought to attack the “Christian and national values” that Orbán said were inherent in the Fundamental Law of Hungary [Website of the Hungarian Government 2022]. He also claimed that he, Orbán, was fighting the same enemies as his Republican allies – Brussels and Washington – and further claimed that “these two locations will define the two fronts in the battle being fought for western civilization”.

This suggests that Orbán perceives himself and the American post-liberal right to be fighting not merely a battle for their respective nations, but a battle for Western civilization itself, a civilization which he defines as being ‘Judeo-Christian’ in nature. The positive reception Orbán received, moreover, suggests that the post-liberal right in America was receptive to this conception of a civilization battle for the future of Western Civilization, and to the notion that liberalism was – perhaps even more than Islam – the key enemy against which post-liberals must struggle.

Despite their differences, what the American post-liberal right draw most from Hungary is a real-life example of a successful post-liberal regime which has disavowed globalism, liberalism, and small government, and increased its electoral success by using the power of the state to dominate the public sphere. Equally, they draw inspiration from Orbán apparent success in promoting family friendly policies which encourage Hungarians to have more children, thus preventing the ‘great replacement’ feared by post-liberals. Nowhere do any of the American post-liberals argue that Orbán’s exact model of rule should be imposed on the United States. Rather, they see his political success as an example of the power social conservatives can gain from abandoning liberal ideals of a neutral state, and instead using state power to re-capture key institutions from the left, including the universities and judiciary, and use this power to promulgate ‘traditional’ values throughout society. Indeed, in DeSantis’ legislation against the teaching of Critical Race Theory, which culminated in the “Stop WOKE act”, in American schools, there is a tacit understanding that liberal arguments in favour of free speech and

open discourse are no longer successful in preventing the advance of progressive social justice policies, and that a stronger, Orbán style post-liberal campaign to limit progressive speech is necessary if conservatives are to win the broader culture wars and save Western civilization.

Equally, elements of Orbán's populism are shared with the American post-liberals. For example, both portray the progressive left as an elite class of highly educated, deracinated 'global citizens', who work in bureaucracies or as managers within multinational corporations, and who are unconcerned with the plight of the working class and hostile to the nation-state and the concept of national borders. Both, too, portray themselves as acting in accordance with the interests of the majority population and against the narrow interests of woke corporations and their progressive allies. Moreover, both frame progressives as anti-democratic, and claim that their march through the institutions has made Western society 'liberal' but not democratic. Therefore, both Orbán and American post-liberals portray themselves as champions of true democracy, which is unhindered by the increasingly progressive judiciary and state bureaucracy, but rather acts in accordance with the interests of 'the people' and the common good.

Finally, post-liberalism is a growing force, which appears to be entering the political mainstream in the United States. Orbán's post-liberalism incorporates a populist idea of democracy which may prove popular in the United States, but also involves an attempt to create a conservative version of liberal hegemony, by using many of the same tools – think tanks, NGOs, state power – to push progressives out of public life and fill the space with conservatives and conservative ideas. It is difficult to imagine American conservatives replicating Orbán's success in capturing state and private institutions in such a large and diverse nation, and conservatives themselves are unlikely to believe such a 'victory' is possible and may have more modest goals.

However, post-liberals in America, a movement supported by some of America's most prominent television and print media commentators, and whose candidates for office have been funded on at least two occasions by Peter Thiel, is now starting to alter the ideological orientation of the Republican Party. Post-liberals such as J.D. Vance, Josh Hawley, and Blake Masters have all won Republican nominations, and the success of Ron DeSantis in Florida has led to many commentators anointing him as Trump's successor as the next Republican nominee for President of the United States. As more post-liberals begin to win nominations and, at times, win

seats in Congress and the Senate, or win gubernatorial elections, it will become increasingly difficult for moderate republicans and the party itself to hold onto its liberal ideals. At the same time, the success of post-liberal political candidates will likely spur more Republican politicians and conservative activists to take a similar approach to politics. And it may be that a conservative movement conscious of the power of the state and willing to use state power to dominate public institutions, and punish corporations that publicly support progressive causes, will prove more successful at defending 'traditional' values and ways of life than the small government conservative movements that traditionalist conservatives believe have consistently ceded power to the progressive left for decades. Moreover, it is important to observe that conservatives are increasingly interested in emulating not merely the post-liberal populism of Orbán, but what they perceive to be the anti-democratic tactics of the progressive left, and therefore wish to gain increasing control over education and over the behaviour of corporations to reshape American society.

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## *Secularization and Religious Identity in Nigeria's Religioscape*

**Abstract:** In this article, I argue that secularization is not a universal concept; it is a Western one whose social and existential context provided the basis for its theorizing. I contend that colonialism and missionary religions brought their kind of secular thought to Africa as African countries were under colonial rule when the debate was rife in the West. Showing this through interdisciplinary methods, the article further contends that the notion of resurgence of religion resonating after the Cold War and particularly 9/11, which is saturating Western debate, cannot also be universal, as secularization did not take place in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Using the Nigerian example, it will be shown that religion has continued to play a pivotal role in identity politics since the colonial era, and there are obviously no signs of abatement. This has however skewed identity, with its resultant effects on national unity and development. The complication of the Nigerian constitution on the secular status of the country has further provided impetus to the already volatile polity. If a reasonable national identity can be established, the present constitution should be unraveled in a manner that makes room for ambiguous secular status.

**Keywords:** Nigeria, secularisation, religious identity, Africa

**Abstrakt:** W niniejszym artykule dowodzę, że sekularyzacja nie jest pojęciem uniwersalnym; jest to pojęcie zachodnie, którego podstawę do rozważań teoretycznych stanowi jego kontekst społeczny i egzystencjalny. Twierdzę też, że kolonializm i religie misyjne wniosły do Afryki własny rodzaj myśli sekularyzacyjnej, bowiem gdy na Zachodzie toczyła się na ten temat debata, kraje afrykańskie znajdowały się pod rządami kolonialnymi. Posługując się metodami interdyscyplinarnymi, pokazuję, że pojęcie odrodzenia religii po zimnej wojnie, a zwłaszcza po wydarzeniach z 11 września, którym przeniknięta jest zachodnia debata, również nie może mieć charakteru uniwersalnego, ponieważ w Afryce, a w szczególności Nigerii, sekularyzacja w ogóle nie miała miejsca. Na przykładzie

Nigerii pokazują, że od czasów kolonialnych religia nadal odgrywa kluczową rolę w polityce tożsamości i nie widać żadnych oznak osłabienia takiego stanu rzeczy. Spowodowało to jednak pewne zniekształcenie jej tożsamości, co miało wpływ na jedność i rozwój narodu. Skomplikowane zapisy nigeryjskiej konstytucji na temat świeckiego statusu państwa dodatkowo zwiększają niestabilność tamtejszej polityki. Aby odpowiednio wytyczyć określić tożsamość narodową, należałoby zacząć od analizy obecnej konstytucji wraz z jej niejednoznacznością w kwestii świeckości państwa.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Nigeria, Sekularyzacja, tożsamość religijna, Afryka

### Introduction

One general mistake many Western scholars make is generalization and universalization of their ideas and assume that such ideas are not only indisputable, but also empirically valid outside of the West. A second mistake could be deliberately ignoring other areas of the world and worldviews as if they are inconsequential in the overall determination and exercise of their ideas. Such skewed positions have undermined the presence and reality of those areas of the world and their worldviews, which, in the course of time, in brutal rebellion, invalidate many of their so called finely constructed ideas. That kind of politics of thought is expected and describes the relations that exist between the global north and south as apodictically demonstrated in the scramble for Africa in the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, colonialism, neocolonialism, globalization and their attendant modernizing impetuses and effects. Therefore, when secularization is discussed from a Western perspective, it usually assumes a theological toga: as it is in the West so it is everywhere!

The meaning of secularization has been mostly gleaned from interdisciplinary perspectives, which will be utilized in this article. From political, sociological, theological lenses, secularization is understood as the privatization of religion, decline of personal religiosity, function of rationalization, differentiation of secular spheres, and so forth. In discussing the secularization of Africa, sometimes, these various categories are not neatly separated.

Recently, Barber [2012a] predicted that there would be a demographic twist that would make the non-believer population greater than the believers in religion by just 2038 globally in the similitude of the social prophets of the 1960s, who also 'prophesied' the decline and demise of religion globally as a result of increasing

secularization. Barber [2012b] anchored his prediction on the existential and hedonistic lifestyle and pleasurable abundant affluence observed in much of the West. While the claims of the secularist theorists are being unbundled in their very presence, Barber, following suit, shows how the universalization of ideas or even feelings about something should be cautiously exercised and predicted. Abbink [2014: 94] nicely makes this caution more pungent when he argues that “the modernization and rationalization of life do *not* universally make religion irrelevant – there is no inevitable process of peoples/societies losing or neglecting religious faith under these conditions.”

By any standards, religion has not declined, and is not showing signs of decline in Africa unlike in the West. One reason is that the population of Africa is growing almost geometrically in comparison to the West, where it is almost static. In 2018, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reported that for the first time in history, people above 65 years are more than those under five, with Europe having highest number of people over 60, which makes the population as aged. The report predicts that by 2100, there could be just one birth for every octogenarian [Lorenz 2022: 1]. However, the 20 youngest populations are found in sub-Saharan Africa, and, by middle of the century, Africa would likely house one billion young people. Whereas in Europe and Asia, the population of young people would likely shrink by 21 per cent and “almost a third” respectively [Lorenz 2022: 1]. The demographic implication on religion is that Africa is most likely to be continuously more ‘religious’ than the West in the future. Thus, to use the West’s religious demography as a benchmark for global prediction on religious demography would be a wrong premise. This is not to suggest that all Africans are, and will be, religious. Gez, Beider and Dickow [2022] have noted the rising number of ‘nones’, even though Africa still appears to be the least secular.

As Abbink [2014] argues on the basis of Pew Surveys, religion and its influences are not declining in Africa, and have not shown the possibility of a decline in the near future. Jenkins [2016] also recognizes quite lucidly that the religious overflow in Africa will spill over to the rest of the world as the continent at present is resident to more Muslims and Christians than anywhere else. But the contentious issue is how has this overflow of religion impacted on identity in a democratizing Africa, given as Abbink [2014: 87] notes, that “religion has even become the primary identity for most Africans, perhaps above national identity”?

This question is germane because, as in the West, religion in Africa has not relocated to the private square as Western secularization theory seems to maintain; if anything, religion in Africa is actively present in both private and public space, and oftentimes authorizing morality and influencing politics. This posture of religion is indisputably problematic, because it has increasingly caused skirmishes with preventable casualties.

In this paper, the rise and decline of Western secular theory, and how the resurgence of religion has challenged the theory, will be briefly explicated. It will be argued that when debate on secularization was rife in the West, most African countries were under colonial authorities. The implication of this is that secularization theory, as understood in the West, in its hard form was brought into Africa, but has not been deeply engrafted. We zero in on Nigeria's history with a religious tweak and thereafter show the problematic nature of secularism in the country, and how this has continued to affect identity and human relations and politics. Our argument is grounded on the premise that uncompromising or hard secularization, as in the West, has not taken place in Africa just as obsessive religiosity being practiced in Africa has also not helped the continent to develop. A balance between them is required for a holistic development of the continent.

### **Secularization in Western Thought**

In the West, the relationship between religion and state has been a contentious one. Particularly from the era of the European Enlightenment, the status of theology as the queen of science did not only wane, but also seemed to have gradually been lost as rationalism gained currency. The propagation and promotion of "the God of the gaps" steadily continued to exclude religion from the public sphere or public consciousness, as more and more people thought that religion should be done away with or at least, privatized. The decline of traditional or organized religion aptly explained the thrust of secularization.

Secularization itself has not been free from religion, because its pristine and accretive meaning has always related to and resonated with religion. For instance, it derives from the Latin *saecularis*, which is the adjective of *saeculum*, connoting a long period of time, but which quickly assumed a Christian meaning of worldly in relation to sinfulness and denunciation of God, to the handing over of the Church's property to the world; a deep sense of religion characterizes the meaning of secularization. To press this home, monastic priests were differentiated from

their parish counterparts as a demonstration of the separation theory underlying secularization [Knippenberg 2015].

The admission and acceptance of secularization as a term in social science in the 1960s amplified its influence in contemporary society. The birth of secularization as a theory that insisted that religion is ‘poisonous’ to the public sphere strongly and adversely affected the relevance of religion. To be sure, secularization theory, if it now qualifies to be regarded as a theory, because, according to Onishi [2018], it is not more than a “doctrine”, is the belief, and in fact, the prophecy that religion would not only wilt, but also subsequently die out of human society. According to Onishi [2018: 171], “the doctrine of secularism relies upon a mythological vision of the human as an autonomous rational ego that has the ability to master itself and the world through calculative thinking.” Onishi’s argument views secularization as an unbalanced ego that seems not to have roundly defined the modern humanity in concrete terms.

The apparent triumph of secularization theory, it was thought, would mean that science would solely explain the origins of humanity, and thus put paid to superstitions and dogmas propagated by religion; in fact, its currency in scholarship and praxis affected how individuals and nations identify themselves [Abraham 2015]. With democracy and its concomitant liberalism and freedom, secularization thesis held that individuals could challenge the authorities of the myths and doctrines which religion had canvassed for several centuries. With industrialization, economic growth and advancement in technology, an ataraxic future was believed to be in store for humanity because, as the secularists thought, hunger, disease, poverty and so forth which were the cannon fodder for the thriving of religion would completely be eliminated from human society. This disenchanted view of life promised a different world-based heaven. Once this paradisaic cocoon was realized for humanity, religion would naturally be eased out of the space [Toft, Philpott and Shah 2011]. But the two World Wars practically affected this rational projection for humanity because, rather than secure humanity, the recourse to rationalism and science resulted in horrific human carnage, whose effects have not fully been erased from history and global consciousness.

Bruce [2009] notes that since the middle of the nineteenth century, religion had evidently declined in the West; its colonizing ethos and influence in politics had also waned in national politics. Progressively, Western liberal democracies divorced themselves from religion, and tilted aggressively toward secularism. Even

though secularization was initially intended to remove the vestiges of religion from the public sphere and replace them with secular principles, as more apodictically demonstrated in Francophone social science, secularization, as it turns out “owes more to the unintended consequences of diffuse social changes than to the deliberate actions of people promoting a secularist agenda” [Bruce 2009: 145].

Shortall [2021: 3] brings home these unintended consequences of secularization when she argues, in the case of Catholicism in France, for instance, that “what is striking about Catholic political thought is the extent to which it defied the logic of secular political taxonomies.” In keeping with the Catholic thought and identity, Shortall [2021: 3] argues that the church “sought to articulate a religiously grounded alternative to both capitalism and communism, both liberalism and totalitarianism” that were the aftermath of the Second World War. The Church, she maintains, was not swallowed up by secularism; rather secularism became the premise for the birth of *nouvelle theologie* – new theology – which, in the course of time, helped in articulating a virile vision for public engagement within a secular space. Shortall [2021: 2-3] elucidates further:

The separation of Church and state did not bring an end to the public role of the Catholic church in France. Though it marked the end of one kind of Catholic politics, it also marked the beginning of another.... But in fact, the events of 1905 forced theologians to reimagine the nature of the Church and its relationship to the political order, as they grappled with the key quandary with the Catholic Church in the twentieth century: how to maintain a public role for itself once the institutions of public life had been secularized.... The separation of Church and state had a productive rather than a destructive effect on ... theology, inspiring new approaches to the problem of political theology and opening up new avenues for Catholic engagement in public life. The results were transformative not just for the Church, but also for European politics more broadly, as theologians weighed in on debates over fascism and communism, democracy and human rights, colonialism and nuclear war.

The predictions and hopes of a truly secularized world, as global events have now shown, were not realized [Lewison 2011; Igboin 2021a]. If anything, secularization was pursued as an exclusive or particularistic belief that was guarded to eliminate religion, as though religion was its only enemy. But in essence, however, secularization could not meet the yearning in the deepest recesses of the human soul, a depth which is the domain of religion. Human spiritual void and the need to



make sense of their lives can only be realized by religion rather than secularization. Before the acknowledgement of the limits of secularization or the process of de-secularization, the issue of identity seemed to have been settled in favor of secularization, at least, in the public sphere. In other words, if religion was separated from the state, public identity was carved based on secularization.

Identity has to be publicly expressed in order to ensure inner satisfaction for any person and group. Any identity that cannot be confidently expressed in public will result in emotional tension between oneself and others who may, by their agency, prevent such public expression. As experience has shown in contemporary world, individuals and groups have persistently agitated and struggled toward acceptance of their peculiar identity wherein they find fulfilment. Therefore, if secularization defined the public sphere, it evidently gave the best of identity; the suppressed religious identity must then find a way to resonate. Hence, the civilizational clash, in this context, of secular and religious identity, which has hardly been acknowledged.

The subverted religious identity, we contend, is essentially what is now widely referred to as resurgence of religious identity. The religious imagination that was prematurely buried in the shallow sand of secularism has launched itself into public consciousness with a thunderbolt.

Given the persistence and influence of religion in the lives of citizens, many proponents of secularization had to renounce their earlier position and admit the presence of religion in human society in the West. In Harvey Cox [1995] and Peter Berger [1999: 2-3], among other known voices in the propagation of secularization theory, literally decamped, and asserted that the world, as Berger now views it, is “as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever” and added that “the relation between religion and modernity is rather complicated.” Berger then warned that “those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at great peril” [Herrington, McKay and Haynes 2015:6]. Cox [1995] recognizes the fall of Pentecostal fire from above as indicating and instantiating power in the public sphere; a semiosis that resonates well with historical significance for global Pentecostalism.

Pentecostalism is today one of the fastest growing strands of Christianity [Asamoah-Gyadu 2021b, Igboin, 2022], which Lewison [2011: 31] succinctly describes thus: “Its powerful and flamboyant presence in the public sphere, built

on its evangelical charge, makes it a religion that takes up space – religion that is very much ‘in’ and ‘of’ the world.” Wariboko [2020] adds that Pentecostalism is not an entirely a private religious sensibility, as its actions critically impact the public sphere, and generate public responses.

Since after the Cold War and particularly the aftermath of 9/11, ‘resurgence of religion’ has become a buzzword that is shaping religious conversation and relations in the West. In their seminal work, *Nations Under God*, Herrington, McKay and Haynes [2015: 2] note with concern that the religious resurgence in the West is not “hollow claims.” Accordingly, “the evidence suggests that while it is true that general religious ceremonial attendance and the authority of religious figures have declined in most developed countries, developing countries show significant levels of religious commitment and they possess a continually rising portion of the world’s population” [Herrington, McKay and Haynes 2015: 2].

They further argue that for the events of 9/11, many scholars in the West had neglected the role of religion not only in international relations, but also in conflict. Resurgence of religion is broadly associated with the rise of religious politics that finds expression in violent sectarianism as well as particularistic religious identity that pits one religious group against another as well as against the secular system. Religious revivalism and exclusivism and their concomitant violence in the era of resurgence of religion mean that there was a decline in the public presence of religion [Hibbard 2015a].

The philosophical underpinning and political grounding of resurgence of religion is manifest in what Petitto [2015: 64] refers to as “a militant and violent-prone form of politics, almost as a God-sent plague of punishment on the earth.” Whatever resurgence of religion means to the West, it is obvious that there are: [1] a return to an abandoned or subverted concept of identity, eclipsed by secularization, which has found its way back into the public sphere with revenge; [2] a stronger basis for the expansion of the meaning of religion, a term, which for a long time, has been understood almost exclusively in reference to Christianity. In referring to resurgence of religion, therefore, religions other than Christianity are now added in the cluster, whereas Christianity was the main religion against which secularization theory was built.

It is in this sense that Scott Hibbard [2015a: 104] argues for the relevance of religion in modern societies precisely because “it continues to define collective – and

particularly national – identities, and second, because religion is uniquely able to provide a moral framework for political action.” In other words, “Religion provides a normative language for political action, informs nationalist mythologies, and helps to define collective identities” [Hibbard 2015b: 100]. Hibbard [2015b: 103] further elaborates that “Religion also remains central to the construction of identity, and particularly collective identities. Hence, even if there is a formal separation of church and state—that is, a separation of religious authority from political authority—religious ideas and beliefs continue to provide a basis for social cohesion and a language for contemporary politics.”

What does the above portend for Nigeria or Africa as a whole, since secularization theory was premised on the Western social sphere and context, and given that African countries were under colonial rule when the debates were rife in the West? How might secularization affect identity in Nigeria? Before I respond to these questions, it is pertinent to give a short historical background of Nigeria with a religious tweak.

### **A Brief History of Nigeria**

Nigeria, in the West African region, is indisputably the largest Black country of the world with over 350 ethnic nationalities brought together by the British authorities that colonized the country. One out of five of the sub-Saharan population is a Nigerian. Nigeria’s ever controversial population has been estimated to be over 200 million people and projected to be 440 million in the middle of the century, which would make it third largest country in the world behind China and India, beating the US [Campbell and Page 2018: 5]. Nigeria’s population is controversial because all the censuses conducted since colonial period were ‘rigged’ in favor of the north and subjected to litigation; the same trend that often affects the country’s elections. The claim of northern part being more populated has been subjected to critical inquiry, but the political utility of the claim has continued to enjoy undue influence on the political trajectories of the country [Igboin 2021b]. Adogame [2010] observes that the country’s censuses have been subjected to manipulation because of their political, economic and most especially, religious advantages. The politicization of Nigeria’s censuses has resulted in the country’s unreliable demographic data, which leaves researchers to make conjectures. In addition, because of the politicization of census, since 1963, when the country conducted its first post-independence census, religious affiliation has always been omitted from the questionnaire [McKinnon 2021].

Gez, Beider and Dickow [2022: 54-55] point out that “Muslim leaders threatened to boycott the 2006 national census should the government keep ‘religion’ on the identity list, apparently out of concern that the census would identify theirs to be a minority religion.... Religious statistics are used to advance political arguments, to perpetuate certain religio-political hegemonies, and to affirm discriminative practices.”

The claim of the north being more populated has also resonated in religious demography, and scholars are often careful in declaring a particular region as overwhelmingly more religiously populated than the other.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the north is projected as predominantly Muslim and the South as Christian. This projection seats uncomfortably on the religious politics that was played by the colonial authorities.

This politicization should be understood in light of the common overlap between political and religious clientelism, with ethnicity often straddling both domains.

<sup>1</sup> Before the amalgamation in 1914, there were six attempts to conduct census around the Lagos Colony starting from 1866, 1871, 1881 and 1891, 1901 and 1911. The 1911 was crisply described as “very defective” and “the British administrators in charge admitted that the census figures were only preliminary and little value for comparative purposes.” The 1921 census “yielded inaccurate data owing to the difficulties arising from the hearty dislike which many tribes feel towards enumeration, and to the shortage of European staff due to World War 1.” For detailed analysis of precolonial, colonial and postcolonial census conducted in Nigeria and how they have been manipulated, see Chidi Odinkalu [2022]. According to Odinkalu, any enduring democracy must take three things in consideration: census, regular elections and public accountability. These are intricately interwoven, and when the first is rigged, mythologized or absent, it has rippling effects on the second and third and the whole country. McKinnon’s [2021] analysis tilts toward Christian population growth slowing down because adherents of traditional religion have largely been converted and reproduction is higher in the northern part of Nigeria. Igboin’s [2012b] analysis shows that the war and activities of Boko Haram and banditry, and most importantly, high mortality rates, poverty and life expectancy in the north have significantly affected the demography of the region. The most crucial challenge is the blatant refusal to record birth and death and use of modern census technology that would have ameliorated the distrust that has thus engulfed all the census exercises thus far. The Nigeria National Conference of 2014 observed these problems of inaccurate and politicized census “with past figures inflated for the purposes of increased revenue allocation and other advantages from the government at the center” [The National Conference 2014]. It therefore recommended that there should be a national database and linkage of all databases operated by commissions and institutions in order to sync them and avoid fraud and criminalization of inflation and distortion of enumeration and census figures. Unfortunately, up until today, no attempt has been made to even debate the document let alone implement it. The government is however proposing to conduct a national census in March 2023 just after the 2023 general elections, which analysts have largely criticise as ill-timed and interpreted as influenced by political motives. The last national census was conducted in 2006 with controversial results that resulted in litigation as expected.

This association can often be dated back to colonial times, when colonial powers and religious groups carved out their areas of operation and continued after independence as groups fought for state power and access to resources [Gez, Beider and Dickow 2022: 54].

While the Muslim north still believes that it was the colonial authorities that halted the Islamization of the whole south, the Christian south argues that it was the same colonial authorities that prevented the full evangelization of the north. The conquest of the north by the British is touted as the wedge against Islam down south, and the colonial pact with the north to protect the region from Christian influence also explains the limitation of Christianity up north [Vaughan 2016]. Like the midfield of a football pitch, the Middle Belt both separates and joins south and north and represents a religious mix, both practically and demographically.

Nigeria is a religiously ‘devout’ country; it is also a place that is endowed with natural, human, and cultural resources. The business of religion is the second most thriving business, apart from the oil industries. There is hardly any corner of the country where temples, churches, mosques, shrines of different shapes and sides cannot be found. They are not just petty places of worship; there are mega-mosques, mega-churches, mega-shrines, and mega-temples that congregate thousands of worshipers at a time [Igboin 2021a].

Nigeria is not only religiously pluralistic; it is also religiously diverse. More complex than the plurality of religions is its religious diversity. Following Beckfordian thesis, religious diversity implies: i] diversity of religious organizations, ii] diversity among individual adherents who belong to them iii] diversity of faith traditions iv] diversity as regards those who combine different religious identities, and v] intra-diversity within a religious tradition [Beckford 2014]. Diverse religious subgroups and denominations complicate identity construction, but also function to maintain some form of sanity and tension. This depicts the ambivalent nature of religion.

Nigeria is not an organic nation but a “manufactured state”, whose survival as one country since independence in 1960 has been described as a miracle [Bourne 2015: ix. See also Meir 2000]. This immediately suggests that without the British, there would not have been what is now referred to as ‘one Nigeria.’ The creation or rather the invention of Nigeria as a country is usually traced to the amalgamation of 1914, when Lord Frederick Lugard, the then colonial Governor General, fused

the Northern and Southern Protectorates together for easy administration of the British colonial government.

But the actual idea for the ‘carving and gluing’ together of the disparate peoples who lived independently in their nations could be traced to the Berlin-Congo Conference of 1884-85 when Europe scrambled for Africa [Adogame, Gerloff and Hock 2008]. This date is critical to our context because, as Akinwunmi [2008] argues, the Berlin Conference has both spiritual and political implications on Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular. The Berlin Conference did not only succeed in partitioning Africa in accordance with political interests, but also created spiritual and ecclesiastical cartographies that aligned with the dominant Christian affiliations of the European nations [Akinwunmi 2008 and Bonk 2008]. As will be discussed later, multiple Christian identities that resulted from the scramble added to the already saturated indigenous religious identity as well as Muslim identity. But the tension between Christian and Muslim identities has been more acerbic and difficult to manage. As Campbell and Page [2018: 5] observe, “Nigeria is at the junction between Christianity and Islam, and more broadly, where the modern and the traditional overlap.” This partly explicates the nature of religious plurality and identity politics that constantly reverberates in Nigeria’s politics.

Prior to the advent of colonialism, there were many well developed empires and kingdoms. In the south, the Benin Kingdom had flourished until the nineteenth century, when it was defeated by the British. The Oyo Empire, the Ife Kingdom, as well as those of the Igbo, were firmly established and organized. In the north, the Sokoto caliphate, Hausa dynasties and the Kanem-Bornu Empire represented sophisticated administratively and judicially developed civilizations, overthrown by the British and all amalgamated into one country.

Most contemporary historians have been very unfair to the religious history and sensibility of these disparate civilizations. While it is easy for them to simply narrate that the north had an Islamic caliphate, they forget that there were deep traditional religious priest-kings that were sometimes conquered, whose voices are still being drowned in the matrix of overarching Muslim population.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The National Conference [2014] observed that there are minorities across the country that have been strangled by the dominant ethnic groups. According to it, “It must be noted that minority/dominant ethnic group consciousness and agitations are also exhibited at the sub-national levels. In all, the ethnic minority and the National Question are, the products of the balkanization of nationalities resulting in their spread across states.” It recommended constitutional provisions to ensure the rights of minority peoples in the country.

These minority populations in the north – non-Muslim and non-Christian but traditional believers – have continued to suffer the loss of identity while faintly resisting the imposed one. The case of the south appears to be a lot more different because traditional religious believers can publicly self-identify and practice their faith [Janson 2021]. In essence, Nigeria’s pre-missionary and precolonial histories should be studied from their indigenous religious outlook; this is important because even today, that religious psychology and sensibility still resonate in identity construction and existential bonding in a pluralist Nigeria.

It is instructive to argue that the British did not (primarily) come to civilize Nigeria, as has been widely assumed by many Europeans and Eurocentric scholars; perhaps British kind of civilization can be said to be an unintended consequence. But more importantly, civilization has to be defined in context, because many of the empires had been developed more than most of Europe in the Middle Ages. However, the psychology and application of Charles Darwin’s evolution – social Darwinism – partly pushed the rival European powers to gratify their insatiate territorial and commercial expansionism. For the British and their counterparts in other African countries, the understanding and application of natural selection presumably put them at a more superior pedestal against the Africans [Campbell and Page 2018].

The racist relationship between the colonizers and the colonized caused tension that resulted in violence on many occasions. Of course, colonialism is itself a violent invasion of Africa’s space and civilization; colonialism was sustained and maintained by constant violence against and violation of Africans. The politics of evil was well entrenched in colonial Africa in that the colonizers justified the beauty of violence against the colonized but condemned violence against the colonizer [Crais 2002; Fanon 2004 and Falola 2009].

In Nigeria, the British colonial authorities adopted Indirect Rule, which should be more appropriately referred to as ‘divide and rule’, because the British successfully set one ethnic group against another in order to exploit all of them. The ethnic cleavages that the British created in Nigeria have not been whittled down since independence. If anything, they have been the fault lines for national disunity, agitation for separate nationality and so forth. Campbell and Page [2018: 8] poignantly capture this when they ask: “What (not who) is a Nigerian?” According to them, this question is responded to in multilayered manner:



First, they would identify themselves with a particular family, either nuclear or extended. Next, they would volunteer religion.... Then they would note their ethnic group. They might tell you of what State they were ‘indigenes’ – that is, where their families came from, not necessarily where they lived. And only then would Nigerians conclude that they were also Nigerians [Campbell and Page 2018: 8].

Campbell and Page [2018] note that this ingrained colonial ethnic disjunction and solidarity – a nice paradox – have not helped to stimulate a pan-Nigerian spirit among the citizens. In other words, Nigerians see themselves as people of their pre-colonial disparate nationalities. Elsewhere, “Rwandans placed religion second after nationality ... Chadians placed it third after nationality and ethnicity ... and South Africans placed it even lower” [Gez, Beider and Dickow 2022: 56]. The British had completely disregarded their precolonial identities and forged one that is difficult to glue on them. Pieri [2019: 23] indisputably captures this situation thus: “The formal British takeover of these territories had a transformative effect on the governance and administration of the region. Most notable was the complete disregard for ethnic, religious, and cultural divides that existed in the country and the imposition of a single (and artificial) Nigerian identity on all.”

If the British had been careful to recognize the diversities of the peoples and acted differently, the present socio-religious turmoil might have been avoided. Although some scholars like Ellis [2016] would want us to exonerate the British from the fate that Nigeria suffers today, it is practically impossible to defend and maintain the act of the amalgamation as a fatal mistake given the present Nigerian situation.

The low level of national patriotism can be traced to the ethnic cleavages, which are eclipsed momentarily when a section of the ethnic nationality assumes the leadership of the country. Igboin [2017] unravels this trajectory in Nigeria. According to him, the major nationalists that fought for the country’s independence never seemed to believe in the unity and oneness of the country until they, by some stroke of political calculations, found themselves at the helm of affairs of the country. It is only then that they demonstrated patriotism and pan-Nigerian affinity. This trend has continued in postcolonial politics; ethnic nationality has been a critical political negotiating instrument to ascend to political offices in the country.

Moreover, Nigerian Christians and Muslims have, by some spiritual reckoning, traced their genealogy to Abraham/Ibrahim, and their promised lands located in Israel and Mecca rather than Nigeria, their natural provenance. The

externalization and internationalization of patriotism is often well demonstrated when Nigerian Muslims and Christians show concerned solidarity to people and events in Israel and the Arab world respectively [Igboin 2015]. For instance, when President Donald Trump relocated the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Nigerian Christians were agog. This political act was interpreted in Christian eschatological mode, and Trump was declared a defender of the Christian faith. Trump would be rewarded with many favorable prophecies and vigils for his lost reelection bid. When the US army killed some Iranian top military brass in 2020, Nigerian Muslims took to the streets to avenge their 'brothers' death on other Nigerians. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is often domesticated in Nigeria; and sometimes, the casualties at home compete with those in the war theater.

Post-independence Nigeria has been bedeviled with crises of inveterate corruption, ethnic chauvinism, political upheaval, religious recrudescence and so forth. Religious politics has skewed and blurred national unity. In the northern part of the country, agitation for the introduction of shariah law into the Nigerian constitution has changed the vista of religious relations among adherents of other religions. In the 1970s, shariah law found its way into the constitution, and its application in real life situation has been a matter of hot debate. In 1986, General Ibrahim Babangida, the then military dictator, enlisted the country into the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC], an act that heightened the debate on the secularity of the country. At the return to civil rule in 1999, the religious politics would be made worse in early 2000 when 12 northern states adopted the implementation of the shariah law, a decision that led to serious crisis and loss of lives and property [Igboin 2014a; 2014b; 2014c and 2021c].

The rise of Boko Haram, a terrorist-insurgent Islamic group fighting for total declaration and implementation of shariah law across the country, has further exacerbated Nigeria's religious history and relations. Boko Haram, which literally means Western education is a sin, argues that shariah law gives a comprehensive constitution on how Nigerian society should be organized and governed rather than how Muslims should be guided. The implication of this is that a modern democratic structure, which arguably aligns with Western liberal ideologies, should be destroyed in favor of Arabo-Islamic ideology, particularly the Medinan Order, where Prophet Muhammad was both a religious and political leader. Thus, Boko Haram felt that the shariah law, promulgated by the democratic government, cannot be deep enough to satisfy the yearning for authentic Muslim identity, because the democratic government itself is a function of a non-Islamic civilization

Consequently, for over a decade now [2009-to date], the Boko Haram group has been fighting to establish an *ummah* – Islamic community – where the shariah law would be used to govern. The group has continued to experiment a shariah-styled government in swathes of land it has captured [Igboin 2014b; 2021c]. The main argument of Boko Haram has been that Western education, secularism, civilization, democracy and its structures are evil. Boko Haram conceives secularism as absolute rejection of God or his non-existence. It argues that Nigeria cannot be a godless country, and because of its secularity, the country was open to Western influences that have negatively impacted on Muslims. Since the Western educational system is an agent of Western civilization in the country, Boko Haram started preaching against it and eventually started attacking schools and killings Christians believed to be agents of Western education and corruption.

However, the question of identity has been a contentious one because many scholars, such as Onuoha [2014], have argued that the Salafist teachings and methods of Boko Haram are antithetical to the tenets of Islam as a peaceful religion, while the latter believes that such Muslims who do not align with its cause are infidels that must be killed alongside other non-Muslims. However, Boko Haram has largely succeeded in manipulating Islamic theology to organize, radicalize, legitimate, indoctrinate and operationalize its thoughts and goal [Kassim and Nwankpa 2018; MacEachern 2018; Ekhomu 2020; Subrahmanian, Pulice, Brown, Bonen-Clark 2021]. Although there is a widespread disenchantment with Boko Haram's ideology and insurgency by the masses, it has succeeded in one critical way: “the reassertion of Islam as a primary identity” [Pieri 2019: 7].

As militant Muslim groups flourished in the north from the 1980s to 1990s, mainline Christians, most vociferously Catholics and Anglicans, stood staunchly against the persistent erosion of Christian voice and values. They were at the forefront of the fight against extended military regimes and political violence that characterized the era. Although they fought against the military, they barely pushed for political or elective positions to consolidate their agitation and offer a pragmatic alternative in governance.

To date, while other mainline churches seem to have been less active in national politics, Catholicism has maintained a consistent posture in speaking truth to power. But the rise of the Nigerian Pentecostalism, with some political and prophetic fury, equals the domination of the political space by Muslims for sometime now. Nigerian Pentecostal Christianity and its political participation have begun to

challenge the existing political order, intruding, as some have argued, into the murky waters of politics. Obadare [2018] has extensively chronicled the rise to political prominence of Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria. This brand of embodied or enchanted faith and praxis, he argues, can best be described politically as a Pentecostal republic. As Marshall [2009], Afolayan, Yacob-Haliso and Falola [2018], Adelokun [2022] among others have suggested, Pentecostals do not only assume a new and different ontological being when they claim to be born again, but they also indeed believe that being dominant in their present political space is part of their Christian heritage.

According to Adelokun, for example, performing power does not only relate to spiritual empowerment with the declarative command over demons and other spiritual forces believed to militate against an individual's progress, but also intentional involvement and intervention in political power in order to decree and determine how the social realm of the society operates. The political space is not neatly separated from the spiritual one; if anything, the latter determines and controls the former. This theological (re)imagination and (re)interpretation of politics and spiritualizing politics [Kalu 2008], initially thought to be a form of political naivety and then overlooked, has begun to yield political dividends as the current Vice President of Nigeria, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, is a pastor of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the biggest Pentecostal church in Africa, having its presence in 196 countries of the world. For the Nigerian Pentecostal, "Everything begins in mysticism and ends in politics" [cited in Wydra 2015: 1].

Furthermore, Nigerian indigenous religion still plays significant spiritual and existential roles, even though most Nigerians will not want to identify with it publicly. The traditional political structure that subsists in Nigeria, apart from the caliphate and emirate in the north, is constituted in the religious belief of the people. Contrary to widespread notion that the religion is artefact, Aderibigbe and Falola [2022] argue that the indigenous religion permeates the whole of African life, both public and private. According to them, indigenous religion has continued to shape people's lives and everyday reality, culturally, politically and economically. Adogame [2022b] argues that the fluidity and dynamism of African indigenous religion has helped to maintain and sustain individual and societal values in the face of threatening global forces. He further maintains that the religion, being a lived one, also shapes the religious and spiritual imaginations

of African religioscape.<sup>3</sup> Of course, it provides the cosmologies for the thriving of missionary religions, which helps it to contest, mediate or negotiate identity in Africa's religious marketplace.

In issues of social justice, a sizeable number of Nigerians resort to traditional means to resolve disputes or seek justice. Ellis [2016] also attests to the social and 'judicial' influence that traditional religious institutions play in Nigeria's body polity, in a country where the formal courts delay or find it difficult to administer justice. There is a religious and demographic blurring that makes defining indigenous religion difficult: many people who publicly and officially subscribe to either Christianity or Islam have continued to patronize the religious resources of the indigenous religion. In addition, religious intersectionality and religious syncretism have revived and transformed indigenous religion, apart from its attempts at organizing and formalizing itself [Laguda 2015; Janson 2021].

### **Secularization and Identity in Nigeria**

As we pointed out earlier, when the debate on secularization was rife in the West, African countries were under colonialism. Of course, the secularization thesis could not have been the priority of the Africans at that time, given the violent nature of colonialism and Apartheid in South Africa. It might be argued that Western secularization could also be a form of violent incursion into the African worldview. The debate about secularization *in* and *of* Africa is an on-going one. According to Igboin [2018], it is more correct to argue for secularization of Africa than secularization in Africa. His argument is based on the reasoning that the incursion of the missionary religions – Christianity and Islam – and colonialism with their concept of individualism, which contradicts the African communalism, sowed the seed of secularization in Africa. These foreign forces secularized Africa in the negative sense in which secularism is generally viewed in Africa. Seed [2015: 78-79] argues in this regard also when he observed that in Africa, prior to missionary and colonial advent, "existence (was) viewed in terms of an integrated and indivisible whole. All human beings and nature are animated by a basic 'vital force.' Human beings and nature are bound together in a symbiotic relationship. This relationship extends to the spiritual world" and does not draw a line between "the sacred and the secular."

<sup>3</sup> This is used to indicate the presence of multiple religions in Africa with the main ones being African Indigenous Religion, Christianity and Islam. It also refers to these religions' trajectories and the competitiveness that defines their interactions.

The blurring of the line between the sacred and mundane in traditional Africa did not allow for secularism, because the religious and political system, in their composite state, did not anticipate the strict Western conception of binary separation. It needs to be unraveled whether, before the advent of colonialism and missionary religions, there was no pluralism, a type that one can call intra-religious pluralism. Of course, there were various religious organizations and veneration of different divinities in African communities. Communality played pivotal role in identity construction more than religion. However, missionary and colonial redrawing and re-worlding of the African space has changed much of Africa's epistemology and theology of communality. With globalization, African culture and identity and their expression in relation with themselves and others, have raised critical concern [Igboin 2021d; Graneß, Etieyibo and Gmaier-Pranzl 2022].

As recently as 2015, Engelke [2015] would still repeat the long-abandoned sentiments of arm-chair anthropologists, who described Africa as a dark continent. Engelke conceives of secularism "as an achievement of civilization" which makes sense in "a certain kind of society – those with 'world religions,' not just witch-doctors or spirit mediums" [Engelke 2015:5]. He adds that "there is no 'proper' religion—where it's just 'African tradition'—there is nothing 'secular' to be constituted" [Engelke 2015:5]. For Engelke, Africa had no idea of religion until it had encounter with Europe. He claims that African traditions, properly conceptualized, cannot be qualified to be regarded as religion, because religion as a term is strictly constructed and understood in relation to Christianity. In fact, for him, the Europeans found no known tradition until they were able "to recognize 'tradition' as having 'religious aspects'" [Engelke, 2015:5]. The absence of a world religion in Africa means that secularism could not be contemplated; its absence connotes, produces and reinforces "Africa's ostensible darkness" [Engelke, 2015:6].

Engelke romanticizes colonialism and deliberately loses sight of the "long processes of delegitimization and demonization, led by agents of Christianity and Islam, many followers of traditional African religions have come to internalize their traditions as lesser religions or even as no religion at all" [Gez, Beider and Dickow 2022: 58]. Ndlovu-Gatsheni [2018; 2020], Mhango [2018], Davidson [1992], among others, have demonstrated the evils and violence that colonialism caused in Africa, and how it systematically eroded the progress and development of Africa. They also show how colonial interpretation of reality did not countenance African thought patterns. Neo-colonialism has wrongly continued

to define Africa in the image of Europe and projecting it as the central of gravity for global progress. These absolutized opinions have been used to gauge Africa [Lorenz 2022]. Gez, Beider and Dickow [2022: 56] observe that “These Western and European roots are too often overlooked, and the history of scholarship on religion is replete with false universalization based on Western conventions.... The use of standard [Western] articulations and categories risks playing down the uniqueness of religion in Africa.”

So, the questions are: what is a world religion? What are the criteria to select a world religion? Who are those who fix the criteria? What is secularity, and what political or religious context should be appropriate for its conception?

The foregoing might seem to suggest that secularity was completely absent in Africa prior to its contact with the West, either in connection with colonialism or missions. However, Igwe [2017] argues that if secularity means political separation of religion and state, there are some examples to demonstrate the presence and practice of secularity in Africa before colonialism. Studying the Igbo of Southeast Nigeria and Dagomba of northern Ghana, Igwe argues that priests and monarchs had finely defined and separated roles and functions in the administration of the communities. In fact, they provided checks and balances in the exercise of their powers. While the priests took charge of rituals and other spiritual concerns of the communities, the monarchs were saddled with the day-to-day administration of the kingdom, and issues that required spiritual information or adjudication were promptly referred to the priests and vice versa. In the case of the Dagomba, the difference was so clear that the monarchs were called the owners of the land, while the priests were regarded as “owners of the gods” [Igwe 2017: 26].

Igwe [2017] calls attention to the colonial erosion of African indigenous political arrangements through forceful introduction of a Western type of government that was not neatly secular as the colonial authorities claimed. “It is important to note that despite the proclaimed secular nature of the colonial state, there was a mix between colonial politics and colonial religion... (such that) [Africans] did not know who came to missionize and who came to politicize” [Igwe 2017: 26].

This colonial mix affected much of the postcolonial constitutions in Africa where, in some instances there are secular principles which do not have practical correspondence in politics. “While most African countries have inherited, as a legacy of European colonialism, a degree of separation between religion and



state, authoritarian tendencies and the great power of religion in many post-independence African countries have often tested this principle” [Gez, Beider and Dickow 2022: 58].

The status of Nigeria has been highly contentious because the concept of secularism immediately invokes a sense of absolute godlessness. Sampson [2014] emphasizes the point that the British allowed northern Nigeria to be ruled by Penal Code, which has semblance of the shariah law; the southern part was governed by Criminal Code, styled along Western legal system. At Independence, the Western legal system was bequeathed to the entire country, which the north felt was tilted toward Christian canon law. The agitation for Islamic jurisprudence or shariah law since then became a matter of religious politics with dire consequences. While radical Muslims like the Izala and Boko Haram prefer to regard Nigeria as a multireligious (and preferably an Islamic) state because of their religious sensibility and radicalism, some who are moderate consider the country as a secular state with a difference. Most Christians do not seem to quarrel with the secularity of the country because they believe that with such status every religious tradition and citizen should be able to practice their faith without molestation. And government should also provide a level playing field for all religions to thrive without favoring one over the other. However, as Fox [2011] correctly observes, Nigeria’s secular status is contentious because, whereas the constitution forbids the adoption of any religion as a state religion, twelve states in the north between 1999 and 2002 adopted sharia as the governing law.

Fox’s reference to the Nigerian constitution is pertinent to understanding how secularity works in Nigeria. Although Fox is correct in asserting that there is a constitutional provision that forbids any state of the federation from adopting a particular religion, the same constitution provides for the establishment of a shariah court to an appellate level financed by public tax. This peculiar provision is what was exploited by the northern governors who politically adopted shariah law in 1999-2002. One of the most radical Islamic movements, *Jama’atu Nasril Islam* (JNI), for instance, argues that since the word ‘God’ appears in the constitution and the word ‘secular’ does not appear in it, it would be unreasonable to regard Nigeria as a secular state. Indeed, according to Igboin [2021a: 12] “sharia appears at least 76 times, kadi 50, Muslims 10, Islamic 26, *wakf* 2 times” whereas “Torah, canon or Christian does not appear at all” in the constitution. He adds that no Nigerian language appears in the constitution whereas Arabic words are therein as well as on the currency notes. Accordingly, Abulmumuni Adebayo Oba

blatantly declares that: “Islamic law, having accepted the sovereignty of Allah and His laws, cannot accept the ‘supremacy’ of the Constitution and the sovereignty of the people” [cited in Vaughan 2016: 201].

Logically, Oba is arguing that the Nigerian constitution is inferior to the shariah law and since there cannot be two sovereignties in one country – Nigeria in this case – the Nigerian constitution must acquiesce and relinquish its supremacy to shariah law, while all the citizens irrespective of their religious belief accept the supremacy of Allah. This is the same ideology that underpins the Boko Haram movement, which contends that the democratic structure built on the constitution is un-Islamic. This extreme religious imagination and indoctrination was practically exhibited on 12 May 2022, when some Muslim students stoned Deborah Samuel, a Christian lady, to death and burnt her inside their college for allegedly blaspheming against the Prophet of Islam, without recourse to the courts for adjudication.<sup>4</sup>

The argument can further be made that the ‘God’ that appears in the constitution, even though it would have been preferred to be written in Arabic according to the Izala position, is indeed Allah. God in this sense is not neutral, syncretistic, pluralistic or secular. On the contrary, he must be considered and understood in a monolithic, particularistic, Islamic or theocratic radar. It also supports the contention that ‘God’ in Christianity and Islam is not the same, despite the comparative sentiments tangentially expressed, which, of course, are geared toward peaceful coexistence. This thus calls to question this position and claim of other religious traditions to the secularity of the country [Igboin 2021a]. Essentially, the position of the Izala and Boko Haram groups cannot be effectively sustained because not all Muslims accept their interpretations of the constitution and Islamic texts. As I have pointed out earlier, there are very many Muslims who do not identify with the Boko Haram’s teachings and activities and other groups like Izala.

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<sup>4</sup> The religious politics of Deborah’s murder is that those arraigned in the court are being charged with “conspiracy and inciting public disturbance” rather than murder. Violent riots broke out subsequently in Sokoto by Muslims attacking Christians while demanding the unconditional release of the arrested suspects. While many Muslims condemned the extrajudicial killing of Deborah, prominent Muslims defended it as the right punishment for blasphemy. The political side of it is well demonstrated by Mr. Atiku Abubakar, a Muslim, former Vice President, and now the presidential aspirant for 2023 elections, who had to delete his tweet sympathizing with the family of Deborah because Muslims threatened not to vote for him. See Awosika [2022].

From this wieldy religious twist, how does Nigeria manage its identity? This critical question has been confronted, evaded, haphazardly answered or ignored. But it is a pertinent one that has continued to resonate in peaceful and violent ways. Nigeria has been described as “a nation held hostage to preventable events of tragic nature and at the front burner repeatedly are questions we have refused to face squarely: Who we are, where we belong, what we represent, what does Nigeria mean to us, do we want to remain one, and how? [Onwunyi and Ezeifegbu 2019: 9851].

Despite the national attitude to these repugnant questions, the country is aware of the consequences of ignoring them. Like Adogame [2022a: 11] strokes, these questions are not only existential but also spiritual, and they determine the health of individuals and the country. According to him, “Who I am, where I am coming, and who/what do I wish to become?” in a multireligious, secular and racial/ethnic encounters are questions that must be disburdened in order to be clear about oneself and others. Religious identity politics has continued to play a highly divisive role among Nigerians, and it seems unlikely that it will vanish overnight.

Francis Fukuyama talks about three categories of identities in our daily encounter with ourselves and others, namely: Thymos, Isothymia and Megalothymia. Thymos asks the question, who am I? Self or personal identity is not as simple as was assumed because individuals continue to understand themselves in accretive ways. Isothymia concerns the desire for recognition and conferred dignity we believe is our due, while megalothymia is the desire for others to recognize us as their superior. Managing the three types of identities is critical to how personal and group relations are formed and maintained on the one hand, and the level of private, group, ethnic, communal, religious or national peace and cohesion on the other [Kukah 2022]. In Nigeria, megalothymia type of identity has taken the pivotal stage of religious and ethnic encounters. The religious and ethnic superiority and arrogance that pervades the polity and the quest for its nationalization as a guiding ethos is a bane of national unity and social and ethnic cohesion. Both identity and religion are defined in exclusive terms rather than in mutually reinforcing manner.

The real-life situation in the country is that religious identity politics between Muslims and Christians has seriously affected the democratization process; for instance, competence and capability to steer the ship of governance are sacrificed at the altar of religious idiosyncrasies and ethnic considerations and affinities. Appointments are often made on the basis of religious affiliation rather than

competence and capacity to deliver on the job; this has constituted a barrier to democratic and national development. The introduction of the Federal Character, which makes representation mandatory for critical positions at the federal level, was meant to balance both religious and educational disequilibria between north and south, which unfortunately, as evidence has spawned, has been abrasively abused with impunity. The political understanding that Muslim and Christian be president and vice president and vice versa is also meant to balance the politics of religious identity and representation.

Religious identity chauvinism, exhibited by the dominant religious traditions, has resulted in the mobilization of the masses to action. The political elite have also stroked the ember of religious identity for their self-serving political interests, which exacerbate religious and political tension. What Kukah [1983] observed in the 1980s in this regard has not changed; if anything, it has become more pervasive. According to him, politicians and the elite have abandoned the most critical and ideological issues that the country needed to develop and devoted their energy toward religious mobilization for self-projection. His words are apposite to drive home his argument:

The ground was therefore well laid and rather than the politicians seeing themselves being divided only by the contending ideological presentations of their party manifestoes, a lot of useful energy was diverted to building religious lagers. Rather than mobilize Nigerians to their cause as politicians, the new political elite were busy mobilizing religious constituencies for a war against one another [Kukah 1983: 103].

More specifically, Olawale [2020: 10] observes, “politicians have adopted the introduction of Islam to create a direct identity to the political landscape of the country. They adopted *sharia* to emphasize the presence of Muslims in the national space. The influence of this religious code has led to deadly confrontations between Muslims and Christians over the years.”

The emergence of Pentecostal identity and politics in national politics as a counter-ing force is most likely to result in further complication of the already tense situation if great care is not taken to guide its application.

Despite taking an illiberal stance on national issues, there are some cases in which the adherents of major religions agree on moral issues. For instance, in spite of

Western pressure on the Jonathan presidency to halt the criminalization of same sex union in 2014, the religious leaders and political elite momentarily put their differences behind them and lobbied both publicly and privately for the Bill to criminalize the practice. The president received accolades for standing up against Western pressure and upholding the scriptural texts of the religions and moral standards of the land [Laguda 2021].

### **Conclusion**

I have argued that secularization, as understood in the West, cannot be applied to Africa as a whole and Nigeria, in particular. This is because the notion of secularism, as denoting godlessness, and secularization, as meaning decline in religious belief and its influence in the public space, do not empirically and analytically resonate with the African religious politics. Despite the negative influences of spiritualizing or religionizing politics in Africa, secularization is yet to define personal and group identity. The argument of global resurgence of religion also cannot be sustained in the experience of Africa because secularization did not actually take place.

Although there could be a rise in global religious nationalism and violence as a result of international politics and competing ideologies, most especially in the West, the issue of religious violence has been a recurrent one in Nigeria, and not due specifically to religious resurgence in the aftermath of Cold War or 9/11. One reason for this is the politics of religious identity and its incidental benefits that accrue to those who have continuously stroked the ember of religious politics inherited from the British. Colonialism and missionary religions have been identified as being responsible for the politics and complications of religious identity in Nigeria. In addition, the plethora of nuances of secularization has complicated religious identity; this is because identity is constructed mainly on the premise of religious affiliation.

Religious obsession has not helped the country, and it shows no sign of decline. Therefore, it has become imperative for a more nuanced deconstruction of secularization in Nigeria through legal means to take place. The starting point is obviously the constitution that is ambiguous about the country's secularity, whose lacuna has been exploited to further demand and entrench dubious and controversial religious politics and identity.

In addition, it has become critical to understand that secularity does not connote godlessness: the existence of God and subscription to religious tradition should be

taken as the basis to deny freedom to those who hold opposing view or perpetrate intolerance, which has been the bane of religious coexistence in the country. It has been established that there was a practice of separation of religion and state in pre-colonial Africa, and each institution functioned as checks and balances. This practice, which is autochthonous to Africa, can still be resurrected because it upholds and balances African values, religious sensibilities and political administration. This decolonizing perspective of secularization needs more nuanced study and application.

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# Miscellanea



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## *Otwarty patriotyzm jako konsekwencja dynamicznej religii<sup>1</sup>*

**Open patriotism as a consequence of dynamic religion**

**Abstract:** Despite the appearance of a cosmopolitan worldview after World War II, the problem of building a community and identity, as well as the vitality of the nation-state remained valid. In the article, the author reflects on the role of religion in creating an open patriotism, i.e. one that is free from the limitations associated with nationalist views. Reaching, among others, Henri Bergson, the author distinguishes between static and dynamic religion, stating, following the same philosopher, that the climax of dynamic one is visible in the Gospel, especially in the Sermon on the Mount. Supporters of this approach are also easy to find outside of the Christianity (e.g. Buber, Gandhi, or Muslim Iqbal). Bergson's distinction had an impact on the initiation by, i.e. Jacques Maritain, the so-called brotherly modern views in Catholicism, which now have a significant influence on the teachings of the Church, also in the context of distinguishing between nationalism and patriotism. Open patriotism, unlike its nationalist variety, does not preclude intra-social pluralism or impose ethnic or religious unity. He was close to Schuman, John Paul II or Franciszek. The author notes that seeking a connection between locality and global solidarity is the task of religious communities in the modern world.

**Keywords:** dynamic religion, patriotism, nationalism, cosmopolitanism, Bergson, Maritain

**Abstrakt:** Mimo pojawienia się po II wojnie światowej światopoglądu kosmopolitycznego, problem budowania wspólnoty i tożsamości oraz żywotności państwa narodowego pozostał aktualny. W artykule autor zastanawia się nad rolą religii w budowaniu otwartego patriotyzmu, czyli takiego, który jest pozbawiony ograniczeń związanych z poglądami nacjonalistycznymi. Sięgając m.in. do Henriego Bergsona, rozróżnia religię statyczną i dynamiczną, stwierdzając za tym filozofem, że punkt kulminacyjny religii dynamicznej uwidacznia się w Ewangelii,

<sup>1</sup> Niniejszy tekst zawiera odniesienia do dwóch wcześniejszych prac: Palaver 2020b i 2021.



a zwłaszcza w Kazaniu na Górze. Zwolenników tego podejścia łatwo także znaleźć poza religią chrześcijańską (np. Buber, Gandhi czy muzułmanin Iqbal). Rozróżnienie Bergsona miało wpływ na zapoczątkowanie m.in. przez Jacquesa Maritaina tzw. bratnich nowoczesnych poglądów w katolicyzmie, które obecnie mają dosyć znaczący wpływ na nauki Kościoła, również w kontekście rozróżniania między nacjonalizmem a patriotyzmem. Patriotyzm otwarty, w przeciwieństwie do swojej nacjonalistycznej odmiany, nie wyklucza wewnątrzspołecznego pluralizmu ani też nie narzuca jedności etnicznej lub religijnej. Bliski był on m.in. Schumanowi, Janowi Pawłowi II czy Franciszkowi. Autor zauważa, że szukanie łączności między lokalnością a globalną solidarnością jest zadaniem społeczności religijnych we współczesnym świecie.

**Słowa kluczowe:** religia dynamiczna, patriotyzm, nacjonalizm, kosmopolityzm, Bergson, Maritain

## Wstęp

Lata tuż po zakończeniu II wojny światowej odznaczały się wysiłkami skoncentrowanymi na odchodzeniu od nacjonalizmu i zastępowaniu go bardziej uniwersalistycznym światopoglądem. Jednym ze skutków tej zmiany było założenie Unii Europejskiej (UE) w Europie Zachodniej. Ten kosmopolityczny kierunek zaczął być poddawany w wątpliwość jednak dopiero wtedy, gdy możliwe stało się rozszerzenie granic UE po zakończeniu zimnej wojny. Nastąpiło wówczas niespodziewane odrodzenie nacjonalizmu etnicznego. Świat pragnący „nieodwracalnego odejścia od wszelakiego nacjonalizmu został skonfrontowany z powrotem «tłumionego nacjonalizmu etnicznego»” [Ignatieff 1994: 9]. Rosnąca wzajemna niechęć między Wschodem i Zachodem oraz kryzys migracyjny we wczesnych latach 90. sprawiły, że francuski politolog Pierre Hassner zaczął nawoływać kosmopolitycznych przeciwników nacjonalizmu do zmiany poglądów: aby zaczęli oni poważnie podchodzić do tematu poszukiwania wspólnoty i tożsamości, mając przy tym jednak na uwadze, że żaden kraj nie może zamknąć się na resztę współczesnego świata bez szkody dla samego siebie. W tym samym czasie kanadyjski autor Michael Ignatieff podkreślał, że mimo jego kosmopolitycznych wysiłków państwo narodowe wciąż pozostaje podstawową formą demokratycznych społeczności [tamże: 21-22]. Aby jednak nie wpaść w pułapkę nacjonalizmu, zastosował on wyraźne rozróżnienie między „nacjonalizmem obywatelskim”, obejmującym wszystkich ludzi zgadzających się z „politycznym credo narodu” – niezależnie od ich rasy, koloru skóry, wyznania, płci, języka czy przynależności etnicznej” – a „nacjonalizmem etnicznym”, zakładającym, że „najgłębsze więzi jednostek nie są przez nie wybierane, lecz dziedziczone” [tamże: 11-13]. Jedynie nacjonalizm

obywatelski ma charakter demokratyczny, podczas gdy nacjonalizm etniczny przejawia cechy autorytaryzmu. Ignatieff był zwolennikiem nacjonalizmu obywatelskiego, który uznawał istnienie narodów za konieczne, aby ludzie mogli prowadzić życie o charakterze kosmopolitycznym [tamże: 21].

Trzydzieści lat później kryzys kosmopolityczny pogłębia się, a nacjonalizm rośnie w siłę zarówno w Europie, jak i w innych częściach świata. Dochodząc do wniosku, że odradzanie się idei nacjonalistycznych stało się jednym z najbardziej zauważalnych zjawisk na przestrzeni ostatnich pięciu lat, Vittorio Hösle utworzył dokumentację Papieskiej Akademii Nauk Społecznych dotyczącą dyskusji z maja 2019 roku na temat związków między narodem, państwem a państwem narodowym [Hösle 2020: 28]. Ataki terrorystyczne, takie jak ten z 11 września 2001 roku w USA oraz późniejsze ataki w różnych krajach Europy, kryzys finansowy z 2008 roku, kryzys migracyjny w 2015 roku oraz pandemia koronawirusa, której stawić czoła musiał w 2020 roku cały świat, postawiły pod znakiem zapytania ideę otwartości granic oraz postawy kosmopolityczne. Wygląda na to, że apel Hassnera z 1991 roku został jednak usłyszany. Brytyjski historyk Timothy Garton Ash nawiązuje właśnie do Hassnera i również zaleca taką modyfikację ideologii liberalizmu, aby nie traktowano po macoszemu kwestii wspólnoty i tożsamości [Ash 2001]. „Kosmoliberalnej fantazji o obywatelach bez korzeni” przeciwstawia „patriotyzm liberalny”, nazywając go „niezbędną częścią składową odnowionego liberalizmu”. Jego poparcie dla patriotyzmu nie stanowi jednak propagowania nacjonalizmu. Zgadza się wprawdzie z poglądem, że kierowanie się dobrem narodu w czasach pandemii COVID-19 jest ważne, ale nie dochodzi do wniosków popierających nacjonalizm: „Jak niejednokrotnie pokazywało zamykanie granic państwa z dnia na dzień i inne działania przeciwko pandemii COVID-19, warstwa narodowa jest zbyt ważna, [...], by pozostawić ją w rękach nacjonalistów”. Ochrona własnej ludności i lokalnych społeczności są zrozumiałe w czasach kryzysu, ale nie można zapominać, że globalna pandemia wymaga również odpowiedzi w postaci globalnych działań. Nieprzemyślany nacjonalizm szczepionkowy może zaszkodzić również poszczególnym narodom, w których funkcjonuje.

W dalszej części moich rozważań pragnę poważnie potraktować słowa Hassnera [1991] i Asha [2021], którzy apelowali za przyjęciem otwartego patriotyzmu pozbawionego ograniczeń związanych z poglądami nacjonalistycznymi. Jak zauważył już Rousseau, nawet kosmopolityzm niesie ze sobą pewne zagrożenia: „Niejeden filozof kocha tatarów, aby być zwolnionym od obowiązku miłości względem sąsiadów swoich” [1995: 12]. Marzenie Lennona o świecie bez krajów,

który artysta przywołuje w swoim utworze *Imagine*, jest dzisiaj krytykowane jako „banalny uniwersalizm”, gdyż ignorowało polityczną potrzebę istnienia poszczególnych społeczności oraz ich granic [Gay 2013: 3]. W dzisiejszych czasach zagrożenia polityczne towarzyszą głównie nacjonalistycznemu odrzuceniu kosmopolityzmu. Patriotyzm często jest praktykowany jedynie w pewnym wąskim zakresie. Wyraźnym przykładem takiego zagrożenia jest działający w Niemczech prawicowy ruch populistyczny PEGIDA [Strømmen i Schmiedel 2020: 66-78]. Nazwa tego ruchu to akronim od „Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes” (po polsku: „Patriotyczni Europejczycy przeciw islamizacji Zachodu”), a jego główny cel stanowi walka z islamem, który jest przedstawiany jako główny wróg społeczeństw europejskich. Walce tej towarzyszy szczególnie podkreślanie tożsamości chrześcijańskiej. Dzięki nowej niemieckiej partii Alternative für Deutschland (po polsku: „Alternatywa dla Niemiec”) ten wrogo nastawiony do islamu patriotyczno-chrześcijański ruch uzyskał miejsca w niemieckim parlamencie. Z kolei Węgry i Polska to dwa kraje, w których podobny światopogląd jest wyznawany nawet przez polityków partii rządzących.

Wsparcie ze strony religii dla takich odmian nacjonalizmu zdaje się uzasadniać poglądy Lennona, którego marzenie zakłada nie tylko zniesienie granic, ale również i religii. Związek między nacjonalizmem i religią jest skomplikowany. Nie ma wątpliwości, że powiązania między religią a zamkniętymi społecznościami istniały już nawet w przypadku najwcześniejszych cywilizacji. Jest to jednak zaledwie tylko jeden aspekt stosunków między nacjonalizmem a religią. Jak pokazuje niniejszy artykuł, istnieje też ścieżka religii, która umożliwia zerwanie tak ciasnych powiązań. Kiedy wiodący przedstawiciele dzisiejszych ruchów prawicowych twierdzą, że stoją na straży chrześcijaństwa, warto wspomnieć o tych chrześcijańskich myślicielach i politykach, którzy po zakończeniu II wojny światowej i umotywowanym religijnie przewycięzeniu nacjonalizmu założyli UE.

W dalszej części niniejszego artykułu najpierw antropologicznie opiszę powody, dla których ludzie dążą do osiągnięcia tożsamości grupowej, która odróżniałaby ich od innych grup. Następnie zastanowię się nad związkiem między religią a tą tendencją grupową w oparciu o podział religii na dwa różne typy. Pragnę przy tym szczególnie podkreślić, że dynamiczny typ religii, który dąży do utworzenia otwartej społeczności wyraźnie odbiega od państwa narodowego i związanych z nim środków przymusu. Z tego względu, że niniejszy artykuł skupia się głównie na Europie, wspomniane dwa typy religii będą dotyczyły chrześcijaństwa, szczególnie katolicyzmu. Kolejnym krokiem będzie przedstawienie kierunku odstającego od

głównego nurtu myśli katolickiej i przedkładającego społeczeństwo obywatelskie ponad państwo narodowe – kierunku, który przyczynił się do utworzenia koncepcji otwartego patriotyzmu wyraźnie różniącego się od zamkniętego nacjonalizmu.

Na płaszczyźnie pojęciowej w kontekście nacjonalizmu i patriotyzmu panuje ogromny chaos. Niezależnie od tego, czy zastosujemy podział na zasadniczo dobry patriotyzm i zawsze zły nacjonalizm, czy też podział na nacjonalizm obywatelski i etniczny według Kohna [1962], wciąż będziemy mieć do czynienia z pewnymi niejasnościami. W przypadku zastosowania pierwszego podziału, jak twierdzi Bauman [2003: 204-207], w praktyce nie uwidoczni się właściwie żadna różnica między tymi pojęciami. Niestety podział Kohna również ma pewne słabości [Brubaker 1999; Tamir 2019]. W praktyce na rzeczywiste funkcjonowanie tych pojęć najbardziej wpływają przede wszystkim warunki polityczne. Wraz z koncepcją otwartego patriotyzmu wprowadzam jednocześnie merytoryczną definicję zgodną z nacjonalizmem liberalnym, który cechuje się otwartością na świat zewnętrzny, brakiem dyskryminacji w obrębie społeczności i respektowaniem pluralizmu. Religie mogą taką otwartość wzmacniać, o ile nie są ograniczane i tłamszone przez państwo oraz utrzymują w stosunku do niego krytyczny dystans.

### **1. Pokusa skłonności grupowych: pseudospecjacja, narcyzm grupowy, altruizm zaściankowy**

My, ludzie, jesteśmy istotami społecznymi i dlatego dążymy do przynależności do określonej grupy, często takiej o dużym znaczeniu. Kwame Anthony Appiah, filozof o wyraźnie kosmopolitycznym światopoglądzie, bierze tę skłonność pod uwagę, opisując – jakże powszechne – pragnienie uzyskania tożsamości grupowej: „Jesteśmy istotami społecznymi. Nie uważamy siebie wyłącznie za część ludzkości, ale uważamy swoich pobratymców za ważniejszych i łatwo dajemy się przekonać do przeciwstawiania się wpływom z zewnątrz” [2019: 58]. Różne koncepcje antropologiczne pogłębiają nasze zrozumienie tej skłonności do przynależności do grupy.

Niemiecko-amerykański psychoanalityk Erik Erikson utworzył w 1966 pojęcie pseudospecjacji, które opisuje, jak jedne grupy ludzi, wbrew faktom naukowym i uniwersalnej koncepcji człowieka, postrzegają inne grupy ludzi jako obce gatunki. Pojęcie pseudospecjacji „mówi o tym, że człowiek, pomimo oczywistej przynależności do jednego gatunku [...] przejawia tendencje do ciągłych podziałów na grupy innego szczebla (od plemion do narodów, od kast do klas, od religii do

ideologii), dające ich członkom silne poczucie tożsamości, a jednocześnie wyraźnej wyższości i swego rodzaju nieśmiertelności” [Erikson 1978: 516].

Pojęciem blisko związanym z „pseudospecjacją” jest „narcyzm grupowy”, zdefiniowany przez niemieckiego socjopsychologa Ericha Fromma i jednoznacznie nazwany przez niego „źródłem ludzkiej agresji” [Fromm 1980: 182-184]. Fromm uważa również, że narcyzm grupowy wzmacnia „solidarność i wewnętrzną spójność grupy” [tamże: 182]. Natomiast amerykański ekonomista Samuel Bowles nazywa tę osobliwą współzależność między wewnętrzną solidarnością i jednoczesną wrogością skierowaną na zewnątrz „altruizmem zaściankowym” [2008]. Za pomocą symulacji komputerowych zdołał on stworzyć na podstawie takich zachowań grupowych dosyć precyzyjne, aczkolwiek niekonieczne nieodzowne, wzory współżycia międzyludzkiego. Praca Bowlesa umożliwia prześledzenie zachowań ludzkich od początków cywilizacji aż do czasów współczesnego państwa socjalnego. Altruizm zaściankowy wyjaśnia, dlaczego wewnętrzna spójność grupy wzmacnia się wraz z nasilaniem się wrogości skierowanej na zewnątrz. Już Darwin [2012: 114] zauważył, że plemiona o wysokim stopniu spójności i gotowości jednostek do poświęcania się mają większe szanse w starciu z innymi plemionami. Darwin nie zwrócił jednak uwagi na istnienie zależności między wzmacnianiem wewnętrznej spójności a wzrostem wrogości skierowanej na zewnątrz. Pojęcie altruizmu zaściankowego szczegółowo opisuje tę zależność.

## 2. Dwa typy religii: religia statyczna i dynamiczna

Tylko jaki jest związek między religią a pseudospecjacją, narcyzmem grupowym i altruizmem zaściankowym? Uzyskanie odpowiedzi na to pytanie ułatwione będzie przez zapoznanie się z treścią ostatniej książki Bergsona pt. *Dwa źródła moralności i religii* z 1932 r. Według Bergsona początkowo wspólne życie ludzi ułożone było według zasady: „by grupa była ściśle zjednoczona, lecz by pomiędzy grupami istniała potencjalna wrogość” [Bergson 2019: 57]. Własna grupa stawiana była przeciwko wszystkim innym i zmuszana do nieustannej, aktywnej obrony: „Tym, co wiąże między sobą członków określonego społeczeństwa, jest tradycja, potrzeba, chęć obrony tej grupy przed innymi grupami i wywyższania jej ponad wszystko” [tamże: 215]. Ten opis zamkniętej społeczności pokrywa się koncepcjami antropologicznymi przywołanymi powyżej. Zamknięta społeczność, której moralność jest ukształtowana pod wpływem nacisku grupy i wynikających z tego zobowiązań, idzie – zdaniem Bergsona – w parze z pewną określoną formą religii, nazwaną przez niego „religią statyczną” i opisaną jako religię plemienną zamkniętej społeczności. W tej formie religii najważniejszy jest wpływ ogółu, natomiast

indywidualne doświadczenia nie mają żadnego znaczenia. Religię statyczną można skutecznie zdefiniować w oparciu o wczesną sakralność w rozumieniu Girarda [1987]: wywodzącą się z mechanizmu kozła ofiarnego i służącą kolektywnemu przewyciężaniu wewnątrzgrupowej rywalizacji i przemocy.

Na potrzeby dalszych przemyśleń muszę jednak podkreślić, że Bergson nie tylko wyróżnia społeczności zamknięte wraz z powiązanymi z nimi religiami statycznymi, ale opisuje też, stanowiące ich przeciwieństwo, religie dynamiczne prowadzące do, wyraźnie odrębnych jakościowo, społeczności otwartych. Obydwa typy religii są powiązane z zupełnie odmiennymi formami moralności. Społeczność zamknięta cechuje się obecnością społecznego nacisku w postaci „czystego zobowiązania”, społeczność otwarta cechuje się natomiast „moralnością absolutną”. Taką moralność przejawiają „ludzie wyjątkowi”, bohaterowie albo święci. Bergson wymienia tutaj między innymi „mędrców greckich”, „proroków izraelskich, arahantów buddyjskich” oraz „chrześcijańskich świętych” [2019: 32-33]. Ludzie ci są pełni twórczego zapału, który Bergson identyfikuje z Bogiem, a który sprawia, że są oni w stanie miłować nie tylko własną rodzinę, grupę, plemię czy nawet ogromny naród, ale także całą ludzkość, a nawet wręcz całą naturę [tamże: 53]. Podczas gdy religia statyczna jest ściśle wiązane z kolektywem, religia dynamiczna jest zakorzeniona w indywidualnych doświadczeniach mistycznych. Należy przy tym jednak pamiętać, że Bergson bazuje na nietypowym rozumieniu mistycyzmu. Nie ma na myśli wycofania się ze świata, lecz aktywny mistycyzm, czyli taki, który dostrzega na przykład w prorokach izraelskich i w ich walce o sprawiedliwość. Według Bergsona, „mistycyzm pełny jest działaniem” i wywodzi się od „proroków izraelskich” i ich „czynnego mistycyzmu” [tamże: 237, 251-252].

Punkt kulminacyjny religii dynamicznej – według Bergsona – uwidacznia się w Chrystusie, w Ewangelii, szczególnie w Kazaniu na Górze (Mt 5,21-48) [tamże: 60, 250-251]. Obecne w tym fragmencie Ewangelii według św. Mateusza nawoływanie do miłowania swoich wrogów dotyczy również przejścia od społeczności zamkniętej do społeczności otwartej (Mt 5,43-45). Bergson podkreśla, że „przejście od zamkniętości do otwartości zawdzięczamy chrześcijaństwu” [tamże: 78]. Chrześcijaństwo przełamuje ciasne granice tradycyjnych wzorców przyjaźni i wrogości i nadaje kierunek ku otwartemu społeczeństwu. Bergson jednak wciąż zdaje się nadmierne przywiązany do tezy o wyższości chrześcijaństwa. Ze współczesnego punktu widzenia nawiązywanie przez Bergsona do mistycyzmu można również odnieść do rozwoju, który nastąpił w różnych religiach przedosiowych na świecie, a który zapoczątkował stopniowe odchodzenie od zamkniętych społeczności [Bellah 2011].



Podobnie jak Bergson, Girard również mówi o dwóch różnych typach religii. To rozróżnienie Bergsona między religią statyczną i dynamiczną odpowiada różnicy między religią pochodzącą od ludzi a religią pochodzącą od Boga opisanymi przez Girarda w jednym z jego wczesnych dzieł, którą to różnicę systematycznie rozwinął w swojej ostatniej książce w celu rozróżniania między sakralnością a świętością [2009: 111-112; 2014; Palaver 2020a]. Podobnie jak Bergson, Girard również podkreśla, że Objawienie judeochrześcijańskie obnażyło brutalną strukturę wcześniejszych religii przedosiowych, doprowadzając tym samym do otwarcia zamkniętych społeczności i pozytywnie przyczyniając się do globalizacji naszego świata.

Niezależnie od tego, jak ważne są wprowadzone przez Bergsona i Girarda rozróżnienia między dwoma typami religii, ze współczesnego punktu widzenia należy nieco zrelatywizować przekonanie tych myślicieli o wyższości chrześcijaństwa. Te dwa wprowadzone typy religii odpowiadają bowiem rozróżnieniu na religie przedosiowe i poosiowe. Podobne zmiany w tym zakresie były widoczne w Indiach, Chinach oraz w przypadku proroków izraelskich, co z kolei miało również wpływ na rozwój chrześcijaństwa i islamu. W przypadku religii poosiowych nie można już mówić o jakiegokolwiek stałej identyfikacji religii i kolektywu grupowego, gdyż postrzeganie transcendencji umożliwia odpowiednie rozróżnienie: „Samosakralizacja kolektywu tworzy swego rodzaju przepaść. Etniczny kolektyw i sfera religijna już wcale nie muszą być ze sobą identyczne. Braterstwo krwi, swoista koalicja przeciw wrogom, ustępuje miejsca idei ludzkości uniwersalnie wykraczającej poza wszelkie uwarunkowania etniczne” [Joas 2013: 274]. Zastosowanie takiego rozróżnienia otwiera możliwość wprowadzenia dystansu między religią a państwem.

Podobne przykłady można znaleźć też we współczesnym judaizmie. Na przykład Buber – jako syjonista – miał pozytywny stosunek do idei narodowej, jednak był świadomy potencjalnych, egoistycznych wynaturzeń tejże idei. Jednoznacznie interpretował on ideę narodu wybranego jako etyczny obowiązek, a nie jako wyraz wyższości swoich narodu i religii. [2010: 515]. Zdaniem Bubera Bóg przejmuje się jednak losem nie tylko narodu izraelskiego, lecz także wszystkich narodów, gdyż – według słów proroka Amosa – Bóg „wywiódł dzieci Izraela z Egiptu, ale też Filistynów z Kaftoru oraz Aramejczyków z Kiru” (Am 9,7) [Buber 2010: 515; por. 55]. Zignorowanie tej części proroczego przekazu grozi zjawiskiem „idolizacji ludu”. Nacjonalizm oparty na wynaturzeniu wiary będzie funkcjonował w oderwaniu od spraw wykraczających poza funkcjonowanie narodu [tamże:



514-515]. Nacjonalizm w rozumieniu Bubera cechuje się wyraźnym zdystansowaniem od pojęcia państwa. Widać to bardzo wyraźnie w jego debacie z Cohenem, w której twierdzi, że etyka musi pochodzić od religii, a nie być narzucana przez państwo. Powołuje się przy tym na proroków izraelskich, aby podkreślić: „Ludzie ci nie podporządkowywali się bezgranicznie woli państwa, uważali wolę Boga za wartość nadrzędną, a kiedy państwo odsunęło się od Boga, opowiedzieli się po stronie Boga i sprzeciwili się woli państwa” [cyt. za: Cohen 2002: 266]. Ta relatywizacja pojęcia państwa była powodem, dla którego wypowiadał się on przeciwko utworzeniu państwa żydowskiego.

Przykładem przedstawiciela podobnego światopoglądu spoza kręgu religii abrahamicznych jest Gandhi. Podobnie jak Rousseau, on również krytykował postawy przedkładające dobro ludzi obcych nad dobro lokalnych społeczności. *Swadeshi*, czyli jego koncepcja narodowej niezależności, rozpoczyna się od zaprzysiężenia się przeciwko „sąsiadom” [Gandhi 2011: 407]. Troska o najbliższe sąsiedztwo społeczne nie jest jednak równoznaczna z popieraniem zamkniętych społeczności. Miłość do najbliższego bliźniego stanowi jedynie początek i powinna rozprzestrzenić się na cały świat: „W *Swadeshi* nie ma miejsca na rozróżnianie między swoimi a obcymi. Służba własnym sąsiadom jest równoznaczna ze służbą całemu światu.” Ideał Gandhiego porównywany jest do „kręgu obejmującego cały ocean”, który zaczyna się od jednostki i rozszerza się na całą wioskę, prowincję, kraj i ostatecznie na cały świat. Z tego powodu Gandhi należy do przedstawicieli otwartego patriotyzmu, który unika jakiegokolwiek zamykania się: „Mój patriotyzm nie opiera się na wykluczaniu. Jest uniwersalny, a ja odrzucam patriotyzm opierający się na wykorzystywaniu innych narodów. Mój patriotyzm byłby czymś niegodnym, gdyby nie był zawsze i bez wyjątku zgodny z najogólniejszym dobrem całej ludzkości” [Gandhi 2019]. Ta fundamentalna otwartość ma swoje korzenie w jego rozumieniu religii: „Moja religia nie zna żadnych granic. Jeżeli wiara jest we mnie żywa, wykroczy nawet poza moją miłość do ojczyzny” [Gandhi 1924: 139]. Punkt widzenia Gandhiego, czyli dystans zarówno w stosunku do wąskiego lokalizmu, jak i do homogenizującego globalizmu, bardzo dobrze obrazuje metafora: „Nie pragnę odgrodzić swojego domu murem ani barykadować okien. Kultury wszystkich krajów powinny swobodnie owiewać mój dom. Żadna z nich nie powinna jednak próbować wykorzenić mnie z mojej ziemi ojczystej” [tamże: 293].

Przedstawiciele religii dynamicznej możemy znaleźć również w islamie. Przykładów należy szukać pośród islamskich myślicieli i aktywistów związanych z Gandhim. Chociaż Muhammad Iqbal jako duchowy przywódca odrębnego muzułmańskiego

kraju nie zgadzał się z wyobrażeniem Gandhiego na temat zjednoczonego narodu hinduskiego, również był przedstawicielem pewnej koncepcji religii dynamicznej. Nie tylko nawiązywał bezpośrednio do poglądów Bergsona, ale reprezentował też wizję islamu, która popierała ideę unii narodów dążącej do osiągnięcia jedności wśród ludzkości [Diagne 2020: 57-76]. Jeszcze bliżej wyobrażenia nacjonalizmu według Gandhiego stały poglądy Abula Kalama Azada oraz Abdula Ghaffara Kahna [Parel 2016: 145].

Wszystkie wymienione przykłady pokazują, jak dynamiczna religia może w wielu różnych tradycjach doprowadzić do przełamania zamkniętego nacjonalizmu, a tym samym do otwarcia się na pluralizm i uniwersalizm. Nie ma oczywiście żadnego liniowego wzorca przebiegu procesu przechodzenia od zamkniętych społeczności / religii statycznej do otwartych społeczności / religii dynamicznej. Gandhi został w końcu zamordowany przez hinduskiego nacjonalistę. Syjonizm według Bubera różni się od swojej współcześnie istniejącej formy. Chrześcijańscy nacjonaści na całym świecie odeszli od przekazu niesionego przez Jezusa, a w wielu krajach islamskich można zaobserwować rośnięcie w siłę wyjątkowo wąskich wariantów nacjonalizmu. Już Bergson wprowadził pojęcie „religii mieszanej”, gdyż podczas I wojny światowej różne narody chrześcijańskie traktowały tego samego Boga jako swojego własnego „narodowego Boga ojczyzny”, mimo iż wszyscy pacyfiści jednogłośnie mówili o Bogu „wspólnym dla wszystkich ludzi” i świadomość istnienia wspólnego Boga powinna sama w sobie być wystarczającym powodem do natychmiastowego zakończenia wojny [Bergson 2019, 225]. Jak zauważył Hans Joas, religie poosiowe również nie zdołały uwolnić się od obecności pokusy wiązania się z siłami politycznymi, jakże typowej dla religii przedosiowych. Rewolucja wieku osi umożliwiła wprawdzie odcięcie się od władzy świeckiej, wciąż jednak nie ma żadnej gwarancji, że dana religia nie cofnie się do stanu przedosiowego. „«Nacjonalizacja» wiary wciąż pozostaje żywą pokusą dla religii poosiowych.” [Joas 2013: 276].

### **3. Otwarty patriotyzm Bergsona a bratnia współczesność katolicka**

Rozpad tradycyjnych form społeczeństw w wyniku globalizacji wymaga pośrednio populistycznych nacjonalizmów [Mishra 2017]. Nasuwa się zatem pytanie, czy to, że jesteśmy istotami społecznymi, da się pogodzić z przekazem Chrystusa. Tam, gdzie nurty chrześcijańskie przywiązały się mocniej do religii statycznej, zawsze istnieje zagrożenie nasilenia się ekstremalnego nacjonalizmu, które bardzo szybko może zakończyć się przemocą lub wojnami w takiej czy innej postaci. Alternatywą nie będzie tutaj jednak jakiś wykorzystany globalizm. Aby odpowiedzieć na to

pytanie, należałoby przyjrzeć się aktualnym dyskusjom dotyczącym kosmopolityzmu. Autorzy, którzy wyraźnie dostrzegają skłonności ludzi do przynależności społecznej, podkreślają jednocześnie wagę postawy kosmopolitycznej. Appiah nie tylko zwraca uwagę na fakt, że ludzie to istoty społeczne, ale również na to, że ich tendencja do tworzenia zamykających się na świat zewnętrzny i wywyższających się grup musi być korygowana kosmopolitycznie: „Kosmopolityczny impuls napędzający nasze wspólne człowieczeństwo nie jest już żadnym luksusem. Stał się koniecznością” [2019: 296]. Orientacja kosmopolityczna nie może jednak po prostu stać w sprzeczności z poszczególnymi tożsamościami, musi natomiast przyczyniać się do budowania otwartego społeczeństwa we współpracy z nimi. Dlatego autorki takie jak Nussbaum czy Benhabib popierają kosmopolityzm w postaci, która zapewniłaby skuteczność jego uniwersalistycznej perspektywy w interakcjach z określonymi jednostkami politycznymi. Kosmopolityzm, kiedy jest obdarty ze złudzeń, otwiera również możliwość ponownego zdefiniowania nawet tak kontrowersyjnego pojęcia jak patriotyzm. Nussbaum zdystansowała się wobec swojego wcześniejszego rozumienia kosmopolityzmu poprzez powiązanie go z patriotyzmem cechującym się globalną wrażliwością. Wręcz nawiązywała do otwartego patriotyzmu Bergsona, który jest godny uwagi w kontekście moich rozważań – zwłaszcza w odniesieniu do jego związku z religią.

Książka Bergsona pt. *Dwa źródła moralności i religii* stanowi zamaskowaną krytykę tezy Durkheima, że konflikt między patriotyzmem i kosmopolityzmem można w łatwy sposób rozładować poprzez połączenie cech obydwu ideologii i dążenie do patriotyzmu kosmopolitycznego [Durkheim 1999: 106-110; 2008: 124-128]. Bergson krytykuje Durkheima za odrzucenie biologicznych podstaw moralności i religii, zarzucając mu głównie to, że przynależność do konkretnej grupy nie umożliwia stopniowego rozszerzania do poziomu całej ludzkości [Bergson 2019: 30-31, 104]. Potrzeba „wyjątkowych ludzi”, aktywnych mistyków, którzy otworzą innym drzwi do całej ludzkości poprzez zachęcanie jej do naśladowania otwartego punktu widzenia prezentowanego przez owych mistyków [Bergson 2019: 32]. Ludźmi kieruje uwarunkowana biologicznie silna tendencja do przynależenia do zamkniętych społeczności, jednak „wyjątkowi ludzie” przecież nie egzystują poza rzeczywistością stworzenia i mogą powołać tę kreatywną dynamikę do życia, a ona przełamie zastałe formacje grupowe, popychając je w kierunku ludzkości” [Bergson 2019: 58].

Pomimo ogromnego nacisku kładzionego przez Bergsona na istnienie biologicznych tendencji do przynależenia do zamkniętych społeczności, nie można go

określić jako fatalistycznego apologety ograniczoności nacjonalizmu. Wyraźnie wskazuje on na związek między nacjonalizmem a inherentną skłonnością do wojny. Dlatego szczególnie ostro krytykował imperializm, nazywając go „falszerstwem mistycyzmu prawdziwego”, czymś, co jedynie go „udaje” poprzez przypisywanie „Bogu współczesnych mistyków nacjonalizmu bogów starożytnych” [Bergson 2019: 326-327]. Oczywiście jest to, że według Bergsona imperializm nie da się pogodzić z „mistycyzmem prawdziwym”, pochodzącym od Boga, „który kocha wszystkich ludzi jednakową miłością i który wymaga od nich, by kochali się wzajemnie” [tamże: 327]. Jak przyznaje Bergson, w przeciwieństwie do imperializmu, który naśladuje prawdziwy mistycyzm w zniekształcony sposób, patriotyzm ma pewne „zabarwienie mistyczne”, co odróżnia go od podlegającego do wojny nacjonalizmu. Jako pozytywna imitacja mistycyzmu umożliwia ludziom „odrzuć tak głęboko zakorzonego uczucia jak egoizm plemienny” [tamże: 290-291]. Miłość do ojczyzny różni się wprawdzie od „miłości do ludzkości”, lecz możliwe jest jej dalsze, znaczące rozszerzenie poprzez zabarwienie mistyczne [tamże: 31, 37, 245].

Rozważania Bergsona na temat otwartego patriotyzmu są jednak dosyć ogólne. Temat dobrze pojmanego patriotyzmu jeszcze dokładniej przybliży francuska filozof i mistyczka Simone Weil. Zajmowała się ona problemem wykorzenia, bez popadania w tendencje nacjonalistyczne. W swojej książce *Wykorzenie* opowiada się po stronie patriotyzmu podporządkowanemu sprawiedliwości [Weil 2011: 142; por. tamże: 125]. W przypadku braku tego podporządkowania, patriotyzm może przeobrazić się w nacjonalizm lub imperializm. Poprzez podporządkowanie patriotyzmu zasadom sprawiedliwości ewoluuje on w patriotyzm konstytucyjny i zapewnia taką samą ochronę w ramach rządów prawa wszystkim swoim obywatelom, niezależnie od ich pochodzenia etnicznego lub religijnego; zapewnia również brak dyskryminacji wobec muzułmanów, ludzi innych wyznań oraz ateistów w duchu chrześcijańskiego miłosierdzia [Habermas 1998: 632-660; Müller 2010]. Patriotyzm otwarty, w przeciwieństwie do swojej nacjonalistycznej odmiany, nie wyklucza wewnątrzspołecznego pluralizmu ani też nie narzuca jedności etnicznej lub religijnej. W kontekście stosunków międzynarodowych nadrzędność sprawiedliwości skutkuje otwartością poszczególnych państw na wzajemne działania w ramach światowej społeczności. Patriotyzm otwarty odróżnia od nacjonalizmu również fakt przestrzegania i aktywnego wspierania uniwersalnych praw człowieka. Przykładowo międzynarodowa ochrona uchodźców musi być realizowana na płaszczyźnie kosmopolitycznej celem ominięcia ograniczeń wynikających z nacjonalizmu [Hollenbach 2016].

Wprowadzenie rozróżnienia Bergsona między religią statyczną i dynamiczną miało duży wpływ na zapoczątkowanie przez Maritaina i innych myślicieli tzw. bratnich nowoczesnych poglądów w katolicyzmie, które przez długi czas pozostawały w mniejszości względem poglądów paternalistycznych, a które obecnie mają dosyć znaczący wpływ na nauki Kościoła, również w kontekście rozróżniania między nacjonalizmem a patriotyzmem [Chappel 2018]. Z punktu widzenia bratniego wariantu katolicyzmu dobro społeczeństwa obywatelskiego jest ważniejsze od dobra kraju. Papież Paweł VI krytykował nacjonalizm i manię rasową, opierając się na poglądach Maritaina. O ile uczucia narodowe są ważne – twierdził – muszą zostać przezwyciężone przez miłość do „wszystkich członków wielkiej ludzkiej rodziny” [1992: nr 62].

Robert Schuman, jeden z ojców założycieli UE, również zgadzał się z „bratnimi” poglądami. W swojej książce *Dla Europy* podkreśla różnicę między nacjonalizmem i patriotyzmem. Zaleca, aby uczyć młodzież, na czym polega prawdziwy patriotyzm, i przedstawia wyraźne różnice między patriotyzmem a nacjonalizmem: Konieczne jest też przygotowanie umysłów na europejskie rozwiązania nie tylko poprzez zwalczanie hegemonii i wiary w wyższość, ale też poprzez walkę z ciasnotą poglądową nacjonalizmu politycznego, autarkicznego protekcjonizmu oraz izolacjonizmu kulturowego. „Wszystkie te tendencje, które wpoila nam przeszłość musimy zastąpić myśleniem o solidarności” [Schuman 1963: 55-56].

Wyraźne rozróżnienie między nacjonalizmem i patriotyzmem miało również ogromne znaczenie dla Jana Pawła II. Podkreślał on koncepcję narodu zwłaszcza na tle do historii Polski. Podobnie jak rodzina, również naród i ojczyzna stanowiły dla niego „niezastąpioną rzeczywistość” [Johannes Paul II 2005: 91]. Jednocześnie stawiał patriotyzm ponad nacjonalizmem, gdyż miał świadomość zagrożenia, jakie niesie ten drugi: „Charakterystyczne dla nacjonalizmu jest bowiem to, że uznaje tylko dobro własnego narodu i tylko do niego dąży, nie licząc się z prawami innych. Patriotyzm natomiast, jako miłość ojczyzny, przyznaje wszystkim innym narodom takie samo prawo jak własnemu, a zatem jest drogą do uporządkowanej miłości społecznej” [tamże: 91-92].

Stanowisko to różni się znacząco od obecnych tendencji nacjonalistycznych widocznych w Polsce [Stanley 2016]. Za istotny należy uznać fakt, że Jan Paweł II kończy rozdział swojej książki *Pamięć i tożsamość* poświęcony pojęciu narodu nawiązaniem do Kościoła katolickiego, którego uniwersalizm ponownie relatywizuje wszelkie powiązania z narodem lub państwem: „Kościół, Lud Boży zbudowany

na Nowym Przymierzu, jest nowym Izraelem i jawi się jako ten, który posiada charakter uniwersalny: „każdy naród ma takie samo prawo do obecności w nim” [tamże: 97; por. Mazurkiewicz 2020].

Choć papież Franciszek nie użył pojęcia patriotyzmu w dokumencie apostolskim *Evangelii gaudium* z 2013 r., to jego przemyślenia są zgodne z formą otwartego patriotyzmu przedstawioną w niniejszym artykule. Franciszek odrzuca wszelkie wąskie poglądy nacjonalistyczne, nawołując, aby zawsze wyglądać poza lokalny i ograniczony horyzont: „Trzeba zawsze poszerzać spojrzenie, by rozpoznać większe dobro, przynoszące korzyści wszystkim” [Franciskus 2013: nr 235]. Z drugiej strony, nie popiera „abstrakcyjnego, globalizującego uniwersalizmu”, ani też „wykorzeniania”. Proponuje za to przyjęcie modelu „wielościanu odzwierciedlającego stykanie się ze sobą poszczególnych swoich elementów bez utraty ich wyjątkowości” [tamże: nr 234-236]. Konkretnie ma on tutaj na myśli „jedność ludów, które w porządku uniwersalnym zachowują swoje indywidualne rysy, czyli ogół osób w społeczeństwie szukającym dobra wspólnego, prawdziwie obejmującego wszystkich” [tamże: nr 236]. W ostatniej encyklice społecznej *Fratelli tutti* Franciszek ponownie podkreśla znaczenie wspomnianego już wielościanu. Ma to na celu zapobiegnięcie fałszywej otwartości na sprawy uniwersalne wynikającej z pustej powierzchowności tych, którzy nie potrafią w pełni zrozumieć własnej ojczyzny [Franciskus 2020: nr 145]. Figura ta stanowi symbol poparcia dla otwartego patriotyzmu na płaszczyźnie międzynarodowej. Ma również znaczenie na płaszczyźnie lokalnej, gdyż podkreśla pluralizm nowoczesnych społeczeństw. Wielościan przedstawia społeczeństwo, w którym różnice istnieją obok siebie, wzajemnie się uzupełniając, wzbogacając i wyjaśniając, nawet jeśli przy akompaniamencie dyskusji i podejrzeń [tamże: nr 215].

To właśnie stanowienie niezbędnego spoiwa między lokalną przynależnością a globalną solidarnością jest zadaniem społeczności religijnych w kontekście funkcjonowania człowieka jako istoty społecznej. Napędzany dynamizmem duchowości, mistycyzm świętości dąży do wzmacniania lokalnych społeczności, zdolnych do otwarcia się na dialog oraz na uniwersalne braterstwo. Takie formy społeczności, w miejscach gdzie są one pielęgnowane i żywe, mogą wzmocnić otwarty patriotyzm tak, aby był podporządkowany sprawiedliwości i znacząco odróżniał się od nacjonalizmu.



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## *Pluralizacja religijna a proces integracji europejskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia<sup>1</sup>*

**Religious pluralization and the process of European integration.****Selected issues**

**Abstract:** The article aims to identify and examine selected relationships between religious diversity and the process of European integration. Integrating Europe, initially divided generally into Catholics and Protestants, was pluralized in religious terms, mainly due to the influx of Orthodox and Muslim populations, as a result of new countries joining the original integrating group and migration processes. Each of these religions has, to some extent, developed its vision of Europe, identity and integration, which influence social attitudes and the views of politicians. One can notice, inter alia, the differentiation of attitudes towards integration between Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox and Muslims, as well as within these denominations, depending on the indications of faith and the degree of religiousness of their followers. In addition to indirect influence, religion exerts its impact through the action of „religious” entities, including churches, Christian Democratic political parties, organizations and politicians. The article, concerning selected research, analyzes the influence of religious pluralism on the genesis and expansion of integration, its deepening and ideological dimension, as well as on the institutionalization of religious issues in the integration process.

**Keywords:** religious pluralization, religious pluralism, European integration

**Abstrakt:** Celem artykułu jest identyfikacja i zbadanie wybranych zależności między zróżnicowaniem religijnym a procesem integracji europejskiej. Integrująca się Europa, podzielona początkowo generalnie na katolików i protestantów, uległa pluralizacji pod względem religijnym, przede wszystkim ze względu na napływ ludności prawosławnej i muzułmańskiej, wskutek dołączania nowych państw do pierwotnej integrującej się grupy oraz procesów migracyjnych. Każda z tych religii ma w jakimś zakresie wypracowaną własną wizję Europy, tożsamości

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oraz integracji, które oddziałują na postawy społeczne i poglądy polityków. Można zauważyć między innymi różnicowanie postaw odnośnie do integracji między katolikami, protestantami, prawosławnymi i muzułmanami, jak również wewnątrz tych wyznań, zależnie od wskazań wiary oraz stopnia zróżnicowania religijności ich wyznawców. Oprócz pośredniego oddziaływania, religia wywiera wpływ poprzez działanie podmiotów „religijnych”, w tym Kościołów, chadeckich partii politycznych, organizacji czy polityków. W artykule, przy odwołaniu do wybranych badań, analizowany jest wpływ pluralizmu religijnego na genezę i rozszerzanie się integracji, jej pogłębianie oraz ideowy wymiar, a także na instytucjonalizację kwestii religijnych w procesie integracji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** pluralizacja religijna, pluralizm religijny, integracja europejska

### Wstęp

Badając genezę i proces rozwoju integracji europejskiej, której efektem było utworzenie Unii Europejskiej, można zauważyć, że na jego zapoczątkowanie i przebieg wpływały różne czynniki, w tym szeroko rozumiany czynnik religijny. Celem artykułu jest podjęcie kwestii wpływu zróżnicowania religijnego na proces integracji europejskiej. Problem ten, pomijany we wcześniejszych opracowaniach, jest w ostatnich dekadach przedmiotem licznych badań, których wyniki nie są jednoznaczne i zgodne. Generalnie dostrzega się związek między składem religijnym poszczególnych społeczeństw a ich stosunkiem do integracji. Integrująca się Europa, podzielona początkowo generalnie na katolików i protestantów, uległa pluralizacji pod względem religijnym, przede wszystkim ze względu na napływ ludności prawosławnej i muzułmańskiej, co było skutkiem dołączania nowych państw do pierwotnej integrującej się grupy oraz procesów migracyjnych. Każda z tych religii ma swój system wartości, zasad i obrządków, jak również pożądaną wizję świata. W ich obrębie można też zauważyć zróżnicowanie postaw odnośnie do integracji między katolikami, protestantami, prawosławnymi i muzułmanami, jak również wewnątrz tych wyznań, zależnie od nakazów wiary oraz stopnia zróżnicowania religijności ich wyznawców, co w pewnym zakresie oddziałuje na kształt, zakres oraz granice integracji europejskiej. Oprócz pośredniego oddziaływania, wpływ religii dokonuje się poprzez działanie podmiotów „religijnych”, w tym kościołów, partii politycznych czy polityków. W artykule stawiana jest teza, że skład religijny integrujących się państw, jak również jego zmiana w kierunku zwiększającego się pluralizmu, wywierały wpływ na genezę i rozszerzanie się integracji, jej pogłębianie oraz ideowy wymiar a także na instytucjonalizację religii w procesie integracji. Mając świadomość złożoności tematu, celem analizy czynię wyżej wskazane wymiary oddziaływania religii na proces integracji europejskiej, ujmowanej jako proces

polityczno-prawny, zakończony powstaniem Unii Europejskiej. Artykuł nie sytuuje się w obrębie badań z socjologii czy filozofii religii, które podejmują zagadnienie pluralizmu religijnego z innej perspektywy, w tym zwłaszcza badań pluralizmu religijnego w określonych państwach [Drozdowicz 2003; Morrison 2014; Hervieu-Leger 2006].

### **1. Pluralizacja religii a geneza i rozszerzanie integracji europejskiej**

Pomimo licznych kontrowersji dotyczących wpływu religii na proces integracji europejskiej istnieje zgoda w sprawie wpływu czynnika religijnego na zainicjowanie tego procesu i początkowy jego przebieg<sup>2</sup>. Największe zasługi przypisuje się politykom-katolikom, skupionym w ugrupowaniach chadeckich [Gierycz, Skolimowska 2014; Nelsen, Guth i Hoghsmith 2010: 2; Barburska 2018: 13-50]. Partie te po II wojnie światowej bardzo szybko się odbudowały, zorganizowały na poziomie międzynarodowym i zdobyły władzę w większości państw Europy Zachodniej. To katolicy byli założycielami Wspólnot – Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer oraz Alcide de Gasperi. Powojenne relacje między katolikami nie tylko wspierały sens wspólnoty, ale również służyły wymianie idei. Jak pisze Nelsen: „Oddani katolicy w znaczącym zakresie zgadzali się w sprawie treści ich wiary oraz jej politycznych implikacji. Ta zgoda miała swoje źródło we wspólnej intelektualnej i duchowej tradycji, ale również rozwijała się w rezultacie interakcji między nimi, swoistego procesu socjalizacji. Personalistyczna ideologia kształtowała światopogląd, który zdominował katolików na świecie w sposób nieznany wcześniej. Głównym założeniem tego światopoglądu było głębokie zobowiązanie do pojednania między wrogami oraz znoszenia barier, szczególnie między byłymi kombatantami. Tym samym, powojenni katolicy nie tylko posiadali jednoczącą kulturę wyznaniową, ale również podzielali światopogląd, który prowadził ich do wywierania presji do zjednoczenia Europy” [Nelsen, Guth 2015: 3]. To właśnie proces pojednania między wojennymi wrogami, jak również idea jedności chrześcijańskiego uniwersalizmu sprzyjały rodzeniu się i realizacji pomysłów integracji Europy [tamże: 181-182]. Mogły one być wprowadzone w życie, ponieważ po wojnie w państwach zachodnich przewagę mieli katolicy, zrzeszeni w partiach chadeckich. Chadecja doszła do władzy w Austrii, Belgii, Francji, Włoszech, Luksemburgu, Holandii w latach 1945-1947 oraz w Republice Federalnej Niemiec (RFN) w 1949 r. [Miecznikowska 2014: 421-431; Ziętara 2016].

<sup>2</sup> Nie uwzględnia czynnika religijnego Łastawski [2011].

Prointegracyjne postawy prezentowali nie tylko politycy-katolicy ale również kościelna hierarchia [Gierycz, Skolimowska 2014: 634-640; Philpott i Shah 2006: 51-54]. Co więcej, jak zauważa Hehir, „Watykan, a szerzej Kościół katolicki, stał się ściśle powiązany z partiami chrześcijańskiej demokracji w Europie Zachodniej. UE jest zbudowana na WE, a WE była pod silnym wpływem chrześcijańskiej demokracji, zakorzenionej w chrześcijańskiej myśli społecznej i w ścisłym powiązaniu z rolą Stolicy Apostolskiej w powojennej Europie” [2006: 103].

Dla chadecji Europa była nie tylko regionem geograficznym, ale wspólnotą mającą do odegrania rolę historyczną. Widziano ją jako obrońcę jedności świata chrześcijańskiego, kształtującą własną tożsamość, jednostkę ponadnarodową, będącą grupą państw gotowych poświęcić suwerenność dla pokoju, państw z „duchem europejskim”. „Zjednoczona Europa nie brzmiała absurdalnie dla człowieka, który rozważał tę ideę od wczesnych dni w katolickich organizacjach społecznych oraz kręgach politycznych. Ponadto, politycy ci oraz Kościół nie mieli trudności w przekonaniu katolików (i niektórych wspólnot protestanckich w Niemczech i Holandii) do poparcia integracji” [Nelsen i Guth 2015: 2-3]. To sprzyjało utworzeniu w 1951 r. Europejskiej Wspólnoty Węgla i Stali (EWWiS), pierwszej w historii organizacji integracyjnej i ponadnarodowej, z udziałem Belgii, Francji, Holandii, Włoch, Luksemburga i RFN.

Wspólnota ta, jak również dwie kolejne powołane w 1957 r. (Europejska Wspólnota Gospodarcza – EWG, Europejska Wspólnota Energii Atomowej – Euratom), zostały utworzone przez państwa z przewagą katolików, bez udziału Wielkiej Brytanii oraz państw nordyckich. W Europie zarysował się zatem w latach 50. podział, który odzwierciedlał kulturalny i ideologiczny rozłam zakorzeniony w Reformacji. Duch wspólnotowy chadecji nie był podzielany w Wielkiej Brytanii oraz w Skandynawii, jak również wśród wielu protestanckich liderów w RFN i Holandii, będących państwami religijnie zróżnicowanymi. Cechą odróżniającą protestanckie elity polityczne od ich europejskich odpowiedników było odrzucenie politycznej integracji i idei federalnych Stanów Zjednoczonych Europy.

Ponadto w państwach tych po wojnie dominującą pozycję zdobyły partie socjaldemokratyczne, nieprzychylnie nastawione do projektu chadecckiego i jego ponadnarodowych rozwiązań. Dobrą ilustracją tego stanowiska była wypowiedź sekretarza Duńskiej Partii Socjaldemokratycznej z końca lat 50., który twierdził, że „jako członek wspólnego rynku, staniemy się siódmym państwem w unii zdominowanej przez Kościół Katolicki oraz ruchy z prawicowego skrzydła” [tamże], a Gunnar

Myrdal opisywał Wspólnotę Europejską jako organizację społeczną, niższą pod względem rozwoju w wielu dziedzinach od bezpiecznych państw protestanckich [tamże]. Antykatolickie nastawienie było widoczne również wśród ewangelików i protestantów w Wielkiej Brytanii. Główny nurt brytyjskiego protestantyzmu był podejrzliwy wobec katolicyzmu i rozszerzenia Wspólnoty, uznawanej powszechnie za ściśle powiązaną z Watykanem. Ponadto wyrażano obawy, że udział w niej miałby prowadzić do osłabienia protestantyzmu oraz podważenia wolności oraz niezależności ludności protestanckiej. Ilustracją tych poglądów w skrajnej formie była opinia przywódcy ekstremalnego odłamu protestantów z Ulsteru, Iana Paisleya, który powiedział: „Kiedy my dołączymy do Wspólnego Rynku, staniemy się protestancką mniejszością w przytłaczającej rzymskokatolickiej federacji narodów” [tamże].

Alternatywnym rozwiązaniem wobec Wspólnoty było utworzenie Europejskiego Stowarzyszenia Wolnego Handlu (EFTA – European Free Trade Association) z inicjatywy Wielkiej Brytanii w 1960 r. W jego skład weszły również Austria, Irlandia, Norwegia, Portugalia, Szwajcaria, Szwecja. Organizacja ta miała charakter koordynacyjny, a nie ponadnarodowy, dominowały w niej państwa niekatolickie. Większość jej członków napotkała potem na problemy w trakcie przystępowania do Wspólnot.

Można zatem uznać, że dominacja chadecji i jej wpływ na zainicjowanie procesu integracji oraz wyznaczenie jego kierunku oddziaływały na decyzje państw w sprawie dołączenia do Wspólnot, wpływały na zakres podmiotowy, przestrzenny integracji – przynajmniej w latach 50 i 60. – jak również na kolejne negocjacje akcesyjne, które były bardzo długie i uciążliwe. Wielka Brytania złożyła pierwszy wniosek w 1961 r., a rozmowy trwały do 1963 r., druga tura rozpoczęła się w 1967 r., ostatnia miała miejsce w latach 1970-1972. W latach 60. wnioski o przyjęcie złożyły też Dania i Irlandia (1961) oraz Norwegia (1962). Negocjacje akcesyjne toczyły się pod wpływem negatywnego wobec przyjęcia Wielkiej Brytanii stanowiska Francji, które uległo zmianie po odejściu Charles’a de Gaulle’a. Zostały one wznowione w 1967 r., a traktaty o przystąpieniu czterech kandydatów podpisano dopiero w 1972 r.

Referenda w sprawie członkostwa odbyły się w Irlandii, Danii i Norwegii. Pokazały, że najbardziej przychylnie do Wspólnot są nastawieni Irlandczycy (83% za), w przeważającej większości będący katolikami; pozytywny wynik uzyskano też w Danii (63%). Spory odsetek przeciwników Wspólnot wynikał z obaw ludności o ograniczenie suwerenności w sprawach gospodarczych oraz negatywne skutki



integracji. W przeciwieństwie do wyniku w tych dwóch państwach, wynik referendum w Norwegii był negatywny. Przeciw opowiedziało się 53,5% głosujących, co uniemożliwiło jej przystąpienie do Wspólnot. Drugie referendum w Norwegii odbyło się w 1994 r. i tym razem wynik był negatywny, przeciw było 52,4% głosujących. Warto zauważyć, że choć referenda dzieliło ponad 20 lat, toczące się wokół nich debaty były podobne. Przeciwnicy integracji wywodzili się z różnych grup społecznych i partii, zwłaszcza z Partii Centrum. Wyrażali obawę o ochronę powszechnie uznanych wartości odnoszących się do narodu i państwa, w tym tożsamości narodowej i suwerenności, wysoko cenionych przez Norwegów. Jednym z głównych argumentów przeciw była obawa przed utratą tożsamości narodowej. Uważano, że udział w integracji spowoduje osłabienie więzi narodowych i doprowadzi do zmiany trybu życia obywateli, a poczucia przynależności do wspólnoty narodowej nie zastąpią inne powiązania emocjonalne, np. identyfikacja ze społecznością europejską czy bycie Europejczykiem [zob. Popławski i Starzyk-Sulejewska 2017].

W wyniku pierwszego rozszerzenia dwa z europejskich państw protestanckich (Dania i Wielka Brytania) stały się członkami Wspólnot, wnosząc własną wizję integracji oraz obietnice złożone elektoratowi: że państwa dołączające nie utracą nic z suwerenności, a federacja nie będzie celem Wspólnot.

Badając relacje między religią a procesami integracji należy zauważyć, że religijny skład społeczeństw europejskich nie był jednorodny. Protestanci żyli też w państwach katolickich, a w dwóch przewyższali liczebnie katolików; w RFN w 1950 r. stanowili 51% wierzących, podczas gdy katolicy – 46%, ale politycznie aż do połowy lat 60. ważniejszą rolę pełniła chadecja. W Holandii przewodziła nawet sześciu z dziesięciu rządów w latach 1946-1970.

Ogólnie rzecz ujmując, protestanci z Niemiec i Holandii popierali gospodarczą i polityczną współpracę w Europie, ale byli przeciwni, przynajmniej początkowo, skierowaniu jej ku federalizmowi. Opowiadali się za wolnym handlem jako alternatywą dla wspólnego rynku oraz inicjatywami brytyjskimi w tym zakresie. Popierali więzi transatlantyckie i przeciwstawiali się projektom de Gaulle'a stworzenia z Europy „trzeciej siły”, wystarczająco potężnej, by stać między mocarstwami, popierali anglo-nordycki jej odpowiednik, nie darząc (do pewnego stopnia) zaufaniem katolików, którzy należeli do bardziej zwartej wspólnoty. Dzieliły ich rozbieżności programowe, ale łączyła antykatolicka retoryka [Nelsen i Guth 2015: 244-245]. Protestanci z „szóstki” nie zgadzali się z katolikami w sprawie natury integracji.

W wyniku poszerzenia w 1973 r. Wspólnot do „dziewiątki” w połowie lat 70. zarysował się podział między państwami z większością protestancką a pozostałymi członkami. Państwa protestanckie były przeciwne budowaniu federalnej instytucji, działając jako spowalniacz integracji. Państwa mieszane wyznaniowo, jak katolicko-protestanckie Niemcy i Holandia, sprzeciwiały się czasami pomysłom pogłębiania integracji.

Kolejne fale akcesji w latach 80. i 90. spowodowały jeszcze większe zróżnicowanie religijne Wspólnot/Unii. Wśród sześciu państw, które dołączyły do integrującej się Europy, w trzech, tj. w Hiszpanii i Portugalii oraz Austrii, dominował katolicyzm, w dwóch państwach nordyckich (Finlandia, Szwecja) – protestantyzm, a w Grecji – prawosławie. Jednak w przypadku tego rozszerzenia, żaden czynnik religijny nie miał znaczącego związku z postawami wobec przystąpienia do Unii Europejskiej (UE), choć można zauważyć, że „protestanci byli obojętni wobec przedsięwzięcia, prawosławni byli bardziej entuzjastyczni, a katolicy nie różnili się od innych niereligijnych i mniejszościowych grup religijnych” [Nelson, Guth i Highsmith 2010: 14]. W przypadku kolejnych akcesji w 2004 r., kiedy do UE przystąpiło dziesięć państw, sama tożsamość katolicka miała na to dosyć mały wpływ, natomiast wskaźnik katolickiej religijności był w negatywnej korelacji ze wsparciem względem UE. Protestancka tożsamość i religijność w tym przypadku nie miały znaczenia, natomiast w odniesieniu do prawosławnych ta korelacja była nieznacznie negatywna [tamże].

Podczas kolejnych rozszerzeń UE w 2007 r. w skład weszły: prawosławna Rumunia; Bułgaria z przewagą prawosławnych i ludnością muzułmańską; prawosławny Cypr – z muzułmańską mniejszością turecką; a w 2013 r. – katolicka Chorwacja. Wynikiem tego było zwiększenie się grupy państw z przewagą wyznawców Kościoła prawosławnego, co z kolei sprzyjało wzmocnieniu znaczenia Kościołów prawosławnych w UE oraz procesach integracji, ale też stworzyło nowe wyzwania dla relacji wzajemnych między UE a państwami z dominacją wyznawców prawosławia. Obecnie na terenie UE znajduje się ponad 40 milionów ludności prawosławnej, z czego ponad 3 miliony stanowią mniejszości religijne, m.in. z Niemiec, Polski, Chorwacji, Austrii i Litwy.

Podsumowując proces rozszerzania się przestrzennego integracji europejskiej – widać, że przed wystąpieniem Wielkiej Brytanii z UE, wśród 28 państw członkowskich UE 11 to państwa z przewagą katolików (Austria, Hiszpania, Irlandia, Litwa, Luksemburg, Malta, Polska, Portugalia, Słowacja, Słowenia, Włochy); 4 – z przewagą

protestantów (Dania, Finlandia, Szwecja, Wielka Brytania); 4 – w których występuje pluralizm religijny, z liczną społecznością laicką i katolicką (Belgia, Francja, Niemcy, Węgry); 4 – pluralistyczne pod względem religijnym, z przewagą ateistów (Czechy, Estonia, Łotwa, Holandia); 5 – z religią prawosławną (Bułgaria, Chorwacja, Cypr, Grecja, Rumunia). Wśród tych państw znajdują się najbardziej zsekularyzowane społeczeństwa europejskie, w tym Holandia, gdzie ludzie niewierzący w 2018 r. stanowili 48% populacji, podczas gdy w Szwecji – 42%, we Francji – 40%, w Belgii – 38% [eKAI 2018]. Ponadto w wielu z tych państw, w rezultacie migracji, powstały i funkcjonują inne wspólnoty religijne, w tym muzułmanie, którzy w państwach tradycyjnie homogenicznych (np. w Belgii, Francji, Danii, Niemczech) stanowią drugą lub trzecią z największych religii, uzyskując możliwości oddziaływania na kształt i tempo integracji europejskiej. W 2017 r. muzułmanie stanowili około 5% ludności UE [Lipka 2017], ale biorąc pod uwagę migracje oraz procesy demograficzne, ich liczebność będzie prawdopodobnie rosła.

Pluralizacji religijnej w ramach UE towarzyszył proces sekularyzacji, który stawiał pod znakiem zapytania możliwości wpływu jakiejkolwiek religii na procesy integracji. Pojawił się również problem oceny wpływu sekularyzacji na poszczególne grupy religijne oraz zdolności oddziaływania czynnika religijnego na integrację w tych nowych warunkach. Pomimo tego zauważa się nadal wpływ składu religijnego społeczeństw na stosunek do integracji [Hervieu-Leger 2006]. Mówiąc inaczej, religijne przekonania oraz stopień religijności pozostały czynnikiem prognozowania postaw politycznych, w tym stosunku do integracji w ramach UE.

## **2. Wpływ zróżnicowania religijnego społeczeństw na ich postawę wobec głębokości i zakresu integracji**

Rozważając zagadnienie wpływu czynnika religijnego na proces integracji, warto przytoczyć kompleksowe badania Nelsena i Gutha [2015]. Biorąc pod uwagę występujące w obszarze integracji europejskiej przypadki zróżnicowanego zaangażowania w ten proces poszczególnych państw, sprawdzano, czy jest on religijnie uwarunkowany.

Tego typu odstępstwa od głównego nurtu integracji wystąpiły w kilkunastu formach współpracy lub integracji, w których nie uczestniczyły wszystkie państwa. Należą do nich:

- 1) klauzule opt-out w traktatach, „wzmocniona współpraca” w Traktacie o Unii Europejskiej [zob. Adler-Nissen 2014: 114-146];

- 2) strefa Schengen;
- 3) strefa Euro;
- 4) Euro Plus;
- 5) Pakt Fiskalny;
- 6) Wspólna Polityka Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony;
- 7) Przestrzeń Wolności, Bezpieczeństwa i Sprawiedliwości;
- 8) Karta Praw Podstawowych;
- 9) Konwencja z Prum (wzmocnienie Schengen);
- 10) symbole;
- 11) europejskie prawo rozwodowe.

Zestawienie uczestnictwa państw w tych formach współpracy z dominującą w nich religią pokazało, że istnieje silna zależność odwrotnie proporcjonalna między liczbą protestantów w danym państwie a liczbą form współpracy, w której uczestniczy dane państwo. Im więcej protestantów, tym mniejsza skłonność do udziału w nowych formacjach integracyjnych, ograniczających niezależność. Ponadto pewne znaczenie miały też inne czynniki, w tym potęga państwa, zróżnicowanie interesów narodowych, położenie geopolityczne, doświadczenia historyczne, ale też i czas przystąpienia do UE. Ten ostatni był czynnikiem ograniczającym udział w nowych formacjach integracyjnych. „Inaczej mówiąc, jeśli dwa państwa przystąpią do UE w tym samym czasie, to [państwo – uwaga autora] z większą proporcjonalnie liczbą protestantów, będzie dołączało się do mniejszej liczby formacji” [Nelsen i Guth 2015: 270].

Badania dotyczące postaw personelu UE potwierdziły również tezę o wpływie podziałów religijnych na stosunek urzędników Komisji Europejskiej do kierunku i kształtu integracji. Pokazały, że urzędnicy pochodzący z państw z państw katolickich w większym zakresie opowiadali się za ponadnarodowością oraz pragmatyzmem instytucjonalnym [Wille 2013: 127]. protestanckich preferują najczęściej międzynarodowy, państwo-centriczny kształt UE, natomiast urzędnicy

Próbując wyjaśnić powody odmiennego podejścia do integracji katolików i protestantów, liczni autorzy odwołują się do odmiennej natury tych dwóch wyznań i wskazują na przeciwieństwo „protestanckiego indywidualizmu” i „katolickiego uniwersalizmu”, skutkujące kształtowaniem się odmiennych stosunków do państwa, w tym skłonnością katolików do ograniczania państwa suwerennego, tworzenia kontynentalnych instytucji, a w rezultacie tego – wspierania europejskiej konwergencji [Minkenberga 2009: 1195; Madley 2007]. Z drugiej jednak strony

istnieją pewne kręgi katolickie i prawosławne, które są szczególnie eurosceptyczne, podobnie jak duża część mniejszości muzułmańskiej [tamże].

W wyjaśnianiu postaw wobec Europy duże znaczenie mają badania Philpotta i Shaha [2006] dotyczące roli idei i instytucji religijnych (katolicyzmu, protestantyzmu i islamu) w procesie politycznej konwergencji. Stosunek tych religii wobec integracji Europy ujmują oni przez pryzmat konceptualizacji państwa i jedności europejskiej. Biorąc pod uwagę ich ustalenia oraz własne badania, Minkenberg wyciąga następujące wnioski: „W państwach małych z większością społeczności protestanckiej, sceptyczne postawy wobec integracji europejskiej są uzasadniane obroną państwa narodowego. Tutaj, protestantyzm oraz narodowy państwowy kościół luterancki idą ręką w rękę” [2009]. „Inaczej mówiąc, kościoły te, traktowane jako kościoły państwowe, były nie tylko strażnikami wiary, ale też obrońcą narodowej tożsamości i suwerenności, a teologiczny element spleciony był z perspektywą polityczno-strategiczną” [Philpott i Shah 2006: 63].

Według Philipotta i Shaha „stanowiska protestantów wobec integracji europejskiej są zróżnicowane, od obrońców do przeciwników. Generalnie jednak europejscy protestanci są mniej entuzjastyczni wobec integracji niż współcześni im katolicy. Nawet liderzy i grupy, którzy popierali integrację, wyrażali ambiwalentny i ograniczony entuzjazm” [tamże], wśród nich Konferencja Kościołów Europejskich, będąca najważniejszą organizacją międzynarodową Kościołów protestanckich [tamże].

Do zbliżonych wniosków doszli też, Guth i Highsmith, zbadawszy wpływ religii na postawy wobec integracji europejskiej. Wziąwszy pod uwagę kilka czynników, w konkluzjach twierdzili, że „w XXI wieku religia nadal ma znaczenie w kształtowaniu postaw wobec UE” [2010: 17], ale jej wpływ jest zróżnicowany, zależnie od wyznania, grupy czy państwa. Bycie katolikiem, a zwłaszcza gorliwym katolikiem, nadal wskazuje na wyższe poparcie dla UE, bycie protestantem – na mniejsze, ale – jak wskazują wcześniejsze badania – najbardziej gorliwi protestanci zdają się odchodzić od generalnego sceptycyzmu ich kultury wyznaniowej i dołączają do katolików we wspieraniu UE. Bycie muzułmaninem czyni sceptycznym wobec UE, zwłaszcza w przypadku gorliwego muzułmanina [tamże].

Należy też brać pod uwagę, że postawy te zależne są również od specyficznych czynników w poszczególnych państwach. Mogą zmieniać się w czasie, zależnie od uwarunkowań ekonomicznych, politycznych, poczucia tożsamości czy wieku

danej osoby. Wyniki badań pokazują, że katolicka czy – szerzej – chrześcijańska kultura mają większy wpływ na starszych respondentów niż na młodszych, zwłaszcza w przypadku chrześcijan. Młodzi protestanci pozostają w niewielkim zakresie sceptyczni wobec UE. Natomiast w przypadku muzułmanów w Europie Zachodniej sytuacja jest odwrotna, to znaczy młodzi ludzie, zwłaszcza gorliwi wyznawcy, są bardziej motywowani przez religię, niż starsi [tamże: 17-19]. „Niektórzy z tych młodych dojrzałych muzułmanów widzą zintegrowaną Europę jako miejsce wolności i szansy dla mniejszości, ale większość gorliwych młodych ludzi widzi Europę jako kulturalne zagrożenie dla wspólnoty europejskich muzułmanów i generalnie islamu” [tamże: 19]. Dyskusja na temat przyjęcia Turcji do UE pokazała zagrożenia, jakie dla procesu integracji może przynieść zderzenie kultury europejskiej i muzułmańskiej [Morrison 2014: 58-60].

Na sceptycyzm grup fundamentalistycznych wobec europejskiej integracji zwraca też uwagę Minkenberg. Twierdzi, że rzucającym się w oczy motywem fundamentalistów, w mniejszym zakresie wśród Kościołów protestanckich, było motywowane religijnie odrzucenie katolickiej dominacji w Europie. Jako przykład podał prezbiterianina Iana Paisleya, który przyrównywał UE do wieży Babel i twierdził, że jest ona sojusznikiem państw z dominacją Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w Europie [Minkenberg 2009].

Z drugiej strony, główne Kościoły w większości państw bronią UE i jej integracyjnego wymiaru duchowego jako wyrażającego chrześcijańskie wartości i tożsamość. Świadectwem tego jest stanowisko, jakie zaprezentowała Konferencja Kościołów Europejskich, organizacja ekumeniczna skupiająca Kościoły tradycji anglikańskiej, prawosławnej, protestanckiej i starokatolickiej. Wraz z katolicką Radą Konferencji Episkopatów Europy przyjęła *Kartę Ekumeniczną. Wytuczne dla wzrastającej współpracy Kościołów w Europie* [2001], w której deklarowano, że „Kościoły popierają integrację kontynentu europejskiego. Bez wspólnych wartości jedność nie uzyska trwałego fundamentu; jesteśmy przekonani, że duchowe dziedzictwo chrześcijaństwa stanowi inspirującą siłę, która przyczyni się do wzbogacenia Europy”.

Stanowisko to potwierdza Minkenberg, pisząc: „Generalnie, najważniejsze Kościoły katolickie i protestanckie wspierały i wspierają proces europejskiej integracji i rozszerzenia – początkowe napięcia między prointegracyjnymi katolikami i narodowo zorientowanymi unijnosceptycznymi protestantami ustępują ekumenicznemu podejściu do Europy” [2009: 1206]. Równocześnie Kościoły te

obserwowały i komentowały proces integracji. Tutaj, możemy zauważyć niewielkie różnice w przedmiocie zainteresowania. Otóż Kościoły katolickie większą uwagę przywiązywały do kwestii moralnych (np. sceptycznie podchodząc do liberalnych regulacji w zakresie bioetyki i reprodukcji) czy do „zagrożenia sekularyzacją”, natomiast Kościoły protestanckie kładły nacisk na problemy nierówności społeczno-gospodarczych. Oba Kościoły miały też odmienny stosunek do umieszczenia odniesienia do wartości chrześcijańskich w Konstytucji dla Europy (katolicki był za, protestancki – przeciw). W tej kwestii Kościół prawosławny stanął po stronie katolików. Ponadto niektóre Kościoły, zwłaszcza w państwach nordyckich oraz w Wielkiej Brytanii, przyjmowały z pewną niechęcią aktywność Kościoła katolickiego na forum UE [tamże].

Biorąc pod uwagę tendencje długofalowe, zauważa się, że stanowisko Kościołów protestanckich wobec UE stawało się coraz bardziej pozytywne, natomiast krytyka Kościołów katolickich wzrastała, w szczególności w ostatnich latach. Przyczyną tego był proces rozszerzania się kompetencji UE na kwestie praw człowieka, w tym kwestie moralne, co Kościoły protestanckie uznają za korzystane, ponieważ widzą w tym nowe możliwości działania, także politycznego, ujmowane również w kategoriach równoważenia wpływów katolików na sprawy europejskie [tamże: 1203].

Natomiast stanowisko Kościołów prawosławnych wobec procesów integracji europejskiej kształtowało się pod wpływem rozszerzania się UE oraz możliwości przystąpienia do niej państw z ludnością prawosławną [Olteanu i Neve 2013]. Po raz pierwszy zostało wyrażone w posłaniu, które zwierzchnicy Kościołów prawosławnych wydali w 1992 r. na spotkaniu w Stambule. Czytamy w nim: „Kościół prawosławny wita każdy krok ku zgodzie i pojednaniu. Szczególnie pozytywnie ocenia dążenia Europy, w której zamieszkuje wielka ilość prawosławnych, do zjednoczenia. [...] Nie zapominajmy, że rejony Europy Centralnej i Wschodniej są zamieszkane w większości przez prawosławnych, którzy wnieśli swój wkład do rozwoju europejskiej cywilizacji i ducha. Wydarzenie to czyni nasz Kościół ważnym elementem wnoszącym pozytywne wartości do zjednoczenia Europy” [cyt. za: Tofiluk 2008: 32].

Oficjalnie zwierzchnicy i przedstawiciele Kościołów prawosławnych wyrażają poparcie dla integracji europejskiej oraz wolę pogłębienia dialogu z instytucjami europejskimi, ale nie bezwarunkowo. Chcą bowiem, by proces integracji nie naruszał autonomii ich Kościołów oraz wartości moralnych, tradycji i obrządków [Tofiluk 2008: 38-42]. Obok pragmatycznej postawy zwierzchników Kościoła,



wśród prawosławnych wierzących i kapłanów widać również postawy eurosceptyczne, a nawet aksjomatyczną dezaprobatę [Olteanu i Neve 2013: 21].

Jak pisze Tofiluk [2008: 38], dla Kościoła prawosławnego UE nie jest tylko obszarem geograficznym, ale kulturowym przejawem chrześcijaństwa, czego nie odzwierciedla obecny proces integracji, który koncentruje na wzroście gospodarczym i potrzebuje innej, chrześcijańskiej perspektywy. Dodatkowym, często podnoszonym argumentem uzasadniającym obawy prawosławia jest zachodni relatywizm moralny i kryzys godności człowieka, wynikające z odejścia od wartości chrześcijańskich [tamże: 22; Tofiluk 2008].

Ponadto Kościoły prawosławne są silnie powiązane z państwami, co wyraża tradycyjna koncepcja symfonii, harmonijnej współpracy między państwem a Kościołem oraz prawne lub zwyczajowe przywileje, które uzyskały Kościoły prawosławne. Ich wyznawcy wyrażają też zaufanie do instytucji religijnych [Olteanu i Neve 2013: 22-23]. Są przeciwni wtrącaniu się podmiotów z zewnątrz w relacje państwo – Kościół, co może rodzić starcia z UE, wkraczającą coraz szerzej w sprawy wewnętrzne, w tym zagadnienia moralności i praw człowieka, szczególnie – równości religijnej. Jeśli bowiem w danym państwie jedna religia ma utrwaloną prawnie pozycję dominującą, to sytuacja ta może być traktowana przez instytucje UE jako naruszenie zasady równości wyznaniowej. Zatem pragnienie utrzymania przez prawosławie swojej odrębności staje się dla niego imperatywem do jej ochrony i stawia tamę rozszerzaniu kompetencji UE na kwestie religijne, jak również ingerowaniu w religijne tradycje ze względu na naruszanie praw człowieka.

Przegląd literatury pozwala wyciągnąć dwa sprzeczne wnioski. Biorąc pod uwagę opinię publiczną na Zachodzie, dowodzi się, że eurosceptycyzm przeważa szczególnie wśród protestantów, natomiast katolicy są bardziej przychylni integracji. Ponadto, fundamentaliści i ewangelicy są zdecydowanie bardziej eurosceptyczni niż większość protestantów. Natomiast Minkenberg potwierdza, że ta prawidłowość do pewnego stopnia znajduje odzwierciedlenie w partiach z afiliacjami religijnymi, natomiast nie dotyczy politycznej roli Kościołów w czasie ostatniego etapu integracji, ponieważ zarówno Kościół katolicki, jak i protestancki raczej wspierały integrację. Były one również zaangażowane na poziomie ponadnarodowym, w postaci grup ekspertów, z którymi Komisja konsultuje się w sprawach etycznych i religijnych [tamże: 1194]. Można też zauważyć, że wraz z upływem czasu zmienia się krytyka UE – od krytyki całościowej, do krytyki wybranych

jej wymiarów, zależnie od statusu państwa (pełny członek, nowy, kandydat) oraz wagi problemu w danej chwili.

### **3. Wpływ pluralizmu religijnego na instytucjonalizację „religii” w procesie integracji**

Pomimo generalnie pozytywnej postawy Kościołów odnośnie do znaczenia dziedzictwa chrześcijańskiego dla tożsamości europejskiej, jak również wkładu chrześcijan w proces integracji włączenie do traktatów odwołania do religii oraz klauzul religijnych napotykało na przeszkody i wskazywało na rozbieżności nie tylko między państwami, ale też między Kościołami. W prawie unijnym odniesienia do religii pojawiały się pierwotnie w kontekście praw człowieka oraz wzrastającego zaangażowania UE w ich ochronę, w tym zwalczanie dyskryminacji ze względu na rasę, narodowość i wiarę. Natomiast sama religia, jak również współpraca z podmiotami religijnymi, były prawie niezauważane przez długi okres w laicyzującej się i integrującej Europie.

Wzrost zainteresowania kwestiami religijnymi nastąpił dopiero w latach 90., wskutek oddziaływania wielu czynników, w tym zakończenia zimnej wojny, kiedy ujawniły się nowe zagrożenia dla pokoju i bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego, w tym dla samej UE i jej państw członkowskich. Wśród nich były liczne konflikty wewnętrzne i zamachy terrorystyczne motywowane przekonaniami religijnymi, pojawiły się grupy fundamentalistyczne propagujące swoją antyzachodnią wizję świata i zagrażające porządkowi międzynarodowemu. Ponadto UE doświadczała fali migracji, w tym ludności muzułmańskiej napływającej do Europy. Co więcej, organizacja otwierała się na przyjęcie nowych państw oraz rozszerzenie kontaktów międzynarodowych z państwami o różnym składzie religijnym, w tym także z ludnością muzułmańską.

Nabierając świadomości tej nowej sytuacji, Komisja od początku lat 90. – głównie w kontekście wyzwania i zagrożeń, jakie stwarzał islam, zwiększającą swoją obecność i wpływy, także w Europie – powoływała grupy ekspertów i organizowała nieformalne spotkania z reprezentantami wspólnot religijnych, by rozważać kulturowe i religijne aspekty tożsamości europejskiej oraz stosunków z zagranicą. Do rozszerzenia kompetencji UE o sprawy religijne przyczynili się także politycy, którzy dzięki charyzmie i pozycji mogli wpływać na Wspólnotę, zwłaszcza Jacques Delors i José Manuel Barroso. To właśnie Delors w latach 90. inicjował i promował nieformalne rundy konsultacji między urzędnikami Komisji a grupami religijnymi. Jako przewodniczący Komisji w 1992 r. wskazywał, że „jeśli w następnych

latach nie damy rady, by dać Europie «duszę», dać jej duchowość i znaczenie, to gra się skończy» [cyt. za: Silvestri 2009: 1217]. Do rozwoju kontaktów między wspólnotami religijnymi a instytucjami europejskimi przyczynił się też Barroso, który stojąc na czele Komisji Europejskiej, zainaugurował w 2005 r. serię oficjalnych corocznych spotkań za zamkniętymi drzwiami przewodniczącego Komisji z liderami i członkami głównych grup religijnych. Ponadto otworzył je dla przewodniczących dwóch instytucji UE, tj. Rady i Parlamentu.

Jedną z inicjatyw Delorsa było powołanie grupy zajmującej się przyszłością integracji, w tym dialogiem między Komisją a wspólnotami religijnymi. Występująca pod nazwą Forward Studies Unit (FSU), zajmowała się przyszłością UE, a przede wszystkim kwestią integracji muzułmanów w Europie. Na potrzeby Komisji i Parlamentu został ustanowiony naukowy projekt „Obecność wspólnot muzułmańskich w Europie oraz przyszłość społeczności europejskiej”. Rezultaty tych badań nie stały się nigdy oficjalnym dokumentem, ale uświadomiły na trwałe, że problemów religijnych nie można odizolować od integracji europejskiej [tamże: 1216-1217].

Kwestia zróżnicowania religijnego oraz konieczności określenia tożsamości i wartości UE stała się przedmiotem negocjacji międzyrządowych. Głównymi inicjatorami i podmiotami dążącymi do włączenia klauzul religijnych do prawa UE były państwa konkordatowe, początkowo na czele z Niemcami, odpowiadającymi na propozycje działających na ich terenie Kościołów oraz mającymi wsparcie Stolicy Apostolskiej. Z poparciem Austrii, Portugalii i Włoch zdołano dołączyć do Traktatu Amsterdamskiego (1997) Deklarację nr 11, która zawierała postanowienia o respektowaniu przez UE statusu Kościołów oraz stowarzyszeń i związków religijnych w państwach członkowskich [Gierycz, Skolimowska 2014: 642-643].

Potem, z inicjatywy bawarskiej chadecji, przy poparciu Austrii i Luksemburga, zostały podjęte nieskuteczne działania na rzecz wprowadzenia do Karty Praw Podstawowych odniesienia w tekście do „kulturalnego, religijnego i humanistycznego dziedzictwa”. Następnie w czasie negocjacji w sprawie włączenia podobnej klauzuli do Preambuły do Traktatu Konstytucyjnego na czele grupy inicjatywnej stanęły Niemcy wraz z Polską i Maltą, wspierane przez niektóre Kościoły. Jednak w tej kwestii pozycje Kościołów okazały się zróżnicowane. Ogólnie ujmując, za włączeniem klauzuli były państwa katolickie mające tradycje konkordatowe (Niemcy, Hiszpania, Włochy, Portugalia, Polska, Litwa, Austria), natomiast państwa z religią niekatolicką, gdzie Kościół miał status Kościoła państwowego

(Dania, Grecja, Wielka Brytania, Finlandia, do 2000 r. również Szwecja) były sceptyczne wobec włączania klauzuli. Kościoły w Polsce i wiele innych występowały za umieszczeniem takiego odwołania, natomiast Kościoły w Portugalii – milczały; Kościoły protestanckie nie zajęły stanowiska, a duński Kościół luterkański uważał, że nie ma potrzeby odwoływania się w preambule do Boga. Takie samo stanowisko zajęły Francja i Belgia, w których Kościół i państwo są instytucjonalnie rozdzielone, chociaż przyczyny tego stanowiska były odmienne. Badali tę kwestię Foret i Riva [2010: 791], którzy doszli do wniosku, że odrębne motywacje wynikały z innych modeli „laickości”, zakorzenionych w odrębnych społeczno-politycznych ścieżkach historycznych; wszechogarniająca laickość francuska zakładała neutralność sfery publicznej, natomiast belgijska – pluralizm filozoficznych i religijnych światopoglądów.

Dopiero w Traktacie o Funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej (Traktat Lizboński), który wszedł w życie 1 grudnia 2009 r., zamieszczono po raz pierwszy w prawie unijnym artykuł poświęcony religii (art. 17 TFUE). Jest on zapisany w Postanowieniach Ogólnych, na jego mocy UE szanuje status przyznany na mocy prawa krajowego Kościołom i stowarzyszeniom lub wspólnotom religijnym w państwach członkowskich i nie narusza ich statusu; szanuje również status organizacji światopoglądowych i niewyznaniowych przyznany im na mocy prawa krajowego. Uznając tożsamość i szczególny wkład Kościołów i organizacji, prowadzi z nimi otwarty, przejrzysty i regularny dialog. Ponadto w Karcie Praw Podstawowych, dołączonej do Traktatu Lizbońskiego, wprowadzono art. 10, dotyczący wolności myśli, sumienia i religii. Zgodnie z nim „każdy ma prawo do wolności myśli, sumienia i religii. Prawo to obejmuje wolność zmiany religii lub przekonań oraz wolność uzewnętrzniania, indywidualnie lub wspólnie z innymi, publicznie lub prywatnie, swej religii lub przekonań poprzez uprawianie kultu, nauczanie, praktykowanie i uczestniczenie w obrzędach. Uznaje się prawo do odmowy działania sprzecznego z własnym sumieniem, zgodnie z ustawami krajowymi regulującymi korzystanie z tego prawa”. Wskutek tych postanowień wprowadzono religię do porządku prawnego UE i dokonano instytucjonalizacji pluralizmu religijnego – UE została zobowiązana do prowadzenia dialogu z podmiotami religijnymi i innymi wspólnotami religijnymi oraz ochrony wolności religii.

Ze strony UE dialog taki prowadzi Komisja za pomocą wyznaczonych urzędników oraz posłowie Parlamentu Europejskiego [Silvestri 2009: 1216-1226]. W przypadku Komisji od 2014 r. za dialog jest odpowiedzialny Dyrekcja Generalna ds. Sprawiedliwości i Konsumentów. Ponadto zostali powołani dwaj koordynatorzy

Komisji, jeden do zwalczania antysemityzmu, drugi – nienawiści wobec muzułmanów. Problemami dyskryminacji religijnej zajmuje się też powołana w 2007 r. Agencja Praw Podstawowych UE. Przyglądając się działaniom tych instytucji, można odnieść wrażenie, że w Europie jedynymi grupami prześladowanymi ze względów religijnych są Żydzi i muzułmanie, natomiast nie widzi się naruszania praw katolików.

W dialogu z UE uczestniczy grupa podmiotów pozarządowych, Kościołów i związków wyznaniowych odzwierciedlających podziały religijne w Europie. Kościoły chrześcijańskie są reprezentowane przez trzy organizacje, dwie o charakterze ekumenicznym, tj. Konferencję Kościołów Europejskich (założoną w 1959 r.), skupiającą obecnie 38 kościołów niekatolickich, głównie ewangelickich i prawosławnych, oraz Radę Konferencji Episkopatów Europy (działającą od 1965 r.), zrzeszającą 33 kościoły, głównie katolickie i prawosławne. Trzecim podmiotem jest Komisja Episkopatów Wspólnoty Europejskiej (powstała w 1980 r.), z udziałem przedstawicieli 24 kościołów katolickich [Białas-Zielińska 2011: 336-338]. Natomiast muzułmanie utworzyli w 1989 r. Federację Islamskich Organizacji w Europie (FIOE), której celem jest reprezentowanie interesów muzułmanów w UE. W 2010 r. powstał Komitet Przedstawicieli Kościołów Prawosławnych przy UE, stanowiący platformę, za pomocą której wyznawcy prawosławia mogą zabierać głos oraz wyrażać swoje stanowiska w sprawach unijnych.

Kościoły prawosławne nie tylko uczestniczą w wielostronnych instytucjach, lecz także już wcześniej ustanowiły inne formy kontaktów z UE oraz kanały oddziaływania. Od 1995 r. istnieje w Strasburgu przedstawicielstwo Patriarchatu Ekumenicznego, które reprezentuje prawosławie na forum UE, utrzymuje kontakty oraz wymienia informacje pomiędzy UE a Kościołami prawosławnymi. Przy UE od 1981 r. swoje przedstawicielstwo ma również Grecki Kościół Prawosławny.

Obok Komisji ważnym forum rozważania kwestii religijnych stał się Parlament Europejski. Sprzyjał temu jego charakter jako organu quasi-ponadnarodowego, z partiami transnarodowymi, w tym o wyraźnych afiliacjach religijnych, zwłaszcza chadekami. Na forum tego organu kwestie religijne pojawiały się w kontekście ochrony i przestrzegania praw człowieka, zwłaszcza wolności wyznania i sumienia, traktowania kobiet w krajach muzułmańskich oraz radykalizmu i ekstremizmu islamskiego [Silvestri 2009: 1222-1226]. Warto dodać, że Kościół prawosławny prowadzi od 1996 r. dialog z Parlamentem Europejskim, ściślej: z partią chrześcijańskich demokratów.

## Zakończenie

Powyższy wywód potwierdza tezę o wpływie pluralizmu religijnego na integrację europejską. W latach 50. ubiegłego wieku homogeniczność religijna państw Europy Zachodniej oraz przewaga chadecji sprzyjały zainicjowaniu integracji europejskiej i jej rozwojowi, ale była ona w pewnym zakresie czynnikiem utrudniającym przystępowanie do UE innych państw, w tym zwłaszcza protestanckich. W okresie kolejnych rozszerzeń, kiedy do organizacji przystępowały państwa prawosławne oraz prawosławne z ludnością muzułmańską, czynnik religijny odgrywał coraz mniejszą rolę.

Rozszerzająca się pluralizacja religijna wpływała pośrednio na zróżnicowanie zaangażowania państw w procesy integracji. Było ono niższe w przypadku państw z przewagą ludności protestanckiej w porównaniu z państwami z przewagą katolików. Natomiast główne Kościoły w większości państw akceptowały UE i jej procesy integracyjne w ich duchowym wymiarze jako mające za podstawę tożsamość i wartości chrześcijańskie (rozszerzające się od wartości moralnych do zagadnień uniwersalnych praw człowieka). Natomiast ich obawy wzbudzał kierunek ewolucji tych procesów, zwłaszcza gdy UE rozszerzała kompetencje na zagadnienia nie tylko praw społecznych, powiązanych z gospodarką, ale też elementarnych praw cywilnych – wartości, na jakich ma opierać się życie społeczne – co doprowadzało do zderzenia systemów wartości chrześcijańskich i liberalnych.

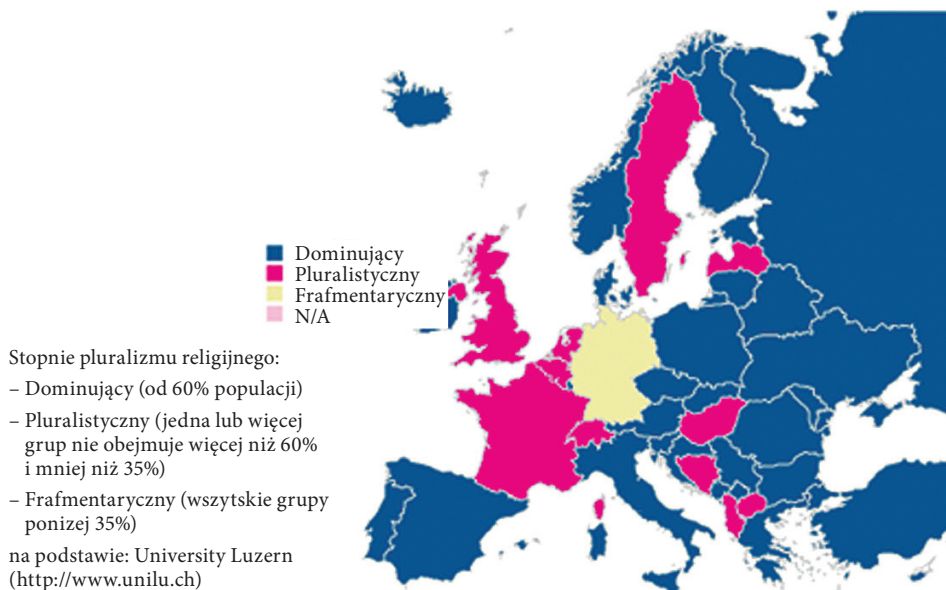
Wydaje się, że wzrastający pluralizm religijny wraz z innymi czynnikami przyczynił się do instytucjonalizacji „religii” w UE, głównie do włączenia w porządek prawny praw chroniących wolność religijną i pluralizm, ale też do utworzenia stałych form kontaktów między przedstawicielami wspólnot religijnych a organami UE oraz organami monitorującymi przestrzeganie praw religijnych, w tym praw mniejszości. To pozwala wspólnotom religijnym wpływać na regulacje unijne, kształtowanie się tożsamości UE oraz kierunek integracji.

Wskutek instytucjonalizacji wyznawcy wszystkich religii znaleźli się pod ochroną zamieszczoną w prawie unijnym zasady wolności sumienia i wyznania, zaś pluralizm religijny został poddany regulacjom równościowym (antydiskryminacyjnym), które jednocześnie dawały ochronę innym pluralizmom. W tej sytuacji wolność wyznania jako jedno z podstawowych praw człowieka, wyrażające i chroniące zróżnicowanie religijne, może być trudne do pogodzenia z innymi wartościami. Na liczne paradoksy związane z realizacją tego prawa zwraca uwagę Roy [2016: 2]. Sądzi, że wolność religijna jest jednocześnie definiowana jako prawo



człowieka oraz może być postrzegana jako zagrożenie tych praw, np. prawa kobiet i prawa dzieci w przypadku obrzezania czy „prawa zwierząt” w przypadku uboju rytualnego. „Problemem jest, że wolność religijna nie jest tylko wolnością opinii, ona jest wolnością do posiadania praktyk religijnych, a te praktyki nie mogą być zredukowane jedynie do sfery prywatnej” [tamże]. Wyznawcy oczekują pomocy i ochrony państwa; w przypadku konfliktu praw ostateczną instancją mogą być sądy międzynarodowe, ale nie ma tu jednego rozwiązania pasującego do wszystkich przypadków, ponieważ należy brać pod uwagę tradycje i relacje między państwem a religią [tamże]. Tak więc pluralizm religijny w połączeniu z sekularyzacją skutkuje zróżnicowaniem postaw w sferze wartości, co może być źródłem napięć społecznych, ale też problemów z określeniem tożsamości Europy, opartej na wartościach chrześcijańskich.

### *Mapa 1. Poziom pluralizmu religijnego w latach 2006-2015*



Źródło: [SMRE-Data]



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## *Religia a polityka – dramat w sanktuarium*

**Analiza postrzegania wpływu chrześcijaństwa na porządek polityczny  
na przykładzie *Bezsilnego Boga* Marka Lilli  
i współczesnych poszukiwań duchowości**

**Religion and politics – drama in the sanctuary**

**Analysis of the perceived impact of Christianity on the political order using  
the example of Mark Lilla's *Powerless God*  
and contemporary searches for spirituality**

**Abstract:** The article places itself in the wide debate about relations between religion and politics. It presents the tension among the contemporary intellectuals on the one hand seeking, for the good of society, for some kind of spirituality and on the other being afraid of giving to religion too much influence on the present state. On the example of Mark Lilla's *The Stillborn God* the article presents the tendency to drawing conclusions in this conflict on the base of ideology rather than on the religion. Mixing those two obscures the image, while the real conflict field seems to be located in everyone's conscience rather than in the intellectual debates. Reference was made to the works of Daniel Bell, Mark Lilla, Jacques Maritain, John Paul II, Piotr Mazurkiewicz, Roger Scruton, and Maciej Zięba.

**Keywords:** Catholic Church, politics, truth, religion, conscience, sovereignty, totalitarianism

**Abstrakt:** Artykuł wpisuje się w szeroką debatę na temat relacji religii i polityki. Przedstawia powstające wśród współczesnych intelektualistów napięcie, gdy z jednej strony poszukują, dla dobra społeczeństwa, jakiejś formy duchowości, a z drugiej – obawiają się nadania religii zbyt dużego wpływu na życie publiczne. Na przykładzie *Bezsilnego Boga* Marka Lilli, przedstawiono negatywne konsekwencje wynikające z tendencji do mylenia w tych refleksjach religii z ideologią. Zwrócono uwagę, że lokowanie konfliktu (między religią a polityką) w intelektualnych debatach pomija poziom ludzkich sumień, który zdaje się prawdziwym polem dramatu. W artykule nawiązano do twórczości m.in. Daniela Bella, Marka

Lilli, Jacques'a Maritaina, Jana Pawła II, Piotra Mazurkiewicza, Rogera Scrutona i Macieja Zięby.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Kościół katolicki, polityka, prawda, religia, sumienie, suwerenność, totalitaryzm

## Wstęp

Hiszpański myśliciel José Ortega y Gasset zauważył, że człowiek masowy postrzega demokrację jako element przyrody, coś absolutnie oczywistego [1997: 57, 81]. Jeszcze na początku lat 90., znajdując odzwierciedlenie w słynnym stwierdzeniu Francisa Fukuyamy [2009] o końcu historii, takie określenie współczesnego mieszkańca Zachodu byłoby może uzasadnione. Dzisiaj nie jest to już tak oczywiste. Od kilku, kilkunastu lat w przestrzeni medialnej dominuje coraz większy lęk o przyszłość demokracji. Na naszych oczach zdają się spełniać przewidywania Ralfa Dahrendorfa o narastającej liczbie ludzi rozgoryczonych i oczekujących władzy silnej ręki [zob. Zięba 1997: 79]. Pojawiają się pytania (i oskarżenia) o możliwość powrotu nie zawsze w pełni zdefiniowanych totalitaryzmów [Albright 2018: 17].

We wrześniu 2018 r. nakładem Wydawnictwa UKSW ukazał się raport pt. *Totalitaryzm w epoce postmodernizmu* [Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018]. Publikacja stanowi podsumowanie badań na temat postaw młodzieży wobec totalitaryzmu<sup>1</sup> przeprowadzonych w latach 2016-2017 w siedmiu krajach Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej. Autorzy, z ks. prof. Piotrem Mazurkiewiczem na czele, opisali istotę totalitarnych systemów i przedstawili całościową koncepcję przyczyn ich narodzin. Opierając się na bogatych przesłankach teoretycznych, wykazali zależność między zanikiem przywiązania do wiary i więzi rodzinnych a potencjalnymi prototalitarnymi skłonnościami. Rodzina i Kościół – stwierdzają – „to dwa główne instytucjonalne zabezpieczenia wolności w totalitarnym systemie” i główne zabezpieczenia przed potencjalnym prototalitarnym „ukąszeniem” [tamże: 168-169].

Przyjęte przez autorów założenia wydają się sprzeczne z dominującym dyskursem medialnym Starego Kontynentu. W środowiskach uniwersyteckich [D'Souza 2006: 121-124] od lat przekonuje się, że postępująca laicyzacja życia politycznego i społecznego jest koniecznym warunkiem wolności, pluralizmu i tolerancji [Mazurkiewicz 2001: 99]. Etyczne oceny rzeczywistości mają pozostawać w sferze

<sup>1</sup> Definicja totalitaryzmu – por. tamże: 16-51.

prywatnej. Rodzina jest postrzegana raczej jako przestrzeń potencjalnej opresji niż miłości i wzrostu. Jednocześnie konstatacje autorów wspomnianego raportu są potencjalnie zbieżne z obserwacjami wszystkich tych intelektualistów, którzy wskazują na potrzebę odrodzenia pogłębionych więzi międzyludzkich i duchowości w postmodernistycznym świecie [Markiewka 2012: 101-119; Zięba 1997: 142]. W Polsce są to często myśliciele katoliccy, co – zdaniem niektórych – może osłabiać siłę ich argumentów. Dlatego dla przykładu wymienić warto Daniela Bella, oraz zmarłego w 2020 r. Rogera Scrutona. Amerykanin już w latach 70. z akademickiej pozycji przewidywał duchową pustkę, z jaką będą musieli mierzyć się ludzie zachodniego świata. Brytyjski filozof w ostatnich latach stał się ważną postacią w polskich środowiskach konserwatywnych, choć trudno byłoby zakwalifikować go jako jednoznacznie katolickiego myśliciela<sup>2</sup>.

W *Kulturowych sprzecznościach kapitalizmu* Bell ostrzegął, że życie opisywane w mediach, świat rozrywki, brak zobowiązań, „raj na ziemi” są możliwe tylko dla nielicznych i przez stosunkowo krótki okres w bezpiecznych zamożnych społeczeństwach [Bell 1994: 121]. Modernizm to filozofia ludzi bogatych, o zabezpieczonej przyszłości, a tymczasem stał się ideologią mas [tamże: 119]. Kryzys – przekonywał Bell – musi nastąpić<sup>3</sup>.

Zdaniem Bella jednym ze skutków zaniku religijności było odrzucenie przekonania o istnieniu transcendentnej rzeczywistości. Swoiste spłaszczenie perspektywy doprowadziło z kolei do przekonania, że człowiek będzie w stanie przekroczyć swoją naturę<sup>4</sup>. „W konsekwencji nowoczesna pycha odmawia uznania jakichkolwiek granic, upiera się, by wszystkie przekraczać” [tamże: 84]. Jednym z objawów takiego rozumowania jest m.in. postrzeganie człowieka w kategorii twórcy samego

<sup>2</sup> W 2019 r. otrzymał z rąk Prezydenta RP Andrzeja Dudy Krzyż Wielki Orderu Zasługi Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, a od Ministra Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego Piotra Glińskiego Doroczną Nagrodę MKiDN. Wcześniej, w 2016 r., został odznaczony medalem „Odważy i Wiarygodność” przyznawanym przez Fundację Polska Wielki Projekt.

<sup>3</sup> Obrazując etapy upadku kultury, Bell przywoływał arabskiego myśliciela Ibn Chalduna. Nowe siły społeczne zawsze na początku mają charakter ascetyczny. Z upływem czasu dyscyplina zanika. Pojawia się hedonizm i dążenie do luksusu, a w ich wyniku społeczeństwo upada. Życie nieodwołujące się do stałych wartości prowadzi do „utrąty *asabiyah*, poczucia solidarności rodzającego braterstwo, tego grupowego uczucia, które stanowi o wzajemnym oddaniu i gotowości, aby walczyć i umierać jeden za drugiego” [cyt. za tamże:].

<sup>4</sup> Autorzy wspomnianego raportu badawczego używają w tym kontekście pojęcia „palingeneza antropologiczna”, oznaczającego „wolę radykalnej przemiany obecnego, rzeczywistego człowieka w człowieka «nowego»” [Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018: 11].

siebie<sup>5</sup>. W momencie jednak, gdy możliwości autokreacji są już nieograniczone, pojawia się wątpliwość, czy dokonywanie jakichkolwiek wyborów ma sens [Bielik-Robson 2000: 19]. Wysiłek autokreacji, gdy można być wszystkim, ale nie wiadomo w jakim celu, zdaje się być ponad ludzkie siły [tamże: 32]. Taka postawa, jeśli nawet nie powoduje zagubienia, lęku a finalnie rozpaczy, jest niebezpieczna dla każdej wspólnoty.

W zderzeniu z pustką dzisiejszego świata człowiek zwraca się w stronę tradycyjnych wartości. Problem w tym, że społeczeństwo przestało je rozumieć. Wykorzenie sprawia, że nie ma tradycji, do której mogłoby się odwołać. Ludzie utracili kontakt z wypracowanymi przez wieki sposobami pokonywania naturalnych życiowych trudności. „Kontrkultura okazała się niewypałem”, nie zaproponowała niczego, na czym można by się oprzeć [tamże: 117].

W sytuacji, gdy świecki system znaczeń okazał się iluzją, najbardziej słuszną drogą jest powrót społeczeństwa zachodniego do jakiejś formy wiary religijnej [Bell 1994: 65]. Religia tradycyjnie była tym źródłem, z którego czerpano przekonanie o wyższym powołaniu człowieka. Według Bella jedynie religia może przywrócić „zerwaną nić tradycji”, jako jedyna może ludzi zwrócić z powrotem ku sobie. Żadna inna siła nie jest w stanie przywrócić roli pokory w codziennym życiu [tamże]<sup>6</sup>.

Roger Scruton również zwracał uwagę na zagubienie jako istotny rys współczesnego człowieka. Nauka odnosi coraz większe sukcesy, ludzkie umiejętności pozwalają na podróże kosmiczne, równoległe jednak brakuje prostej wiedzy, co robić i co odczuwać w najważniejszych momentach indywidualnego życia. Angielski filozof za najbardziej zdezorientowanych członków współczesnego zachodniego społeczeństwa uważał młodych ludzi i tych wszystkich, którzy – niezależnie od wieku – podlegają tzw. kulturze młodzieżowej. W opinii Scrutona współczesne nastolatki nie mają żadnego doświadczenia członkostwa, a jeśli nawet są religijni, ich wiara jest często oderwana od tradycji i rytuałów, które tworzą społeczność [Scruton 2006: 151]<sup>7</sup>. Deficyt członkostwa jest wobec tego zaspokajany w sposób

<sup>5</sup> Autorzy *Totalitaryzm w epoce postmodernizmu* nazywają to podejście „antropologią nieograniczoną” [Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018: 39, 42].

<sup>6</sup> O roli pokory w życiu społecznym – por. [Hayek 2004].

<sup>7</sup> Spadek liczby młodych Polaków określających się jako „wierzące” i „głęboko wierzące” oraz zmniejszenie uczestnictwa w praktykach religijnych polskiej młodzieży potwierdzają m.in. badania CBOS *Młodzież 2018* [Grabowska i Gwiazda 2019]. O zwiększającej się atomizacji młodych ludzi świadczą również wyniki badań opisanych w przytoczonym we wstępie raporcie *Totalitaryzm w epoce postmodernizmu* [Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018].



prymitywny, bez przejścia na wyższy, wymagający odpowiedzialności poziom. Zespoły muzyczne i drużyny piłkarskie dają fanom poczucie przynależności, ale nie wymagają wysiłku. Dla młodych ludzi tymczasem często jest to jedyny sposób budowania własnej tożsamości. Młodość przestała być etapem życia, momentem przygotowania do podjęcia trwałych zobowiązań, a stała się jedynym sensem i sposobem na samookreślenie. Nie ma powodu, ani żadnej presji, by stać się dorosłym.

Podobnie, jak Bell, Scruton również dostrzegął konieczność przywrócenia społeczeństwu etycznego odniesienia. W świecie, w którym „Bóg umarł” jedność społeczeństwu – zdaniem Scrutona – może zapewnić kultura wysoka. Podobnie jak religia stawia ona pytanie: „co odczuwać”. Sztuka i literatura pozwalają na przyporządkowanie naszej jaźni do właściwej wspólnoty, która daje jednostce poczucie przynależności i zestaw wzorów postępowania w obliczu typowych ludzkich problemów [2006: 28]. Droga kultury wysokiej nigdy nie zastąpi doświadczenia wiary, nie może być substytutem religii. „Wyobrażenia może nam [jednak] ukazać, «czym jest» wiara w jakąś doktrynę i «czym jest» praktykowanie zwyczajów i rytuałów” [tamże: 92]. Brytyjski konserwatysta zdawał się mieć nadzieję, że może w ten sposób zyskają one ludzką sympatię [tamże].

Czy wymienieni intelektualiści autorzy raportu oraz Bell i Scruton mówią o tym samym? Czy wejście w „dowolną formę duchowości” może być samo w sobie szczepionką na prototalitarne pokusy? A może tak przychylnymi religii deklaracjami autorzy wspomnianego na wstępie raportu wpisują się w niebezpieczne dążenie do integracji tronu z ołtarzem [Hobbes 2005]? Przytoczone wyzwania są częścią nieustającego dialogu religii i polityki. W niniejszym artykule zaprezentowano swoiste napięcie, jakie występuje wśród współczesnych myślicieli, którzy, z jednej strony, jak przedstawiono powyżej, widzą potrzebę często bliżej nieokreślonej duchowości w życiu społecznym i martwią się jej zanikiem, a z drugiej – obawiają się jakiegokolwiek wpływu religii na życie polityczne. Na przykładzie pracy Marka Lili, profesora Columbia University, pt. *Bezsilny Bóg* [2009] staram się wykazać, że negatywne dla religii wnioski wyciągane są jednak – po pierwsze – na podstawie mylonej z religią ideologii, a po drugie – z lekceważeniem rzeczywistej nauki Kościoła katolickiego na temat autonomii życia politycznego. W przytoczonej perspektywie pomija się też fakt, że pierwotnym polem konfliktu między dobrem a złem jest ludzkie sumienie i podejście do prawdy.



## 1. Na straży pokoju

Lilla, zarysowując istotę różnic w postrzeganiu roli religii w życiu publicznym, wyróżnia dwie narodzone na początku XIX wieku szkoły filozofii politycznej, których echa, zdaniem Lilli, widoczne są do dzisiaj. Obie próbowały odpowiedzieć na pytania, jak stworzyć system niezależny od teologii politycznej; czy możliwy jest ustrój nieodwołujący się do idei Boga i czy jego ewentualnymi obywatelami mogliby być wyznawcy różnych religii żyjący w zgodzie i pokoju. Lilla jednych nazywa „dziećmi Hobbesa”, drugich „dziećmi Rousseau” [Lilla 2009: 199, 225]<sup>8</sup>.

Pierwsi, wspominając wojny religijne, które głęboko naznaczyły autora *Lewiatana* uważali, że niemożliwe jest zapewnienie trwałego pokoju bez całkowitego oddzielenia władzy od jakichkolwiek pytań metafizycznych. Ludzkie myślenie powinno być skoncentrowane na rzeczywistości materialnej. Dlatego należy podkreślać rolę strachu i niewiedzy w kształtowaniu się wiary w Boga tak, by zniechęcać ludzi do religii. Dla drugich, uczniów Rousseau, wiara nie wywodzi się z lęku i jako taka nie prowadzi do przemocy. Przyczyną walk i niezgody jest to, co moglibyśmy nazwać religią instytucjonalną [por. Lilla 2009: 227]. Człowiek, by być moralnym i szczęśliwym, potrzebuje idei Boga, dlatego nie należy o tym zapominać przy tworzeniu dobrego systemu politycznego. Nie można pomijać potrzeb duchowych w racjonalnym świecie nauki i techniki.

Na gruncie nauk Rousseau, a także Kanta i Hegla narodziła się tzw. teologia liberalna. Przedstawiciele tego sposobu myślenia starali się wydobyć esencję ewangelicznej moralności z otaczającej ją mitologii i przesądów. Doceniali oni rolę chrześcijaństwa w rozwoju świata i nie chcieli zaprzepaścić jego przesłania, ale nie traktowali poważnie Boga Starego i Nowego Testamentu. Łącząc przekonanie o konieczności pełnego rozdzielenia polityki od pytań natury metafizycznej ze świadomością naturalnej dla człowieka potrzeby wiary, wywodzili nową formę religijności w całości z ludzkiego doświadczenia. Wpisując się w szeroki nurt indywidualizacji ludzkiego postrzegania, czynili jednostkę sędzią prawd teologicznych. Przekonywali, że odnaleźć Boga można tylko poprzez odnalezienie samego siebie. Rewolucyjny w swych założeniach ruch wywodził się z protestanckich Niemiec i tam też znalazł największą liczbę zwolenników. Miał być trzecią drogą, religijną, w przeciwieństwie do „bezdusznego materializmu” Anglosasów

<sup>8</sup> Jako „dzieci Hobbesa” Lilla wymienia angielskich utylitarystów i marksistów. Dziedzicem Rousseau w zakresie spojrzenia na religijność człowieka jest, zdaniem Lilli, przede wszystkim Immanuel Kant [Lilla 2009].

i wolną od ostrych polemik nękających katolicką Francję [por. Lilla 2009: 229-232]. Zakładał, że duch i moralność ówczesnych Niemców były nierozzerwalnie związane z protestantyzmem i tylko ścisły związek z tą religią miał im zapewnić skuteczną modernizację.

Lata 20. XX wieku przyniosły zdaniem Lilli gwałtowną reakcję przeciw teologii liberalnej i całej tradycji myślenia o religii w kategoriach ustanowionych przez Rousseau. Jednym z ważniejszych pisarzy religijnych tego okresu był Karl Barth, który uważał XIX-wieczne myślenie za przemianę religii w humanizm. Zdecydowanie sprzeciwiał się stawianiu człowieka jako punkt wyjścia rozważań metafizycznych. Pragnął przywrócenia Bogu jego właściwego miejsca w hierarchii bytów i w hierarchii myślenia [por. Lilla 2009: 267]. Barth porównywał wysiłki liberalnych teologów z budowaniem nowej Wieży Babel. Człowiek powinien najpierw zwracać się do Boga, a później działać w świecie, pamiętając jednak, że to, co nas na co dzień zajmuje, to „tylko gra”.

Tak, jak przed I wojną światową teologia liberalna, tak zaraz po niej poglądy Bartha stały się popularne w niemieckim społeczeństwie. Sam Barth nigdy nie przyłączył się do ruchu nazistowskiego, ale – jak twierdzi Lilla – zainspirował do tego wielu swoich czytelników [Lilla 2009]. Hasła takie jak „kryzys” i „wybawienie”, przekonanie o konieczności podjęcia ostatecznych decyzji ukształtowały apokaliptyczne myślenie tamtego czasu. W dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym powszechne było przekonanie, że zagrożenia związane z wojnami religijnymi i teologią polityczną, to czasy bardzo odległe. Przesady i nietolerancja wydawały się niewspółmierne do nowoczesnego, technicznego świata, a bezduszna kultura potrzebowała oddechu i nowego sensu.

W tym momencie dochodzimy do kulminacyjnego wydarzenia XX wieku – II wojny światowej. Według Lilli „poglądy religijne”, odrodzenie w Niemczech mesjanistycznej teologii politycznej doprowadziły do narodzin totalitaryzmów [Lilla 2009: 16, 309]. Odejście od pełnego rozdziału polityki i religii, zdaniem Lilli, zaczęło się od niewinnej próby przywrócenia Bogu Jego miejsca w świecie. Lekcja Rousseau o naturalnej potrzebie wiary jest na pewno psychologicznie bardziej kompletna niż surowe poglądy Hobbesa. Niestety, według Lilli, przyczyniła się do zniszczenia od wewnątrz jedynej zasady zdolnej utrzymać pokój w Europie. Powodowani mesjanistycznymi przekonaniem i myśliciele dwudziestolecia międzywojennego przyłączyli się, z jednej strony, do Hitlera, z drugiej – do bolszewików. Profesor Columbia University przekonuje, że dzisiejsza sytuacja może

być podobna. Przez ostatnie pięćdziesiąt lat w głównym nurcie amerykańskich i europejskich badań brakowało prac dotyczących wpływu religii na życie polityczne. Wiara w Boga pozostawiona sferze prywatnej zdawała się nie zagrażać stabilności rządów. Zachodni opinotwórcy wierzyli, że rozpalanie ludzkich umysłów przez idee teologiczne jest już niemożliwe, że „ludzie nauczyli się oddzielać pytania religijne od politycznych, że fanatyzm jest martwy” [Lilla 2009: 9]. Lilla ze zgrozą stwierdza: „myliliśmy się” – po okresie stabilizacji przychodzi czas niepokoju [tamże]. Dlatego powinniśmy uświadomić sobie dziedzictwo Hobbesa, który – zdaniem Lilli – stworzył podwaliny pod uprawianie polityki bez odwoływania się do boskiego objawienia [por. tamże: 11]<sup>9</sup>. Uwalniając refleksję polityczną od „spekulacji teologicznych na temat tego, co być może leży poza nim”, dał światu kruchą podstawę dla pokoju [por. tamże: 13].

## 2. Błędne koło

W tym punkcie nasze rozważania zamieniają się w błędne koło. Z jednej strony, demokracja<sup>10</sup> pozostawiona „sama sobie” łatwo przeradza się w tyranję, z drugiej – pokusy wprowadzenia religii do życia politycznego również kończą się niebezpiecznie. Zdaniem Lilli mamy zatem zwolenników Hobbesa, którzy widzą w nim teoretyka współczesnego porządku i państwa prawa oraz spadkobierców myśli Rousseau. Czy to jedyna oś podziału?

Próbą rozwiązania tego problemu może być przyjrzenie się bliżej temu, co Lilla, podobnie jak wcześniej Hobbes i myśliciele przełomu XIX i XX wieku, odrzucili [por. Lilla 2009: 18]<sup>11</sup>. Autor *Lewiatana* najbardziej obawiał się wpływu Kościoła

<sup>9</sup> Por. tamże: 11 oraz m.in.: „Przede wszystkim musimy zauważyć, w jak dużym stopniu zawdzięczamy Hobbesowi trwałą zmianę przedmiotu politycznego dyskursu w myśli Zachodu. Po trwającym ponad tysiąc lat okresie panowania teologii chrześcijańskiej Hobbes znalazł nowy sposób mówienia o religii oraz wspólnym dobru, bez odwoływania się do nierozdzielnych związków łączących człowieka, Boga i świat. Już samo to, że myślimy i mówimy o religii, a nie o prawdziwej wierze, prawie czy nakazach objawienia, zawdzięczamy w dużej mierze właśnie Hobbesowi” [tamże: 95].

<sup>10</sup> Demokracja rozumiana jako forma ustroju politycznego państwa, w którym uznaje się wolę większości obywateli jako źródło władzy i przyznaje się im prawa i wolności polityczne gwarantujące sprawowanie tej władzy. Por. <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/demokracja;3891717.html> (03.06.2020).

<sup>11</sup> „Czytelnicy zauważą nieobecność w tym omówieniu nowożytnych myślicieli katolickich. Powodem jest to, że rekonstruowany w tej książce spór aż do początku dwudziestego wieku omijał katolickich teologów ze względu na instytucjonalną izolację katolickich szkół wyższych oraz wrogą postawę, jaką przez większość dziewiętnastego stulecia Kościół przejawiał wobec nowoczesnego społeczeństwa. Opowieść o myśli katolickiej wymagałaby odrębnej książki” [Lilla 2009: 18].

katolickiego na politykę. Od jego śmierci minęło blisko 350 lat. Oś krwawych religijnych sporów nie toczy się obecnie między protestantami a katolikami. Analiza reakcji medialnych na różnorodne wypowiedzi papieży (dokonana np. przez znawcę nauczania Jana Pawła II Macieja Ziębę OP) świadczy jednak o niezrozumieniu i lęku, jaki ciągle wzbudza Kościół katolicki [Zięba 1997: 27]<sup>12</sup>. Człowiek, który nie śledzi na co dzień działań Stolicy Apostolskiej i nie studiuje oryginalnych papieskich tekstów, ma niewielkie szanse poznać z mediów istotę papieskiego nauczania [tamże: 24].

W przedstawionych rozważaniach warto sięgnąć po prace Jacques'a Maritaina, jednego z czołowych myślicieli personalizmu i neotomizmu, który odnosząc się w pierwszej kolejności do idei suwerenności, wskazywał na błędy w myśleniu intelektualnych potomków zarówno Hobbesa, jak i Rousseau. Suwerenność, zdaniem autora *Człowieka i państwa*, „oznacza niezależność i władzę, które są najwyższe będąc oddzielone lub transcendentnie najwyższe i umieszczone ponad ciałem politycznym” [Maritain 1993: 58]. Miejsce dla tej idei, zdaniem Francuza, znajduje się w sferze duchowej. Władca nie może być transcendentnie oddzielony od poddanych. Jest na szczycie struktury politycznej, jako części, która reprezentuje całość, a nie, tak jak wyobrażał to sobie Hobbes, ponad nim [por. tamże: 43]. Inaczej rządzący ma pełnię władzy i sprawuje ją bez odpowiedzialności. Ustanowione przez niego prawo obowiązuje niezależnie od tego, czy jest sprawiedliwe, czy nie, bo poddani nawet we własnym sumieniu nie mogą się mu przeciwstawić. Zarówno ciało polityczne, jak i pojedynczy człowiek zostają pozbawieni autonomii. W koncepcji Hobbesa jedyną siłą łączącą ludzi ze sobą jest strach przed nagłą śmiercią, zamieniony w momencie zawięzania się umowy na strach przed władzą.

Konsekwencją implementacji tak rozumianej idei suwerenności do sfery politycznej jest sytuacja, kiedy posiadając absolutnie zwierzchnią władzę, „państwo samo uznaje się za ciało polityczne lub uosobienie ludu” [Maritain 1993: 59]. Lud w posłuszeństwie państwu jest posłuszny samemu sobie. W ten sposób w koncepcji Hobbesa znika przestrzeń dla pluralizmu i polityczności. Stanowi to pierwowzór dla późniejszych teorii liberalnych, według których celem państwa jest zapewnienie obywatelom bezpieczeństwa i względnej swobody często kosztem udziału we władzy. Jeśli daje się ludziom prawo do wolności, pomijając jednocześnie aspekt wolności wewnętrznej, trudno jest utrzymać porządek, tak by respektowana była

<sup>12</sup> Zięba przytacza liczne przykłady upraszczania wypowiedzi papieży.

wolność drugiej osoby. Potrzebna jest silna władza zewnętrzna, bo jeśli człowiek nie zna aspektu wolności wewnętrznej, trudno mu zrozumieć i uszanować wolność drugiej osoby. Podstawowe prawo koncepcji liberalnej, że moja wolność kończy się tam, gdzie zaczyna się wolność drugiej osoby, musi opierać się na strachu.

Późniejsza historia przyniosła demokratyzację idei suwerenności, przeniesienie pojęcia suwerena z króla na lud. Maritain nazywał tę koncepcję „niedorzecznością”, „absurdalnym” pomysłem Rousseau, w którym uznaje się lud za równocześnie rządzący sobą i od siebie oddzielony. Takie spojrzenie stworzyło mit niepodzielnej woli emanującej z ludu, zawsze słusznej woli powszechnej. Znow, tak jak władza króla u Hobbesa, prawo ludu stało się najwyższe w porządku, a przez to niezbywalne. Myśl Rousseau, zdaniem Maritaina, jest w gruncie rzeczy kontynuacją dzieła Hobbesa [por. tamże: 52].

Tak przedstawiana idea suwerenności, zdaniem francuskiego filozofa, pomija średniowieczną ideę namiestnictwa, kiedy to władca jest częścią ludu, a nie obrazem Boga. Namiestnik posiada władzę, ponieważ zostaje do niej dopuszczony przez lud. Nie posiada pełni praw, ale uczestniczy w prawie ludu. A ponieważ „prawo ludu do rządzenia sobą wynika z prawa naturalnego, zatem samo wykonywanie prawa do rządzenia podlega prawu naturalnemu” [tamże: 56].

Stwierdzenie Lilla o religijnym podłożu totalitaryzmu jest uproszczeniem także w świetle wspomnianego na wstępie raportu. Autorzy przedstawiają religię nie tylko jako barierę, ale też – za Friedrichem i Brzezińskim – wręcz jako „wyspę odrębności” unoszącą się na morzu totalitaryzmu [za Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018: 23-24]. Przypominają, że architekci totalitarnych systemów mieli tego pełną świadomość i dlatego traktowali religię jako jednego z głównych wrogów ideologicznych. W obliczu totalitarnych zbrodni, które znamy z historii XX wieku, niezależna wizja świata, budząca obawy Hobbesa, była nie tylko jedyną ucieczką, ale wręcz gwarancją zachowania tego, co ludzkie.

W chrześcijańskiej wizji przekonanie, że lud jest w stanie sam sobą rządzić, a konkretnie: wybrać rozsądnych ludzi do pełnienia roli ustawodawców, wynika z przekonania o niezbywalnej godności człowieka [por. Mazurkiewicz 2001: 95]. Nazywanie człowieka osobą podkreśla, że będąc małą częścią materii, jest on jednocześnie „światem samym w sobie” – „istotą zebrzącą”, która ma kontakt z Istotą Absolutną [Grzybowski 2007: 197]. „Poglądy religijne”, o których wspomina Lilla, tego aspektu absolutnie nie uznawały, a to właśnie zachowanie osobowej

wizji człowieka nie pozwala ograniczyć człowieka do jego uwarunkowań biologicznych, produktywności ekonomicznej czy pozycji społecznej<sup>13</sup>. Jedynie przy zachowaniu postrzegania człowieka jako osoby może się kształtować prawidłowa relacja między obywatelem a ciałem politycznym. Osoba jest częścią ciała politycznego, któremu ma służyć, ale też czymś ponad nim z racji tkwiącego w niej ducha i wiecznego przeznaczenia [por. Maritain 1993: 155].

Pamięć o transcendentnej naturze osoby ludzkiej może być zachowana w ramach różnych rozwiązań ustrojowych, dlatego Watykan swoim autorytetem nie opowiada się za dominacją żadnego konkretnego systemu [por. Mazurkiewicz 2001: 213]. Sobór Watykański II, określając wzorcowe relacje państwa i Kościoła, stwierdza, że „wspólnota polityczna i Kościół są w swoich dziedzinach autonomiczne” [cyt za: tamże: 209]. Sedno stanowiska Kościoła nie polega na próbie zatarcia granic między religią a polityką. Opiera się bowiem na ewangelicznej zasadzie jasno polecającej oddawać „cezarrowi to, co należy do cezara, a Bogu to, co należy do Boga”<sup>14</sup>. W *Centesimus annus* Jan Paweł II naucza, że „wiarę chrześcijańską nie sądzi, by mogła ująć w sztywny schemat tak bardzo różnorodną rzeczywistość społeczno-polityczną i uznaje, że życie ludzkie w historii realizuje się na różne sposoby, które bynajmniej nie są doskonałe” [Jan Paweł II 2000: 46]. Z tego też powodu Kościół nie proponuje żadnych modeli, bo mogą się one zrodzić jedynie w ramach historycznych sytuacji, dzięki wysiłkowi wszystkich, którzy w sposób odpowiedzialny podejmą się odpowiedzi na konkretne problemy życia [por. tamże: 43]. Papieskiemu nauczaniu obca jest nostalgia za optymalnym ustrojem bądź myślenie o przyszłym idealnym rozwiązaniu społecznym [por. Zięba 1997: 46]<sup>15</sup>.

### 3. Punkt graniczny – uznanie prawdy

Dlaczego tak łatwo wobec tego atakować Kościół katolicki? Maritain w *Człowieku i państwie* przyznał, że myślał na ten temat ponad dwadzieścia pięć lat. Francuski filozof był przekonany, że możliwe jest pokojowe ułożenie relacji Kościoła

<sup>13</sup> Jan Paweł II przypominał, że „człowiek nie uznając wartości i wielkości osoby w sobie samym i w bliźnim, pozbawia się możliwości przeżycia w pełni własnego człowieczeństwa i nawiązania tej relacji, [...] dla której został stworzony przez Boga. Człowiek bowiem staje się naprawdę sobą poprzez wolny dar z siebie samego” [2000: 83].

<sup>14</sup> Mt. 22,21.

<sup>15</sup> Warto podkreślić, że tę wyjątkową cechę wyrosłej z korzeni chrześcijańskich kultury europejskiej podkreślali również myśliciele nieprzemawiający z pozycji religijnej. Leszek Kołakowski zauważał, że chrześcijaństwo leżące u źródeł duchowości Starego Kontynentu „nie odnalazło i nie obiecywało żadnych trwałych rozwiązań dla losu doczesnego ludzi” [2006: 30]. Kołakowski podkreślał ponadto zdolność kultury europejskiej do „kwestionowania samej siebie” i „spoglądania na siebie samą oczami innych” [tamże: 20].

i państwa<sup>16</sup>. Dodawał jednak, że, „w praktyce wszystko będzie zależało od tego, co lud dobrowolnie uzna w swoim sumieniu...” [Maritain 1993: 173] Kluczowym zdaje się być w tym miejscu pojęcie prawdy. Prawda rozumiana jako obiektywny stan rzeczy, ostateczna odpowiedź i fundament wszystkiego, co istnieje, jest tą kategorią życia społecznego, która wymaga ustosunkowania się [por. Jan Paweł II 1998a: 45; por. Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018: 8-9]. Jan Paweł II w encyklice *Centesimus annus* dowodził, że totalitaryzm rodzi się właśnie „z negacji obiektywnej prawdy, że jeśli nie uznaje się prawdy transcendentnej, triumfuje siła władzy” [Jan Paweł II 2000: 44]. Mazurkiewicz istotę konfliktu ukazał w sposób graficzny. Z jednej strony istnieje przekonanie, które można przedstawić zgodnie z poniższym schematem:



Mysł przeciwną autor ilustruje w następujący sposób [Mazurkiewicz 2001: 99]:



Zięba podkreśla, że samo unikanie mówienia o prawdzie, jeśli wynika z przekonania o jej braku, prowadzi do prawa pięści [1997: 40]<sup>17</sup>. Tymczasem, jak zauważa dominikanin, na Zachodzie „już samo przyjęcie istnienia prawdy absolutnej rodzi lęk przed wybuchem nietolerancji i autorytaryzmu” [tamże]. Jako ilustrację tej postawy przywołuje komentarz Milтона Friedmana do *Centesimus annus* Jana Pawła II. Słynny ekonomista, chwając encyklikę, zaznacza, że „pewne wzniosłe przekonanie, potraktowane w encyklice jakby było rzeczą oczywistą, zmroziło

<sup>16</sup> Rozwiązanie analogiczne – stosowanie niezmiennych zasad według odmiennych, zależnych od warunków historycznych, zasad [por. Maritain 1993: 161-164].

<sup>17</sup> Maritain dostrzegał, że we współczesnym mu świecie negatywne odniesienie do dominujących poglądów było traktowane jak obelga w stosunku do zbiorowości i powinno spodziewać się ekskomuniki [por. Grzybowski 2007: 361].



mu krew w żyłach” [tamże: 40]. Zastanawia się: „posłuszeństwo prawdzie o Bogu i człowieku jest pierwszym warunkiem wolności. Czyjej «prawdzie»? Przez kogo stanowionej? Czyżby echa hiszpańskiej inkwizycji?” [cyt za: tamże: 40]. Zięba konstatuje, że współczesny liberalizm nie tylko utracił powszechne u jego początków przekonanie o możliwości stopniowego odkrywania przez człowieka prawdy absolutnej, ale odrzuca samo istnienie prawdy [tamże].

Cytowany ekonomista amerykański przywoływał hiszpańską inkwizycję w komentarzu do encykliki dotyczącej m.in. ludzkiego sumienia. Nie przypominał jednak dokumentów Soboru Watykańskiego II. *Deklaracja o wolności religijnej* w znacznej części poświęcona jest obowiązkowi ludzkiemu, jakim jest poszukiwanie prawdy [*Dignitatis Humanae*: DWR 3], stanowi jednak czytelną wizję Kościoła sprzeciwiającego się wszelkim środkom przymusu i nieusprawiedliwionego nakłaniania do wiary<sup>18</sup>. Pogłębienie tej myśli znajdziemy w encyklice *Redemptoris misio*, gdzie Jan Paweł II napisał: „Kościół niczego nie narzuca, on tylko proponuje” [cyt za: Zięba 1997: 44], oraz: „*W Tertio millennio adveniente* wzywa cały Kościół do rachunku sumienia z grzechu nietolerancji i narzucania swych poglądów siłą” [cyt za: tamże: 48].

Dla Hobbesa i, co za tym idzie, dla Lilla samo odwoływanie do sumienia jest jednak najbardziej problematycznym elementem zagrażającym stabilności rządów, „ponieważ każda jednostka albo sekta religijna może wypowiedzieć posłuszeństwo suwerenowi, powołując się na jakiś wewnętrzny głos” [Lilla 2009: 118].

W tym wypadku ciekawe jest to, że obawy dotyczące sumienia są w Kościele znane i częściowo podzielane. John Henry Newman, dziewiętnastowieczny teolog, konwertyta z anglikanizmu na katolicyzm, podkreślał, że zmysł dobra i zła „jest tak delikatny, tak zmienny, tak łatwo ulegający dezorientacji, zaciemnieniu, wypaczeniu, tak subtelny w swoich metodach argumentacji, tak łatwo poddający się kształceniu, tak tendencyjny w wyniku pychy i namiętności, tak niestały w kierunku, w którym podąża, iż starając się istnieć pośród różnych działań i triumfów ludzkiego intelektu, zmysł ten jest największym ze wszystkich nauczycieli i równocześnie świeci jednak najsłabszym światłem” [2019: 77-78]. Skutkuje to pełną świadomością, że nawet osoby uważane przez Kościół za święte

<sup>18</sup> „Jeśli zważywszy na szczególne sytuacje narodów, zostaje przyznana jednej wspólnocie religijnej wyjątkowa pozycja cywilna w prawnym ustroju społeczeństwa, konieczne jest, aby jednocześnie było uznawane i respektowane prawo wszystkich obywateli i wspólnot religijnych do wolności w dziedzinie religijnej” [tamże: DWR 6].

lub godne naśladowania również popełniały błędy [por. tamże: 84]. Zdaniem Kościoła (który w 2019 r. włączył Newmana w poczet swoich świętych), chociaż światło Boże w umyśle człowieka może ulegać refrakcji, zachowuje zawsze prerogatywę w postaci domagania się posłuszeństwa [tamże: 64-65].

Hobbes słusznie zakładał, że człowiek jest skłonny do zła, Kościół określa ten stan jako skażenie grzechem pierworodnym. Zawsze jednak przypomina, że dzięki łasce człowiek może odpowiedzieć na Boże wezwanie i dlatego jest zdolny do dobra. Przeciwnie przekonanie, zdaniem Maritaina, wiedzie do wniosku, że ponieważ i tak człowiek nie potrafi współpracować z łaską, musi na świecie „urządzić się po swojemu” [Maritain 1946: 62-64]. Jak można wywnioskować również z twórczości Rousseau, z tej perspektywy już niewiele do stwierdzenia, że „człowiek po prostu taki jest”, a nic, co naprawdę ludzkie, nie może być złe, więc musi być dobre, lecz jest skażone przez opresyjną kulturę i cywilizację [por. Lilla 2009: 179]. Rousseau, według Scrutona, usprawiedliwił kwestionowanie każdej praktyki i każdego zwyczaju przy posługiwaniu się przyjętym *a priori* standardem i poprawianie go tak długo, aż osiągnie właściwy poziom [Scruton 2006: 36-38]. W konsekwencji następuje indywidualizacja sumienia, przekonanie, że „osąd moralny jest prawdziwy na mocy samego faktu, że pochodzi z sumienia” [Jan Paweł II 1998b: 32]. Maritain twierdził, że: „Człowiek burżuazyjny zaprzecza istnieniu w sobie zła i pierwiastka irracjonalnego, by móc cieszyć się świadectwem swego sumienia, być zadowolonym z siebie i przez siebie” [1946: 63].

Podobnie zamieszanie związane z sumieniem i niechęć do niego przedstawiał Newman, który podkreślał, że „gdy ludzie bronią praw sumienia, nie chodzi im w żadnym sensie o prawa Stwórcy ani obowiązki wobec Niego – w myśli i czynie – jaki ma stworzenie, ale o prawo myślenia, mówienia, pisania i działania zgodnie z własnym osądem lub nastrojem, nie myśląc wcale o Bogu. [...] Żądają tego, co uważają za prerogatywę Anglika, a mianowicie, by każdy sam sobie był panem we wszystkim, wyznawał co chce, nie pytał nikogo o pozwolenie...” [Newman 2018: 70-71]. Podobne przekonanie wyklucza potrzebę jakiegokolwiek autorytetu. Sprawujący władzę przestają być wybranymi „najmądrzejszymi spośród ludu”, ponieważ ich przekonania nie mogą się różnić od umiejętności przeciętnej jednostki [tamże: 67; por. Maritain 1993: 74-75<sup>19</sup>]. Nie ma to nic wspólnego z wymagającą

<sup>19</sup> Zdaniem Maritaina tylko oparcie państwa na demokratycznych podstawach może zapobiec objęciu kontrolą państwową zbyt licznych funkcji życia społecznego. Wśród współczesnych myślicieli jest wielu, którzy zwracają się w kierunku tzw. rządów instytucji. Maritain twierdzi, że społeczeństwa demokratyczne, które zagwarantowałyby obywatelom wolność polityczną,

posłuszeństwa transcendentną prawdą, o której pisze m.in. Jan Paweł II [2000: 91]. Prawdą, której nie można sprowadzać do poziomu ideologii.

W antyreligijnych wypowiedziach często zalicza się religię do teorii konstruktywistycznych [Zięba 1997: 48]. W ten sposób myli się prawdę z ideologią. Jan Paweł II przyznawał, że chrześcijaństwo niejednokrotnie sprowadzono do ideologii, ale jest to sprzeczne z jego nauczaniem. Ideologia stanowi przeświadczenie o pełnym poznaniu (posiadaniu) prawdy, co pozwala na stworzenie idealnego modelu życia społecznego. Kościół natomiast uważa się za dyspozytariusza, a nie właściciela prawdy objawionej, „a po drugie i jeszcze ważniejsze, jest ona w stosunku do niego pierwotna, co więcej, jest ponadludzka, ponadracjonalna, ponadfilozoficzna i ponadteologiczna, a jednym z ważnych zadań Kościoła jest obrona owej prawdy przed redukcją jej do ideologii” [tamże: 49]. Do wizji idealnego świata, który wysiłkiem rozumu można by na Ziemi zaprowadzić. W przeciwieństwie do opisywanej przez Lillę teologii politycznej lat dwudziestych XX wieku, „mesjaniistyczne wizje” nie dotyczą tu bezpośredniej organizacji życia politycznego [Lilla 2009: 313-315].

Przekonanie, że nowoczesność jest odwrotnie skorelowana z religijnością, stanowiło wielokrotnie inspirację dla budowania aksjologicznej próżni. Maritain przestrzegał jednak, że takie działanie zawsze związane jest z próbą ustanowienia nowego porządku, który sam musi opierać się na jakiś założeniach. Nigdy nie jest tak, że nie wierzymy w nic, nie czynimy żadnych wstępnych założeń. Autor *Humanizmu integralnego* za najbardziej drastyczny przykład takiej sytuacji uważał rozwój komunizm w Rosji; „...religia ta i wiara nie zjawia się przed nimi ani jako religia, gdyż jest ateistyczna, ani jako wiara, gdyż podaje się za wyraz nauki. Komunizm jest tak do głębi, tak substancjalnie religią – ziemską, że nie wie tego, że jest religią” [Maritain 1946: 36]. Doktryną, która chciałaby stanowić dla ludzi bezpieczną przystań „pod warunkiem rezygnacji z własnego rozumu” [Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018: 25]. Z tej pierwszej negacji, działaniu wbrew sobie, czyli wbrew sumieniu, rodzi się spirala kłamstwa, którą zburzyć może tylko prawda [tamże: 26].

Jeśli ustrój państwowy zawiera zabezpieczenia zapewniające mu stabilność i bezpieczeństwo, wspólnota obywatelska w żadnym przypadku nie musi oznaczać harmonii i braku napięć. Silna demokracja nie jest sprzeczna, w istocie zależy od

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powiększając jednocześnie despotyzm administracyjny, reprezentują osobliwy sposób myślenia. Mają wielkie sprawy, a nie mają małych, tymczasem już Tocqueville ostrzegał, że najbardziej niebezpieczne jest zniewolenie obywateli właśnie w sprawach małej wagi.

polityki akceptującej pluralizm i konflikt [Putnam 1995: 179; Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018: 25]. Obawy Marka Lilli są poniekąd słuszne, ludzie nie mogą żyć bez stawiania sobie pytań o charakterze metafizycznym. Obserwacje statystyczne pokazują, że wbrew panującym w XX wieku przekonaniom o nieuchronności postępującej sekularyzacji religia nie zanika [Mazurkiewicz 2001: 182]. Z punktu widzenia interesów państwa istotne jest jednak pytanie, czy wiara obywateli, także poprzez przytoczony we wstępie element pokory, przyczyniać się będzie do budowania dobra wspólnego, czy zastąpi ją jakiś rodzaj „religijności wynaturzonej” [tamże: 182]. Doświadczenia XX wieku pokazują wyraźnie, że jest to szczególnie istotne, gdy zauważymy, że tam, gdzie zawodzi religia, pojawiają się kultury, wiedza ezoteryczna i samozwańczy guru, którzy pociągają za sobą spragnione duchowości tłumy [Bell 1994: 204].

### Zakończenie

Scruton i Bell ostrzegali, że współczesna kultura zamiast budować, niszczy wspólnotę; byli zgodni w krytycznej ocenie duchowego stanu społeczeństw zachodnich. Amerykański ekonomista, podkreślając odmienną zasad panujących w poszczególnych dziedzinach, przestrzegał przed „najbardziej złowieszczym podziałem społeczeństwa” [tamże: 121]; angielski konserwatysta ostrzegał przed popadnięciem w barbarzyństwo. Obaj myśliciele zwracali się w kierunku religii jako koniecznej siły inspirującej życie społeczne. Przekonywali, że poczucie *sacrum* jest koniecznym gwarantem moralności, która z kolei stanowi podstawę panującego ustroju.

W Zachodniej kulturze, ze względu na wielowiekową tradycję, pierwszym wyborem wydaje się chrześcijaństwo. Wraz jednak z dziewiętnastowieczną teologią liberalną upowszechniło się przekonanie, że „chrześcijaństwo, aby być nowoczesne, musi być zredukowane do swego rodzaju religii moralności, całkowicie pozbawionej pierwiastków mistycznych i rygoryzmu doktrynalnego” [Zięba 1997: 29]. Przyznano wówczas, że religia jest potrzebna, ale po odpowiedniej, naukowej korekcie. Tytuł pracy Lilli – *Bezsilny Bóg* – oznacza Boga wyzbytego z transcendencji, ideę Boga wyprowadzaną z czysto ludzkiego doświadczenia. Wiara obywatelska kreuje Boga pozbawionego realnego wpływu na rzeczywistość, który stał się „martwym Bogiem”, niemogącym zaspokoić tych poszukujących szczerą wiarą [Lilla 2009: 315]. Dlatego jedną z zaskakujących tez Lilli jest przeświadczenie, że najtrudniejsze wyzwanie dla „wielkiej separacji” (polityki i religii) nie przyszło od ortodoksyjnych wyznawców, ale od w pełni nowoczesnych

filozofów i teologów<sup>20</sup>, którzy odwróciwszy się od chrześcijańskiej i żydowskiej ortodoksji, stwierdzili, że teologia polityczna sankcjonująca tyranie i kulturalne zacofanie straciła na znaczeniu dzięki wysiłkowi rozumu. Ortodoksyjni wyznawcy, m.in. Jan Paweł II, popierają autonomiczność państwa. Ostrzegają jedynie, że państwo świeckie nie może być państwem laicyzującym [Kowalczyk 1992: 73].

Lilla słusznie postuluje, by czasu pokoju, jakim po II wojnie światowej cieszyła się znaczna część zachodnich społeczeństw, nie traktować jako rzeczywistości oczywistej, w której refleksja nad relacjami religii i polityki nie jest już potrzebna. Broniąc tego, co nazywa „dziedzictwem Hobbesa”, Lilla zdaje się jednak nie dostrzegać, że jedynie to, co transcendentne daje podstawy do właściwego postrzegania, a co za tym idzie – do ochrony osoby ludzkiej. Zdaje się nie dostrzegać, że to właśnie założenie o istnieniu prawdy najwyższej, transcendentnej, do której może odwołać się ludzkie sumienie, daje możliwość zmiany, poprawy; stwarza przestrzeń wolności i dialogu. Bez transcendentnego wymiaru poszukiwanie i wspólne odkrywanie prawdy zamienia się w ideologię [por. Mazurkiewicz i in. 2018: 8, 25].

Jeśli neutralność religijna zachodniego świata jest świadomym wyborem, nie można zapominać, że jest to wynik przyjęcia określonych wartości, metapolityki i wiary ludu, która ją kształtuje [por. tamże: 25]. Wyjątkowa kruchość demokracji polega na tym, że by istnieć, potrzebuje stałego godzenia w sobie dwóch sprzecznych idei: zasady większości i przekonania o istnieniu wartości absolutnych<sup>21</sup>. „Demokracja zatem jawi się jako swoisty «pożeracz wartości», których «dostawcami» są funkcjonujące w społeczeństwach Kościoły. Ich obecność wraz z napięciami, do jakich przy tej okazji dochodzi, jest niezbędna dla jej właściwego funkcjonowania” [Mazurkiewicz 2001: 343]. Cała trudność w postrzeganiu katolickiego podejścia do świata polityki polega na tym, że finalnie, niezależnie od tego, jak je określimy i gdzie ulokujemy jego źródło, każdorazowo toczy się

<sup>20</sup> Współczesne przejawy podobnych tendencji na gruncie Unii Europejskiej opisuje Piotr Mazurkiewicz w „*Polityka wyznaniowa Unii Europejskiej*”, w: Mazurkiewicz P., Ptaszek R., T., Młyńczyk Ł., *Polityka wyznaniowa. Perspektywa Unii Europejskiej*, Zielona Góra 2018 „Kościoły i wspólnoty religijne są ważnym partnerem unijnych konsultacji, ale zarazem poprzez wciąganie ich w ten proces dąży się do neutralizacji ich religijnego przesłania”. Celem jest wytworzenie świeckiej religii zgodnej z unijnymi standardami, pozbawionej krytycznego ostrza wobec sfery politycznej bez przeprowadzania gwałtownej rewolucji, burzenia kościołów i usuwania hierarchów.

<sup>21</sup> Artykuł powstał na podstawie pracy magisterskiej pt. *Pluralizm a idea apostołstwa* przygotowanej pod kierownictwem prof. Marcina Króla w Instytucie Stosowanych Nauk Społecznych Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.

ono w niezwykle delikatnym sanktuarium ludzkiego wnętrza. Wnętrza, które zawsze jest niedoskonałe i skłonne do wszelkiego zła, ale też niewiarygodnego dobra. Może więc w prowadzonych dyskusjach warto odwrócić pytanie i nie koncentrować się na tym, dlaczego to delikatne wnętrze ciągle pozwala na zło, ale zapytać, czemu – czasem wbrew wszystkiemu – jest zdolne do dobra [por. Maritain 1946: 57]<sup>22</sup>?

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<sup>22</sup> W *Humanizmie integralnym* za błąd Bartha Maritain uważał, z jednej strony, „bezpośredni powrót do przeszłości”, a z drugiej – przekonanie, „że łaska nie ożywia” [tamże].

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*O duchowym przywództwie politycznym.  
Polityka duchowa jako droga  
dla rozwoju przyszłej Europy*

**On Spiritual Political Leadership. Spiritual politics  
as a path for the development of future Europe**

**Abstract:** Spiritual political leadership refers to politics as the art of governing, which takes into account full and comprehensive human development and enables self-realization of citizens. It satisfies the ultimate aspiration of the human being to achieve intellectual and moral perfection, which reaches its highest state in holiness, the result of human connection with the perfection of God. The goal of spiritual political leadership is a happy society, one in which everyone has the opportunity for self-realization, while at the same time respecting the self-realization of others. It promotes social harmony, which comes from cooperation among different groups within society and is an alternative to today's disharmony resulting from political conflict. Once the practical value of spiritual political leadership is recognized, a practical postulate follows: leaders of the European Union and of individual European countries should abandon the modernist trend of secularization and participate fully in the development of Christian civilization, which can unify humanity around the world on an ethical level, and should always have in mind the highest universal values and the ultimate goal of human life. The time has come to rebuild the strength of Christianity in Europe and to build in our countries social harmony that can radiate to other countries and continents.

**Keywords:** political leadership, politics, spirituality, self-realization, Europe, social harmony, Christianity, European Union, Saint Augustine, Saint Thomas Aquinas

**Abstrakt:** Duchowe przywództwo polityczne odnosi się do sztuki rządzenia państwem, która uwzględnia pełny i wszechstronny rozwój osobowy człowieka, umożliwia obywatelom samorealizację i w ten sposób zaspakaja ludzkie dążenie do osiągnięcia doskonałości moralnej i intelektualnej, osiągającej swój najwyższy stopień rozwoju w świętości jako łączności z doskonałością Boga. Jego celem jest szczęśliwe

społeczeństwo, w którym każdy ma możliwość samorealizacji, a jednocześnie szanuje samorealizację innych. Wspiera harmonię społeczną, która wynika ze współdziałania między różnymi grupami w obrębie społeczeństwa oraz jest alternatywą dla dzisiejszej dysharmonii będącej pokłosiem toczącego się konfliktu politycznego. Z wartości duchowego przywództwa politycznego wyłania się postulat praktyczny: przywódcy Unii Europejskiej oraz indywidualnych państw europejskich powinni porzucić modernistyczny trend to sekularyzacji i uczestniczyć w rozwoju cywilizacji chrześcijańskiej, jednoczącej ludzkość całego świata na poziomie etycznym, oraz mieć zawsze na uwadze najwyższe wartości uniwersalne i ostateczny cel życia ludzkiego. Nadszedł czas, aby odbudować w Europie siłę chrześcijaństwa oraz budować w naszych państwach promieniującą na inne państwa i kontynenty harmonię społeczną.

**Słowa kluczowe:** przywództwo polityczne, polityka, duchowość, samorealizacja, Europa, harmonia społeczna, chrześcijaństwo, Unia Europejska, św. Augustyn, św. Tomasz z Akwinu

## Wstęp

W pracach politologicznych, czy też z dziedziny filozofii politycznej, próżno szukać określenia „duchowe przywództwo polityczne”. Warto się jednak nad tym pojęciem zastanowić. Za podjęciem rozważań na ten temat przemawia ich praktyczny aspekt: dobro, tradycyjny cel myślenia o polityce [Arystoteles: 1094a-1094b]<sup>1</sup>. Zważmy bowiem, że dobro państw słusznie wymaga dobrych rządów i dobrego przywództwa, a za takie, jak będę chciał to wykazać, uznać należy duchowe przywództwo polityczne. Ponadto, świat współczesny targany licznymi konfliktami potrzebuje wskazania właściwego kierunku, w jakim ma dalej się rozwijać. Choć wielu próbuje służyć użyteczną radą, twierdzą jednak, że nic nie zastąpi tutaj refleksji filozoficznej. Jako że filozofia, w klasycznym jej rozumieniu, to „dążenie do wiedzy całościowej o całości rzeczywistości” [Korab-Karpowicz 2022: 7.53]. To nie jest wiedza wycinkowa i ograniczona, specjalistyczna czy fachowa, lecz wszechogarniająca, uniwersalna, obejmująca istotne sprawy dotyczące człowieka. „Poznaj siebie samego” – to starożytne hasło leżące u jej podstaw<sup>2</sup>. Bowiem bez znajomości samych siebie, bez zrozu-

<sup>1</sup> Arystoteles pisze, że skoro polityka, jako sztuka rządzenia i nauka o państwie, używa dla realizacji swego celu wszystkich innych nauk i umiejętności, to jej cel musi obejmować cele ich wszystkich i być „największym dobrem człowieka” [tamże: 1094b].

<sup>2</sup> Maksyma „Poznaj samego siebie” (gr. *gnóthi seautón*) znajdowała się na frontonie świątyni Apollina w Delfach. Uważa się ją za jedną z maksym delhijskich, tzw. przykazań wielkich mędrców, które stanowiły podstawowe reguły wychowawcze świata helleńskiego. Według świadectwa Ksenofonta i Platona używał jej Sokrates. W dialogu Platońskim *Fajdros* Sokrates mówi do młodego Fajdrosa, że skoro nie jest jeszcze „w stanie, jak napis w Delfach powiada, poznać siebie samego”, wydaje mu się zbędnym zajmować się metodologią i innymi zbędnymi dociekaniem dotyczącymi świata zewnętrznego [90].

mienia, kim jesteśmy i jakie jest nasze przeznaczenie, jakże my, ludzie, mamy planować i organizować nasze życie indywidualne i zbiorowe? Jakże mamy wiedzieć, jaki jest cel i dobro państw, jaki ma mieć charakter dobre przywództwo i kogo obierać za przywódców? Rozważania tu podjęte na temat duchowości i polityki wyjaśnią znaczenie pojęcia „duchowe przywództwo polityczne”, a jednocześnie wskażą na wagę tak rozumianego przywództwa oraz tego, co określam „polityką duchową”, dla harmonii społecznej i rozwoju współczesnej Europy.

### 1. Polityka a duchowość

W książce *Teologia życia duchowego*, którą napisał teolog i moralista, ks. prof. Stanisław Witek, czytamy: „Życie duchowe stanowi wyraz tego, co w człowieku jest najważniejsze i nadaje mu charakter istoty rozumnej i wolnej. Chodzi tutaj o jego poznanie prawdy, umiłowanie dobra, szukanie piękna, pragnienie miłości i inne wielkie sprawy człowieka... W nich wyraża się jego dostojeństwo moralne, godność człowieczeństwa” [Witek 1986: 15].

Omawiając zaś pełnię życia duchowego, ks. Witek dodaje: „Doskonałość prawdziwego człowieczeństwa osiąga swój najwyższy stopień rozwoju w świętości jako łączności z niezmierną doskonałością Boga” [tamże: 211].

Polityka w opinii wielu osób nie wiąże się dziś z tym, co w człowieku jest duchowe, a więc święte i najwyższe. Oddzielona często od moralności, zarówno w praktyce działań politycznych, jak i w teorii, na ogół nie kojarzy się z duchowością. Utożsamiana z walką o władzę, przybiera formę ciągłego konfliktu, zarówno w obrębie danego kraju, jak i na arenie międzynarodowej. Pojęcia „polityka” i „duchowość” mogą się wręcz wydawać ze sobą sprzeczne. Pierwsze odnieść można do walki i ludzkich ułomności, drugie do najwyższych wartości moralnych i stanu doskonałości. Czy więc, zapytam, mówiąc językiem nieco staroświeckim, może istnieć „polityka z ducha”, inaczej – „polityka duchowa”, czyli taka, która otwiera się na doskonałość człowieczeństwa, a więc to, co w nim moralnie najwyższe, i na świętość? Jaki ma sens wyrażenie „duchowe przywództwo polityczne”? Czy dzisiejszą dysharmonię i konflikt w życiu politycznym może zastąpić harmonia społeczna?

Aby odpowiedzieć na te pytania, spróbuję najpierw zastanowić się nad tym, czym jest w istocie polityka i jaki jest jej charakter.

Po pierwsze, chciałbym zauważyć, że nie zawsze polityka była oderwana od moralności. Tradycja klasyczna<sup>3</sup>, obejmująca zarówno wielkich filozofów antycznych (takich jak Platon, Arystoteles, Cyceon), jak i chrześcijańskich (św. Augustyna i św. Tomasza z Akwinu), „umieszczała politykę w polu działań moralnych człowieka” [Krąpiec 2007: 5]. Pierwszym wielkim krytykiem tradycji klasycznej był Machiavelli. Głosił on separację między praktyką polityki i wymogami moralnymi. Jako wielbiciel ustroju republiki rzymskiej pozostawał on jednak nadal do pewnego stopnia pod wpływem klasycyzmu. Zerwał z nią ostatecznie Thomas Hobbes, ojciec nowożytnej filozofii politycznej. Autor *Lewiatana* wyraża to jasno: „dawności jako takiej nie należy się żaden szacunek” [Hobbes: konkluzja 15]. Wszelako – pomimo ataków ze strony moderności (nowoczesności), a następnie, postmoderności (ponowoczesności)<sup>4</sup> – tradycja klasyczna, łącząca politykę i etykę oraz podkreślająca wagę cnót w życiu publicznym, przetrwała do naszych czasów. W sposób klasyczny myślimy nadal. Tradycja klasyczna wyposażała nasze umysły w zespół pojęć, które okazały się dla cywilizacji zachodniej nigdy niewysychającym źródłem inspiracji i odnowy.

Powracając do źródeł, a więc do tradycji klasycznej, w dalszych rozważaniach na temat przywództwa politycznego oprę się o myśl dwóch wielkich teologów i filozofów chrześcijańskich: św. Augustyna i św. Tomasza z Akwinu.

## 2. Dwa państwa i dwie polityki

Nazywany często przez potomnych ojcem teologii katolickiej, św. Augustyn w swym wiekopomnym dziele *Państwo Boże* przedstawił ideę dwóch typów państw, a ściślej dwóch społeczności [Korab-Karpowicz 2010: 129-156]. Pierwsze, państwo ziemskie, składa się z „ludzi pragnących żyć wedle ciała, drugie [państwo Boże] – pragnących żyć wedle ducha” [Augustyn, *Państwo*: XIV, 1].

Państwo ziemskie to według św. Augustyna społeczność tych, którzy żyją według norm ustalonych przez człowieka. Jest to społeczność ludzi odwróconych od Boga, czyli ludzi upadłych, identyfikujących siebie nie z duchem, lecz z cielesnością i realizujących cele doczesne na ziemi. Jego mieszkańcy powodowani są miłością własną

<sup>3</sup> Tradycja klasyczna to w moim rozumieniu tradycja moralna, która wyłoniła się w europejskiej myśli politycznej. Obejmuje ona filozofów i myślicieli, dla których polityka jest nieodłącznie związana z etyką i którzy podkreślają wagę cnót w życiu publicznym.

<sup>4</sup> Tradycyjność (epoka społeczeństwa tradycyjnego), moderność (nowoczesność) i postmoderność (ponowoczesność) to trzy epoki w dziejach ludzkości, ale jednocześnie trzy formacje kulturowe lub ideowe [zob. Korab-Karpowicz 2013: 51-70].

i żądzą posiadania, która prowadzi do przywłaszczenia. Roszczą sobie prawa do własności, która staje się niewzruszoną podstawą stosunków społecznych. Lecz własność prywatna dzieli. Dlatego państwo ziemskie jest wewnętrznie rozbite, skłócone, podzielone tak, że „jedna część silniejsza uciska drugą” [tamże: XVIII, 2]. W takim państwie, miłującym moc, władcy rządzą z żądzy do panowania – choć pełni wad, chcą być panami świata. Natomiast mieszkańcy państwa Bożego, którzy żyją z wiary, miłują Boga nade wszystko i z tej miłości wypływają ich czyny na ziemi. Prowadzą życie zgodnie ze wskazaniami od Boga i z perspektywą szczęścia, które ma dopiero nadejść. Identyfikują siebie jako istoty duchowe i trwają w pokoju i prawdzie. W takim państwie przywódcy, wyposażeni w cnoty, stają się dla innych wzorem. Ich władza „nie jest dla ich dobra własnego, lecz dla dobra ludzkości” [tamże: XIV, 3].

Podążając za myślą św. Augustyna i próbując zastosować ją do dnia dzisiejszego, mogę powiedzieć, że tak jak mamy dwa państwa, na zasadzie analogii, mamy także dwa typy polityki. Państwu ziemskiemu, czyli inaczej – wadliwemu, odpowiada polityka rozumiana jako walka o władzę, której celem jest dominacja nad innymi i zapewnienie sobie dóbr doczesnych, oraz związany z nią ciągły konflikt. Państwu Bożemu, które może być rozumiane jako państwo dobre, czyli wzorowe lub godne naśladowania, odpowiada polityka rozumiana jako sztuka rządzenia, oparta na zgodnej współpracy między obywatelami. Taka polityka realizuje życie dobre. Życie dobre, cel polityki jako sztuki rządzenia, to szeroko pojęty dobrobyt wspólnoty politycznej. Tak jak czytamy w *Traktacie polityczno-filozoficznym*, „[ż]ycie dobre to życie pełne” [Korab-Karpowicz 2022: 3.411] – wiąże się z pełnym ludzkim rozwojem. To nie tylko bezpieczeństwo i zamożność obywateli, ale także ich rozwój duchowy, czyli moralny i intelektualny. „Dla człowieka pobożnego życiem dobrym jest dążenie do doskonałości moralnej i poznania Boga, a w rezultacie osiągnięcie szczęścia wiecznego” [tamże: 1.22].

Przypomnijmy, że słowo „polityka” (gr. *politike*) pochodzi od greckiego słowa *polis*, oznaczającego miasto-państwo, a jednocześnie wspólnotę złożoną z wolnych obywateli. W oryginalnym więc znaczeniu tego słowa polityka to sztuka rządzenia, a równocześnie zaangażowanie się obywateli w działania w sferze publicznej. Na sztukę rządzenia składają się zarówno umiejętność organizacji społeczeństwa dla współdziałania w celu realizacji życia dobrego, jak i umiejętność utrzymania się przy władzy tych, którzy ją sprawują. Polityka rozumiana jako sztuka rządzenia może więc zawierać element konfliktu, jaki wiąże się ze współzawodnictwem i walką o władzę oraz jej utrzymaniem, a także z różnicą poglądów między osobami i grupami uczestniczącymi w życiu politycznym, ale się do konfliktu nie

sprowadza. Konflikt występujący zarówno w stosunkach wewnętrznych państwa, jak i w stosunkach międzynarodowych „nie jest istotą polityki ani jej nie definiuje, a jest jedynie jej elementem składowym” [tamże: 1.15].

Wynika stąd, że rozumienie i definicje polityki przez samo odniesienie jej do walki o władzę [zob. Morgenthau 1956: 25] i konfliktu czy słynnego rozróżnienia między przyjacielem i wrogiem są błędne [zob. Król 2008: 129-136]. Polityka właściwie rozumiana to nie sam konflikt czy współzawodnictwo, ale przede wszystkim sztuka rządzenia – to umiejętność organizacji społeczeństwa do współdziałania i realizowania w społeczeństwie życia dobrego. Życie dobre jest dobrem wspólnym całego społeczeństwa, a więc wszystkich jednostek składających się na daną społeczność polityczną i każdej z osobna, a nie jedynie dobrem partykularnym, jakim jest korzyść określonej jednostki lub grupy [zob. Krąpiec 2007: 103, 107]<sup>5</sup>. Na dobro wspólne składają się więc wszystkie dobra (materialne i duchowe) wytworzone w danym państwie, które są rezultatem pracy jego obywateli oraz służą ich samorealizacji, czyli zaspakajaniu ich potrzeb i celów życiowych. Jeżeli polityka, właściwie rozumiana jako sztuka rządzenia, realizuje życie dobre i uwzględnia najwyższe cele duchowe człowieka (a więc jego dążenie do doskonałości moralnej i intelektualnej oraz potrzebę łączności z niezmierzoną doskonałością Boga), może być ona wówczas określona jako „polityka duchowa”. Państwo, które dzięki takiej polityce realizuje w społeczeństwie życie dobre, jest prawdziwie dobrym państwem. „O ile państwa wadliwe, z rozmaitych powodów, takich jak na przykład wysoka przestępczość, bieda i brak osłon socjalnych, albo brak wolności słowa i sumienia, kontrola przepływu informacji i utrzymywanie ludzi w ignorancji i poczuciu winy,<sup>6</sup> blokują [pełny i wszechstronny] rozwój [osobowy] człowieka, państwa dobre go umożliwiają” [Korab-Karpowicz 2017: 164]<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Dla o. Mieczysława Krąpca dobrem wspólnym jest rozwój osobowy członków społeczności politycznej. Jest to słuszne, chociaż nie oddaje pełnego znaczenia terminu „dobro wspólne” w teorii polityki. W moim ujęciu dobrem wspólnym jest zarówno rozwój osobowy członków społeczności, jak i rezultat tego rozwoju: ich bezpieczeństwo, zamożność, wykształcenie, inteligencja, moralność, kultura osobista, cnoty obywatelskie, osiągnięcia artystyczne i naukowe, zdolności twórcze, rozważania religijne i filozoficzne.

<sup>6</sup> Według amerykańskiego krytyka społecznego Noama Chomsky’ego na współczesne metody manipulacji społeczeństwem składają się m.in.: manipulacja informacją i odwracanie uwagi od problemów ważnych na te o znaczeniu drugorzędnym; traktowanie ludzi jak małych dzieci; utrzymywanie ich w ignorancji i przeciętności; operowanie na ich emocjach, budowanie w nich poczucia winy i tym samym niszczenie poczucia wartości własnej [zob. Lamentowicz 2015: 26-27].

<sup>7</sup> W cytowanej książce – *Harmonia społeczna* – wymienione są cztery kryteria dobrego państwa. Pierwszym kryterium jest wypełnienie funkcji obrońcy i organizatora społeczeństwa; drugim – pełny i wszechstronny rozwój osobowy obywateli, trzecim – rozwinięte cnoty obywatelskie; czwartym – właściwy ustrój.

### 3. Duchowe przywództwo polityczne

Nawiążę teraz z kolei do myśli św. Tomasza z Akwinu. Posługując się proponowaną przez niego analogią, można zauważyć, że podobnie jak w człowieku da się wyróżnić pewien porządek naturalny, który nakazuje nam zastanawiać się nad naszym postępowaniem i w naszych działaniach kierować się rozumem, tak i w społeczeństwie są zawsze ci, którzy coś proponują innym i ich kierują, i ci, którzy ich słuchają [Tomasz z Akwinu: 108, 2 i 6]. Życie społeczne nie może obejść się bez kierownictwa. Władza i rządy są rzeczą naturalną. Dla realizacji w państwie życia dobrego lub jakiegokolwiek przedsięwzięcia grupowego potrzebne jest więc zawsze odpowiednie przywództwo.

Przywódca to, ujmując rzecz najprościej, ten, który stoi na czele grupy swych zwolenników i przewodzi, czyli organizuje i kieruje ich do określonego celu. Przewodzić można za pomocą praw, rozkazów, poleceń, perswazji, autorytetu lub ich kombinacji. Przywódca polityczny w danym państwie przewodzi społecznością swojego kraju, podejmuje kluczowe decyzje i sprawuje najwyższe urzędy w państwie [Hartliński 2012: 56-60]. Do przywódców politycznych zalicza się zazwyczaj prezydentów, premierów oraz inne osoby kształtujące politykę państwa i swoimi decyzjami wywierające znaczący wpływ na społeczeństwo.

Po tych wstępnych rozważaniach możemy się teraz zapytać: na czym polega duchowe przywództwo polityczne? Czym różni się ono od zwykłego przywództwa politycznego, z jakim mamy do czynienia zazwyczaj w wielu państwach?

Tak jak wyróżniliśmy dwa typy państw: państwo dobre i państwo wadliwe; dwa rodzaje polityki: politykę jako sztukę rządzenia i politykę jako walkę o władzę, tak możemy wyróżnić dwa rodzaje przywództwa politycznego: duchowe i zwykłe. Zwykłe przywództwo polityczne to rezultat działalności osób o umysłach mniej lub bardziej przeciętnych. W zależności od ich wiedzy, umiejętności oraz zaangażowania na rzecz dobra wspólnego mogą oni mieć mniejszy lub większy pozytywny wpływ na rozwój danego kraju. Granice zwykłego przywództwa politycznego wyznacza, z jednej strony, państwo słabe lub upadłe, niezdolne do obrony własnych granic oraz zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa i warunków dobrobytu materialnego obywatelom, a z drugiej strony – państwo silne i dobrze zorganizowane, osiągające sukcesy gospodarcze oraz zapewniające obywatelom bezpieczeństwo i wysoki standard życia. Bez względu jednak na to, czy zwykłe przywództwo polityczne prowadzi do państwa silnego czy słabego, bogatego czy biednego, rządzonego w sposób demokratyczny czy autorytarny, wyposażonego w najnowsze technologie



i posiadającego najlepsze uniwersytety czy zacofanego, omija ono ważny aspekt życia ludzkiego, jakim jest sfera ducha. Zapomina o poszukiwaniu prawdy, umiłowaniu dobra, pomnażaniu piękna, pragnieniu miłości, dążeniu do Boga i o innych wielkich sprawach człowieka. Często wręcz, za pomocą indoktrynacji lub w inny sposób, zubaża ono lub wypacza duchowość obywateli i ich demoralizuje<sup>8</sup>.

Tak jak to przed wiekami napisał św. Tomasz z Akwinu: ponieważ przywódcy polityczni mają wpływ na życie wielu osób, z których złożone jest społeczeństwo, władzy w państwie nie powinni pełnić ludzie przeciętni, lecz ludzie wybitni, „wybijający się nad pozostałymi wiedzą i sprawiedliwością” – tacy, którzy swoich umiejętności i stanowisk nie obrócą na własną korzyść, lecz będą mieli na uwadze korzyść innych i dobro wspólne [Tomasz z Akwinu, 96, 4]. Jednakże, wychodząc tu już poza myśl św. Tomasza, pragnę tu zaakcentować, że od duchowego przywódcy politycznego należy wymagać jeszcze więcej. Powinien wyróżniać się na tle innych większą wiedzą i poczuciem sprawiedliwości oraz kierować się w swych działaniach dobrem wspólnym oraz posiadać nie tylko ograniczoną wiedzę fachową, ale też filozoficzną i uniwersalną – tę, która dotyczy ostatecznych przeznaczeń i celów człowieka. Inaczej mówiąc, duchowego przywódcę politycznego powinna charakteryzować mądrość – całościowa wiedza o rzeczywistości. Bowiem, skoro „przewodzić” znaczy „kierować do określonego celu”, to również na poziomie politycznym, kiedy ma się na uwadze kierowanie państwem, ten określony przez przywódcę cel polityczny, w którego realizację zaangażowani są obywatele, nie może być sprzeczny z pełnym i wszechstronnym rozwojem osobowym człowieka, z jego pełną samorealizacją, z jego dążeniem do osiągnięcia doskonałości moralnej i intelektualnej, która, jak pisze ks. Witek, osiąga swój „najwyższy stopień rozwoju w świętości jako łączności z niezmierną doskonałością Boga” [Witek 1986: 15].

Jednym z najtrudniejszych i najbardziej odpowiedzialnych zadań jest rządzenie państwem. Dlatego u steru władzy nie mogą być ludzie przeciętni. Podczas gdy w związku z zasadą wolności, jaką jest możliwość samorealizacji, wszystkim obywatelom przysługuje równy dostęp do wiedzy i wykształcenia, wykonywanie określonych funkcji należy do osób najlepiej się do tego nadających. Do tych funkcji należy też funkcja rządzenia. Wymaga ona osób o pożądanym umiejętnościach, wiedzy i moralności.

<sup>8</sup> W dzisiejszych realiach politycznych zwykle przywództwo polityczne prowadzi do państwa zmaterializowanego i zsekularyzowanego (przykładem może być większość państw europejskich) lub do równie zmaterializowanego państwa religijnego, w którym dominuje jedno wyznanie i brak jest wolności sumienia (przykładem mogą być niektóre państwa arabskie).

Te rozważania prowadzą do definicji duchowego przywództwa politycznego. Duchowe przywództwo polityczne to sztuka rządzenia państwem, która uwzględnia pełny i wszechstronny rozwój osobowy człowieka oraz umożliwia obywatelom samorealizację.

„Samorealizacja jest realizacją ludzkich potrzeb” [Korab-Karpowicz 2022: 4.31]. Ludzie mogą mieć różne potrzeby i różne cele życiowe, wynikające z ich wykształcenia i wychowania. To, co dla jednej osoby jest sukcesem i spełnieniem życiowym, dla drugiej może być porażką. Duchowe przywództwo polityczne nie narzuca określonego celu samorealizacji obywatelom, ale mając na uwadze różnorodne ludzkie potrzeby, stwarza obywatelom warunki dla ich pełnego i wszechstronnego rozwoju osobowego. Umożliwia każdemu spełnienie przypadających mu zadań życiowych pod warunkiem, że nie wiąże się z tym krzywda innej osoby. Jego celem jest szczęśliwe społeczeństwo, a więc takie, w którym każdy ma możliwość samorealizacji, szanując jednocześnie samorealizację innych.

#### **4. Cnoty obywatelskie i harmonia społeczna**

Cnoty obywatelskie to wartości kulturowe, które mają pozytywny wpływ na relacje obywateli w życiu społecznym i pomagają im osiągnąć wspólny i indywidualny sukces. Są to takie cechy osobowe jak odwaga, uczciwość, pracowitość, wzajemna życzliwość, współdziałanie, poszanowanie prawa, a nade wszystko umiłowanie wolności i miłość ojczyzny. Mądrość, z kolei, to podstawowa cecha przywódców. To umiejętność odróżniania dobra od zła, kierowania się dobrem oraz urzeczywistniania tego, co w życiu wartościowe, przez podejmowanie możliwie najlepszych decyzji korzystnych dla wspólnoty. Ale nawet te wzniosłe cnoty mogą zmienić się wady, jeżeli podporządkowane są żądzy panowania, służą egoizmowi pojedynczego narodu i nie mają odniesienia do ostatecznego celu ludzkiego istnienia. Aby zachować swą wzniosłość, muszą być odniesione do, wpływających z wiary w Boga, cnót najwyższych i uniwersalnych, dotyczących całej ludzkości.

Filozofia moderności odrzuciła klasyczną ideę mądrości i cnoty w polityce. Dążąc do oparcia polityki na podstawach naukowych, Hobbes, podobnie jak jego liczni modernistyczni i postmodernistyczni następcy, próbował traktować ludzi w sposób abstrakcyjny i mechaniczny [Korab-Karpowicz 2010: 284-286]. Przyjął założenie, że wszyscy ludzie są jednakowo pobudzani do działań przez pożądania. Tym samym zakwestionował ich cnoty i podkreślił ich wolę mocy i interesowność.

Konsekwentnie, skoro, zgodnie z teorią Hobbesa i jego uczniów, ludzie nie wyróżniają już pozytywne cechy osobowe, gdyż wszyscy, bez względu na ich wykształcenie i pochodzenie, mają na uwadze jedynie interes własny i dążą do panowania nad innymi, wówczas władzę w państwie może pełnić każdy. W dzisiejszych demokracjach, kto będzie u władzy, nie zależy od cnót danego człowieka, lecz od wygrania wyborów, a o tym decydują różne czynniki. Polityka, klasycznie rozumiana jako szuka rządzenia, staje się w tym kontekście walką o panowanie i grą interesów. Pomniejszeniu ulega idea wspólnego dobra, a znaczenia nabierają interesy partykularne partii politycznych i określonych grup politycznego nacisku. Współczesne życie polityczne przybiera w ten sposób formę ciągłego konfliktu, toczzonego zarówno wewnątrz państwa, jak i na arenie międzynarodowej. Jest zdominowane przez osoby, którym brak moralności, a także często odpowiednich kwalifikacji dla pełnienia funkcji przywódczych. Jako rezultat ich ignorancji, następuje upadek duchowych aspektów życia. Życie ludzkie w społeczeństwie staje się coraz bardziej mechaniczne, pragmatyczne, manipulowane przez media, skomercjalizowane, zunifikowane i powierzchowne, i brakuje w nim miejsca dla poezji, sztuk pięknych oraz głębszej refleksji filozoficznej i religijnej.

Postulatem praktycznym płynącym z tych obserwacji jest konieczność zmiany charakteru współczesnej polityki. Aby tego dokonać, należy dowieść, że Hobbesowski obraz natury ludzkiej i wynikająca z niego dominująca do dziś koncepcja polityki jako walki o władzę są błędne. Człowiek został obdarzony wolnością, a to oznacza, że nie jest ślepo podporządkowany swoim pożądaniam, lecz ma możliwość wyboru. Jego postępowanie jest modyfikowane przez nabyte cechy osobowe, którymi są cnoty, oraz przez normy społeczne, którymi są zasady etyczne. Nawet jeżeli kierują się w działaniu określonym interesem, ludzie nie są istotami interesu, których zachowania są z góry zdeterminowane przez ich pożądaniami, ale zdolnymi do decydowania o sobie istotami rozumnymi, moralnymi i wolnymi.

Alternatywą w stosunku do dzisiejszej dysharmonii wynikającej z konfliktu w polityce i ucieczki z życia prawdy, dobra, piękna i miłości jest harmonia społeczna. Harmonia społeczna nie jest sztuczną unifikacją ludzkości ani też nużącą równością społeczeństwa bezklasowego – nie jest ujednoliceniem ani też zrównaniem. Jest raczej społecznym bogactwem – swoistą kompozycją różnorodności jednostek i grup, w której odnajdziemy wzajemne uzupełnianie się oraz cnotę moralną. Na tę różnorodność składają się dające się wyróżnić w społeczeństwie grupy osób, takich jak pracownicy, przedsiębiorcy czy urzędnicy, które różnią

się od siebie pozycją społeczną, sposobem zatrudnienia, zamożnością i tradycją, jednakże każda z nich, motywowana duchem obywatelskim, działa na swój sposób na rzecz wspólnego dobra. Innym elementem składowym tej różnorodności jest elita moralna i intelektualna, służąca wspólnocie wiedzą i przykładem, i stąd nieodzowna w każdym zdrowym społeczeństwie. Jeszcze innym elementem jest duchowe przywództwo polityczne, zdolne do dokonywania właściwych wyborów i urzeczywistniania w społeczeństwie tego, co wartościowe, oraz kierujące się najwyższymi celami człowieka.

Jak już wspomnieliśmy, duchowe przywództwo polityczne umożliwia obywatelom samorealizację. Z tego względu przywództwo polityczne państwa słabego lub upadłego, które, z uwagi na kierowanie się raczej interesem partykularnym grup nacisku niż dobrem wspólnym, nie jest w stanie zapewnić obywatelom bezpieczeństwa i odpowiednich warunków życia dla ich samorealizacji i pełnego oraz wszechstronnego rozwoju, nie jest duchowym przywództwem politycznym. Nie jest nim też przywództwo państwa silnego, zmilitaryzowanego, którego celem jest podbój i dominacja nad innymi i które, zmienia obywateli w części maszyny wojennej, niszcząc w nich miłosierdzie, litość oraz inne wyrazy człowieczeństwa, a także zastępując ich cnoty wadami. Zaprzeczeniem duchowego przywództwa politycznego są także wszystkie projekty polityczne, które odciągają ludzi od ich rozwoju osobowego i odrzucając łączność z Bogiem jako ostateczny cel ludzkiego życia, przyznają polityce najwyższe miejsce w ludzkim życiu i angażują ludzkość w ograniczone doczesne cele (czy to motywowane ideologią, chęcią wzbogacenia się, czy podbojem) i które jakże często kończą się zmarnowaniem ludzkiego potencjału i fiaskiem. Bowiem, jak ostrzega nas św. Augustyn, jeżeli sami ludzie bez Boga, dążą do swoich celów, nie osiągają trwałego rezultatu, a jedynie doświadczają pomieszanania, czego paradygmatem jest Babilon i jego projekt, wieża Babel [Augustyn, *Objaśnienia Psalmów*: 136,2].

Zacytuję tutaj fragment swojej książki *Historia filozofii politycznej*. „Kiedy poddamy refleksji projekty polityczne, [takie jak, na przykład, wielkie podboje i socjalizm, a dzisiaj integracja europejska i liberalizm,] którym całe pokolenia poświęciły życie, zapominając o Bogu jako celu prawdziwym, a które wszystkie kończyły się porażką [...], widzimy, jak wzburzone wody Babilonu odpływają w dal. Nie powinniśmy się w nich zanurzać, ostrzega Augustyn; nie powinniśmy nawet zbliżyć się do tego żywiołu pomieszanania. Drzewa rosnące wzdłuż brzegów są niepłodne. Poją je wody Babilonu, a przeto nie rodzą owoców. Jedyne, co możemy zrobić, to usiąść ponad tymi wodami, popatrzeć na nie z oddali i zapłakać nad

tymi, którzy dali się im ponieść, i nad samymi sobą, więźniami Babilonu” [Korab-Karpowicz 2010: 153-154].

Od cnót obywateli, od ich odwagi, pracowitości, poszanowania prawa, uczciwości, koleżeństwa i miłość ojczyzny, owocujących ofiarną i samorzutną pracą na rzecz wspólnoty, zależy siła i zamożność państwa. Ale nawet te wzniosłe cnoty obywatelskie mogą zmienić się w wady, jeżeli podporządkowane są żądzy panowania, służą egoizmowi pojedynczego narodu i nie mają odniesienia do ostatecznego celu ludzkiego istnienia. Dlatego polityka, właściwie rozumiana jako sztuka rządzenia, która realizuje życie dobre i uwzględnia najwyższe cele duchowe człowieka, musi mieć charakter duchowy. A w Europie oznacza to oparcie jej na chrześcijańskim ideale doskonałości – spotęgowanie władz ducha ludzkiego, skierowanie ich do tego, co w człowieku najważniejsze: do poznania prawdy, umiłowania dobra, szukania piękna, pragnienia miłości i innych najwyższych wartości, oraz nastroszenie ich do harmonii i osobistej świętości pod wpływem miłości do ludzi i Boga.

##### **5. Przyszłość Europy i odrodzenie chrześcijaństwa**

Ze względu na doświadczenie historyczne związane z kształtowaniem się cywilizacji zachodniej, tożsamości Europy nie da się oddzielić od chrześcijaństwa. Przez wiele wieków chrześcijaństwo było w Europie najpotężniejszym środkiem dla podźwignięcia jej mieszkańców moralnie i kształtowania ich osobowości, a wypływająca z niego jedność duchowa stanowiła źródło ich potęgi. W tradycji europejskiej wiara łączyła się z rozumem w nierozzerwalną wielką całość, prowadzącą do moralnego i intelektualnego doskonalenia człowieka, a jedność duchowa wypływająca z chrześcijaństwa tworzyła silny kulturowo i politycznie Zachód. Trend sekularyzacji dzisiejszych społeczeństw zachodnich można więc uznać za nieporozumienie. Przyczynia się do postępującej atomizacji Europy i zatracenia przez nią dawnej duchowej jedności. Prowadzi Europę do moralnego, a w konsekwencji do politycznego, upadku. Zapowiada przyszłość wewnątrznie zwartej kultury muzułmańskiej. Duch religijny islamu, wsparty na prostej wierze, staje się dziś ważnym czynnikiem politycznym w konfrontacji z zsekularyzowanym światem zachodnim oraz rozbitą wewnątrznie Europą.

Chrześcijaństwo, w którym najwyższe przykazanie miłości nie wprowadza rozdziału na wiernych i niewiernych, współplemieńców i wrogów, jest istotnym elementem budującym za pomocą uniwersalnych wartości moralnych zarówno jedność europejskiej wspólnoty politycznej, jak i duchową jedność całej ludzkości. Wywodzi się z niego idea braterstwa ludzi, której wyrazem są uniwersalne prawa

człowieka [Piechowiak 1997: 29]. Dlatego Europa ma dziś wielkie zadanie do wypełnienia – odrodzenie chrześcijaństwa i dokończenie dzieła Chrystusa. Istotą Jego dzieła jest odrodzenie moralne człowieka, otwarcie przed nim możliwości uczestnictwa w świętości i doprowadzenie go do doskonałości<sup>9</sup>. Oddanie się Bogu w religii chrześcijańskiej nadaje zarówno indywidualnemu życiu ludzkiemu, jak i życiu społecznemu zupełnie odmienny, moralny charakter. Jest przeciwwagą dla indywidualizmu i egoizmu. Oparcie się na najwyższych wartościach buduje osobowość człowieka. Rozwija w jednostce cnotę. Łączy jednostki we wspólnotę. Umożliwia realizację na ziemi wartości uniwersalnych: prawdy, dobra, piękna i miłości, które nie są tworam ludzkimi, lecz tkwią w samej konstrukcji wszechświata.

Wynika z tego postulat praktyczny. Przywódcy polityczni Unii Europejskiej oraz indywidualnych państw europejskich powinni porzucić datujący się od ponad dwustu lat trend sekularyzacji, powrócić do idei *Civitas Christiana* i uczestniczyć w rozwoju jednoczącej ludzkość na poziomie etycznym cywilizacji chrześcijańskiej [Sołowiow 2007: 38-39] oraz mieć zawsze na uwadze najwyższe wartości uniwersalne i ostateczny cel życia ludzkiego. Czas odbudować w Europie siłę chrześcijaństwa oraz budować w państwach europejskich promieniującą na inne kraje i kontynenty harmonię społeczną.

Harmonia członków określonej społeczności – oparta na ich wspólnej tożsamości, wzajemnym uzupełnianiu się i skutecznym współdziałaniu, pomimo ich nieraz różnych indywidualnych dróg życiowych i przekonań – buduje wspólny dobrobyt, tworzy porządek społeczny oraz niesie ze sobą pokój, zgodę, porozumienie, czasem kompromis między różnymi jednostkami i grupami. Wiąże się z nią umiejętność konstruktywnego rozwiązywania nieporozumień i sporów. Buduje współdziałanie oraz solidarność społeczną w oparciu o sprawy, które łączą ludzi, a nie ich dzielą. Dzięki niej, w atmosferze bezpieczeństwa, tolerancji, życzliwości i wolności, wyzwala się w społeczeństwie energia twórcza, która kierowana jest na pozytywne tory: na tworzenie wspólnego dobra. Wyraża się ona w twórczości naukowej, wynalazczej i artystycznej oraz w umiejętności organizacyjnej i inicjatywie gospodarczej. U jej podstaw jest elita moralna i intelektualna, służąca wspólnocie wiedzą i przykładem, oraz mądre duchowe przywództwo polityczne, zdolne do urzeczywistniania w społeczeństwie tego, co wartościowe, oraz kierujące się

<sup>9</sup> Osiągając doskonałość, ludzkość realizuje postulat Chrystusa: „Bądźcie więc tak doskonali, jak doskonały jest Ojciec wasz niebieski” (Mt 5,48).

najwyższymi celami człowieka. Jej owocem są piękne rzeczy i piękne zachowania. Harmonia społeczna prowadzi wspólnotę do szczęścia.

### **Zakończenie. Szczęście jako samorealizacja**

Podsumowując nasze rozważania: szczęście to nie tylko ulotna chwila przyjemności. Rozpatrywane jako trwała wartość, szczęście to samorealizacja, spełnione życie, realizacja ludzkich potrzeb, zarówno materialnych, jak i duchowych. Duchowe przywództwo polityczne odnosi się do sztuki rządzenia państwem, która uwzględnia pełny i wszechstronny rozwój osobowy człowieka, umożliwia obywatelom samorealizację i w ten sposób zaspakaja ludzkie dążenie do osiągnięcia doskonałości moralnej i intelektualnej, osiągającej swój najwyższy stopień rozwoju w świętości jako łączności z doskonałością Boga. Jego celem jest szczęśliwe społeczeństwo, w którym każdy ma możliwość samorealizacji, a jednocześnie szanuje samorealizację innych. Wspiera harmonię społeczną, która wynika z współdziałania między różnymi grupami w obrębie społeczeństwa oraz jest alternatywą dla dzisiejszej dysharmonii będącej pokłosiem konfliktu politycznego toczącego się zarówno wewnątrz państwa, jak i na arenie międzynarodowej. Z wartości duchowego przywództwa politycznego wynika postulat praktyczny. Przywódcy Unii Europejskiej oraz indywidualnych państw europejskich powinni porzucić modernistyczny trend sekularyzacji i uczestniczyć w rozwoju cywilizacji chrześcijańskiej, jednoczącej ludzkość całego świata na poziomie etycznym, oraz mieć zawsze na uwadze najwyższe wartości uniwersalne i ostateczny cel życia ludzkiego.

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*Polityczny wymiar braterstwa.  
Perspektywa Fratelli tutti  
na tle tradycji katolickiej*

**The Political Dimension of Fraternity.  
A *Fratelli tutti* perspective on the Catholic tradition**

**Abstract:** The article analyses the political dimension of the fraternity category in the encyclical of the Holy Father Francis *Fratelli tutti*. In its first part the author recapitulates the essence of brotherhood presented in the encyclical. In the second, the importance of the political dimension of the Pope's understanding of brotherhood is revealed. The third part of the text is devoted to presenting the challenges that arise in the context of the proposed approach to the fraternity from the perspective of the social doctrine of the Church. In the last, fourth part, the possible source of those challenges is discussed by showing the tension between the *Fratelli tutti*'s understanding of brotherhood and the Catholic tradition of understanding of brotherhood.

**Keywords:** brotherhood, catholicism, Francis, *Fratelli tutti*

**Abstrakt:** Artykuł analizuje polityczny wymiar kategorii braterstwa w encyklice Ojca Świętego Franciszka *Fratelli tutti*. W pierwszej części autor rekonstruuje istotę braterstwa w ujęciu encykliki. W drugiej – odsłania znaczenie politycznego wymiaru proponowanego przez Papieża rozumienia braterstwa. Trzecia część poświęcona jest ukazaniu wyzwań, jakie rodzą się w kontekście proponowanego ujęcia braterstwa w perspektywie nauki społecznej Kościoła. W ostatniej, czwartej części, przedyskutowane zostaje możliwe źródło tych wyzwań, poprzez ukazanie napięcia między proponowanym przez *Fratelli tutti* rozumieniem braterstwa a specyficznym dla katolickiej tradycji pojmowaniem braterstwa.

**Słowa kluczowe:** braterstwo, Franciszek, *Fratelli tutti*, katolicyzm

## Wstęp

Encyklika Ojca Świętego Franciszka *Fratelli Tutti* jest dokumentem programowo odznajującym się od bycia koherentną wypowiedzią na temat ludzkiego braterstwa, czy swoistą summą nauczania w tym zakresie [por. Franciszek 2020: nr 5]<sup>1</sup>. Wedle Papieża ten dokument Magisterium, ze swoimi 287 akapitami, stanowić ma jedynie „skromny wkład w refleksję” na temat uniwersalnego wymiaru braterskiej miłości „i jej otwartości na wszystkich” [tamże]. Nie jest to zatem tekst o charakterze precyzyjnego, naukowego wywodu. W istocie wyrażone zostało w nim wiele emocji, a autor nie waha się powracać do kwestii podejmowanych we wcześniejszych partiach tekstu. Założenia teoretyczno-metodologiczne *Fratelli tutti* należy mieć na uwadze w kontekście celów niniejszego opracowania. Mianowicie, przedstawione tutaj ustalenia na temat sensu braterstwa i jego politycznego znaczenia traktować należy jako możliwą, ale zapewne nie jedyną, interpretację myśli Franciszka na ten temat. Należy dopuścić możliwość, że w jakimś punkcie przedłożona rekapitulacja i interpretacja też *Fratelli tutti* może rozmijać się z papieską intencją, mimo wszelkich wysiłków autora włożonych w to, aby rzetelnie oddać myśl encykliki.

Poniższa analiza składa się z czterech części. W pierwszej próbuję zrekapitulować istotę braterstwa przedstawioną we *Fratelli tutti*. W kolejnej – odsłonić polityczny wymiar proponowanego przez Papieża rozumienia braterstwa. Trzecia część poświęcona jest ukazaniu w zarysie wyzwań, jakie się rodzą w kontekście wcześniejszych ustaleń w perspektywie nauki społecznej Kościoła. W ostatniej, czwartej części, próbuję przedyskutować możliwe źródło tych wyzwań, nawiązując do rozumienia braterstwa w ramach tradycji Kościoła katolickiego.

### 1. Idea braterstwa we *Fratelli tutti*

Fundamentalną tezę *Fratelli Tutti* stanowi twierdzenie o istnieniu braterstwa uniwersalnego, „które pozwala rozpoznać, docenić i miłować każdą osobę niezależnie od bliskości fizycznej, niezależnie od miejsca na świecie, w którym się urodziła lub w którym mieszka” [Franciszek 2020: nr 1]. Jest ono ugruntowane w poczuciu „przynależności do tej samej wspólnoty ludzkiej” [tamże: nr 30], a zatem w samym byciu człowiekiem, stanowiąc propozycję, dar „Ojca nas wszystkich” [tamże: nr 46]. Papież nieprzypadkowo nie przywołuje w tym kontekście Boga Ojca chrześcijańskiej teologii, gdyż podkreśla, iż „różne religie,

<sup>1</sup> W związku z różnymi wydaniem tytułowej encykliki, przypisy – zgodnie ze zwyczajem tworzenia referencji w przypadku dokumentów Magisterium – odnoszą się do numerowanych akapitów *Fratelli tutti*, a nie do stron konkretnego wydania.

wychodząc z uznania wartości każdej osoby ludzkiej jako stworzenia, powołanego do bycia dzieckiem Bożym, wnoszą cenny wkład w budowanie braterstwa” [tamże: nr 271], w sposób szczególny akcentując wspólnotę podejścia do kwestii braterstwa z Wielkim Imamem Ahmadem Al-Tayyebem. W podpisanej wspólnie deklaracji w Abu Zabi obaj duchowi przywódcy przypomnieli bowiem, że Bóg „stworzył wszystkich ludzi równymi w prawach, obowiązkach i godności, i powołał ich, aby żyli razem jako bracia i siostry” [tamże: nr 5].

Warto dodać, że choć – jak podkreśla Papież – „uznanie każdego człowieka za brata lub siostrę i dążenie do przyjaźni społecznej, która włączałaby wszystkich, nie są czystą utopią”, to „wymagają determinacji i umiejętności znalezienia skutecznych sposobów, które zapewniłyby jej realną możliwość” [tamże: nr 180]. Mówiąc inaczej, uniwersalne braterstwo, zdaniem Papieża, jest pewnym, pochodzącym od „Ojca nas wszystkich”, potencjałem realnie wpisanym w każdego człowieka, który jednakowoż musi zostać przez ludzi świadomie zaktualizowany w działaniu. Jest to szczególnie istotne współcześnie, gdyż – jak zauważa Papież – „w dzisiejszym świecie poczucie przynależności do tej samej wspólnoty ludzkiej słabnie, a marzenie o wspólnym budowaniu sprawiedliwości i pokoju wydaje się być utopią z innej epoki” [tamże: nr 30]. Chrześcijańską zachętą do takiej aktualizacji jest papieska egzegeza przypowieści o miłosiernym Samarytaninie: „spotkanie Samarytanina i Judejczyka” – zauważa Franciszek – „jest potężną prowokacją, która demaskuje wszelkie manipulacje ideologiczne, abyśmy mogli poszerzyć nasz krąg, abyśmy mogli nadać naszej zdolności do miłowania wymiar uniwersalny, zdolny do przekraczania wszelkich uprzedzeń, wszelkich barier” [tamże: nr 83].

Kwestia owej totalnej transgresji wydaje się o tyle istotna, że braterstwo uniwersalne, zdaniem Papieża, jest teleologicznie pierwsze – lokuje się przed jakimikolwiek innymi formami przynależności. Jak twierdzi, „właśnie w to powiązanie powszechnej jedności włącza się każda ludzka grupa i w niej odnajduje swe piękno. Zatem każda osoba rodząca się w określonym kontekście wie, że należy do większej rodziny, bez której nie jest możliwe pełne zrozumienie siebie” [tamże: nr 149]. W świetle owego teleologicznego pierwszeństwa uniwersalnego braterstwa Papież uznaje za przejaw „zachwycająco ludzkiego” zachowania, działanie, które, co prawda, nie polepsza losu innego, ale wyraża świadomość owej najszerzej przynależności. Tytułem przykładu zauważa: „Jeśli bowiem ktoś posiada nadmiar wody, a jednak troszczy się o nią, z myślą o ludzkości, to dlatego, że osiągnął poziom moralny, który pozwala mu wyjść poza swoje granice i poza granice grupy, do której należy” [tamże: 117].

## 2. Polityczny wymiar powszechnego braterstwa

Zarysowana wizja braterstwa w sposób szczególny wiąże się z polityką, stanowiącą najistotniejszy czy najdonioślejszy wymiar jego aktualizacji. Papież zauważa: „człowiek może bowiem pomóc potrzebującemu, ale kiedy dołącza do innych w tworzeniu społecznych procesów braterstwa i sprawiedliwości dla wszystkich, wkracza na pole największej miłości, miłości politycznej” [tamże: nr 180]. Konsekwentnie, zauważa Papież, „aby umożliwić rozwój światowej wspólnoty, zdolnej do realizowania braterstwa [...] potrzebna jest lepsza polityka, służąca prawdziwemu dobru wspólnemu” [tamże: nr 154]. Owa „lepsza polityka” odnosić się powinna do ideału braterstwa, który ma aktualizować. Rzecz zatem można, że to ten ideał dookreśla zasady i cele właściwej polityki. „Stwierdzenie – pisze Papież – że jako istoty ludzkie jesteśmy braćmi i siostrami, jeśli nie jest tylko abstrakcją, ale ucieleśnia się i staje się konkretne, stawia przed nami szereg wyzwań, które nas poruszają, zobowiązują do przyjęcia nowych perspektyw i wypracowania nowych reakcji” [tamże: nr 128].

*Fratelli tutti* za „niezbędne minimum” celów politycznych zgodnych z duchem uniwersalnego braterstwa uznaje eliminację głodu i handlu ludźmi oraz zapewnienie wszystkim mieszkania („dachu nad głową”) i opieki zdrowotnej [tamże: nr 189]. Ale nie ogranicza do tego zobowiązań płynących z braterstwa. Papież jest w tej kwestii bardzo szczegółowy. W kontekście migracji, które – zdaniem Papieża – „będą tworzyć podstawę przyszłości świata” [tamże: nr 40], braterstwo „wiąże się z koniecznością podjęcia pewnych niezbędnych działań, zwłaszcza w przypadku osób uciekających przed poważnymi kryzysami humanitarnymi. Na przykład: zwiększenie liczby przyznawanych wiz i uproszczenie procedur; zastosowanie prywatnego i wspólnotowego sponsorowania, otwarcie korytarzy humanitarnych dla uchodźców znajdujących się w najtrudniejszej sytuacji; zapewnienie odpowiedniego i godnego zakwaterowania; zapewnienie bezpieczeństwa osobistego i dostępu do podstawowych świadczeń; zapewnienie odpowiedniej opieki konsularnej, prawa do posiadania przy sobie w każdej chwili osobistych dokumentów tożsamości, równego dostępu do wymiaru sprawiedliwości, możliwość otwierania rachunków bankowych i zapewnienie środków niezbędnych do życia; zapewnienie swobody poruszania się i możliwości podejmowania pracy; ochrona małoletnich i zapewnienie im regularnego dostępu do edukacji; zapewnienie tymczasowej opieki lub programów przyjmowania; zapewnienie wolności religijnej; promowanie ich integracji społecznej; sprzyjanie łączeniu rodzin i przygotowanie wspólnot lokalnych do procesów integracyjnych” [tamże: nr 130]. Ponadto, w przypadku tych, którzy „już dawno przybyli i są częścią tkanki społecznej, ważne jest zastosowanie

koncepcji obywatelstwa”, które „opiera się na równości praw i obowiązków, zgodnie z którymi wszyscy korzystają ze sprawiedliwości. Dlatego ważne jest – pisze Papież – aby w naszych społeczeństwach stworzyć koncepcję pełnego obywatelstwa i odrzucić dyskryminujące użycie określenia mniejszości, które rodzi poczucie izolacji i niższości. Toruje ono drogę wrogości i niezgodzie; niweczy sukcesy i pozbawia praw religijnych i obywatelskich niektórych obywateli, którzy są w ten sposób dyskryminowani” [tamże: nr 131]. Tak realizowane braterstwo wiąże się przy tym z bezinteresownością – nieoczekiwaniem niczego w zamian za pomoc, której jest się dawcą, od tych, którzy ją otrzymują. Jak zauważa Papież, „tylko kultura społeczna i polityczna, która zawiera w sobie bezinteresowną gościnność, może mieć przyszłość” [tamże: nr 142].

Polityczny wymiar koncepcji braterstwa, znoszący – jak pokrótce naszkicowano – w imię równości kategorie mniejszości i większości, oczekiwania wobec migranta ze strony obywateli danej wspólnoty etc., zdaniem Papieża przekłada się również na zakaz pewnych istotnych z perspektywy bezpieczeństwa wewnętrzne i zewnętrznego politycznych praktyk. W imię braterstwa Papież zakazuje nie tylko kary śmierci, podkreślając zaangażowanie Kościoła na rzecz jej całkowitego zniesienia; zakazuje również stosowania kary dożywocia (którą nazywa „ukrytą karą śmierci” [tamże: nr 268]), wyraźnie podważa zasadność prowadzenia wojen, lokalizując się blisko stanowiska pacyfistycznego. Papież przywołuje w tym kontekście Jana XXIII, przypominając za nim, iż „w epoce potęgi atomowej byłoby nonsensem uważać wojnę za odpowiedni środek przywrócenia naruszonych praw” [tamże: nr 260].

Biorąc pod uwagę zakres, zarysowanych tutaj jedynie, politycznych zmian i działań powiązanych z ideałem braterstwa, nie dziwi, że ostatecznie prowadzi on Papieża do postulatu fundamentalnej przebudowy relacji politycznych, swoistego „politycznego resetu”. Franciszek jest przekonany, że potrzebujemy takiego „światowego porządku prawnego, politycznego i gospodarczego, który zwiększy i ukierunkuje współpracę międzynarodową na solidarny rozwój wszystkich narodów” [tamże: nr 120]. W tym kontekście Franciszek podkreśla, że „niezbędne staje się dojrzewanie silniejszych i sprawnie zorganizowanych instytucji międzynarodowych, których władze byłyby desygnowane sprawiedliwie, na podstawie porozumień między rządami krajowymi, i wyposażone w możliwość sankcjonowania” [tamże: nr 172]. Oznaczałoby to ostateczne zerwanie z zasadą suwerenności państw (jej istotą jest władza zwierzchnia na danym terytorium), a zatem w ogóle państwowości w dotychczasowej formie i zaistnienie „jakiejsz formy globalnego

autorytetu, regulowanego przez prawo” [tamże]. Papież podkreśla, że „powinno się [...] przynajmniej przewidywać możliwość powołania do życia skuteczniejszych organizacji światowych, obdarzonych autorytetem, aby zapewnić globalne dobro wspólne, eliminację głodu i ubóstwa oraz pewną obronę podstawowych praw człowieka” [tamże]. Wszystko to ma zaś służyć globalnej „integracji kulturalnej, gospodarczej i politycznej”, której „powinien towarzyszyć proces edukacyjny, który promowałby wartość miłości sąsiada, będącej pierwszym krokiem koniecznym dla osiągnięcia zdrowej, powszechnej integracji” [tamże: nr 151].

Pojawić się może pytanie, jaką rolę w budowie powszechnego braterstwa pełnić ma religia. O znaczeniu religii Papież pisze w ostatnich paragrafach encykliki. Religia jest istotna nie tyle dla aktualizacji, ile legitymizacji idei uniwersalnego braterstwa. Jak zauważa Franciszek „przekonania religijne odnoszące się do sakralnego sensu życia ludzkiego pozwalają nam uznać podstawowe wartości naszego wspólnego człowieczeństwa” [tamże: nr 283], a zatem pomagają dostrzec wspólne pochodzenie i jedną naturę wszystkich ludzi. Ponadto – pisze Papież – „bez otwarcia się na Ojca wszystkich ludzi, nie może być solidnych i stabilnych motywów apelu o braterstwo”. „Jedynie z tą świadomością dzieci, które nie są sierotami – podkreśla dalej – możemy żyć ze sobą w pokoju”. Nie wiem, czy pośrednie nawiązanie do słów Schillera z *Ody do radości* („Bracia, nad tym gwiaździstym niebem musi mieszkać kochający ojciec”), jest tu przypadkowe, czy nie, ale podobnie jak w jego utworze, tak i tutaj pochodzenie powszechnego braterstwa od ojcostwa Bożego pozostaje ostatecznie w tle. Braterstwo uniwersalne we *Fratelli tutti* wydaje się przede wszystkim wiązać się – jeśli można to tak wyrazić – z cofnięciem się poza historię, do uprzedzającej ją natury człowieka, przynależności do „wspólnoty ludzkiej”. Rola – niewątpliwie przydatnej dla legitymizacji braterstwa powszechnego – religii wydaje się tutaj ostatecznie instrumentalna.

### 3. Powszechne braterstwo w perspektywie nauczania społecznego Kościoła

Polityczne znaczenie braterstwa w perspektywie *Fratelli tutti* staje się – rzec chyba można bez przesady – znaczeniem podstawowym. To tu aktualizuje się ideał braterstwa i – nieprzypadkowo – właśnie w obszarze polityki Papież wzywa do fundamentalnych przekształceń, dość precyzyjnie kalibrując ich kształt na kartach encykliki. Rodzi to jednak pewne pytania, zwłaszcza związane z posoborowym rozumieniem roli Kościoła.

Ugruntowana w nauczaniu soborowym i posoborowym katolicka teoria polityki, pojmująca ją jako przestrzeń niedoskonałej, acz dostatecznie dobrej



realizacji zasady sprawiedliwości, zachęcając świeckich do politycznego zaangażowania, konstytuowała Papieża i – szerzej – hierarchię Kościoła jako aktorów metapolitycznych. Ich zadaniem było głoszenie moralnej prawdy i, w konsekwencji, formowanie sumień obywateli, jak również obowiązek wyrażania sprzeciwu wobec idei politycznych, które niszczyłyby obraz Boży w człowieku. Fundamentem tego zaangażowania było przekonanie o wynikającym z natury ludzkiej, a zatem powszechnie i bezapelacyjnie obowiązującym, prawie moralnym, którego przestrzeganie „jest ludziom konieczne do zbawienia” [Paweł VI 2003: nr 4]. Istnienie wynikającego z natury człowieka prawa moralnego, którego autorytatywnym nauczycielem jest Kościół, otwierało drogę do jego szczególnej, metapolitycznej pozycji we wspólnocie politycznej. Jasne określenie zadań Kościoła jako obrońcy transcendentnej godności człowieka pozwalało Kościołowi z jednej strony zachować w hierarchii dystans wobec bieżącej polityki, z drugiej odgrywać w owej polityce istotną i niezastępowalną rolę, zwłaszcza gdy władza polityczna zaczynała rościć sobie kompetencje do omnipotencji [Boeckenfoerde 2006: 309-313]. To specyficzne, dostrzegane również w niektórych porządkach konstytucyjnych, miejsce Kościoła określano niekiedy mianem „niepolitycznej polityczności” [Mazurkiewicz 2017: 233-254].

Jeśli jednak „prawo naturalne” zostaje zastąpione przez „naturalne braterstwo” jako punkt odniesienia dla zaangażowania Kościoła i osądu politycznego, to cała powyższa koncepcja zaczyna się chwiać. O ile bowiem można bezbłędnie wskazać nieprzekraczalne zasady prawa naturalnego, a zatem tzw. negatywne normy, zostawiając szeroką przestrzeń dla politycznych dyskusji odnośnie do aplikacji norm pozytywnych, o tyle postulaty płynące z braterstwa odnoszą się do głównie do norm pozytywnych. Zmiana typu norm stanowiących podstawowy punkt odniesienia dla zaangażowania Kościoła zmienia w sposób istotny trajektorię i charakter jego aktywności. O ile obrona zasad negatywnych prawa naturalnego zasadniczo nie zagraża „polityzacji” chrześcijańskiego przesłania, o tyle definiowanie i „kalibrowanie” wymogów płynących z norm pozytywnych może rodzić zasadne pytania o mandat Kościoła do wkraczania na teren polityki. Jako, że dobro może być zawsze wyrażone w inny sposób, a ponadto – w świecie po grzechu pierworodnym – żadne z rozwiązań społecznych nie będzie miało charakteru idealnego, również chrześcijanie mogą stać po przeciwległych stronach politycznej barykady w rozmaitych polityczno-społecznych kwestiach (począwszy od sporu o system podatkowy po wizję zakresu działania państwa). Jednocześnie jednak cały Kościół łączyć powinien sprzeciw względem naruszania przez prawo stanowione negatywnych norm prawa naturalnego.

Ryzyko „polityzacji” chrześcijańskiego przesłania we *Fratelli tutti* odsłania się wyraźnie, jeśli zestawimy główne polityczne postulaty płynące z przedłożonej idei braterstwa. Należą do nich m.in.: pełna otwartość na nieograniczone przyjmowanie i integrację migrantów, od których jednakowoż nie mamy prawa niczego oczekiwać w imię braterskiej bezinteresowności; gwarantowanie mieszkania i wyżywienia każdemu, kto go potrzebuje; odrzucenie pojęcia „mniejszość” jako dyskryminującego i budzącego nienawiść; zniesienie kary śmierci i dożywocia; postulaty pacyfistyczne, niuansujące również etyczną zasadność zbrojnej obrony; idea wyposażonej w możliwość nakładania sankcji władzy ponadnarodowej, etc. Patrząc na nie w zestawieniu, nietrudno dostrzec ich lewicowe czy – nazwijmy to szerzej – poświeceniowe nachylenie. Istotnym wymiarem tych postulatów jest zatem antropologiczny optymizm, zapoznający *de facto* w istotnym stopniu naukę o grzechu pierworodnym, a zatem naznaczony utopizmem. Rodzi to istotne pytania odnośnie do konsekwencji zrealizowania papieskich „marzeń” o lepszej polityce. Przykładowo: czy naprawdę możemy sądzić, że powołanie władzy światowej upodmiotowi słabsze organizmy państwowe, skoro już dzisiaj elity finansowe próbują kontrolować proces globalizacji? Jeśli – jak zauważył Benedykt XVI – encyklika *Pacem in terris* dała „decydujący impuls do otwarcia Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji na poglądy lewicowe” [2018: 11], wydaje się, że *Fratelli tutti* stanowi znacznie więcej niż impuls.

#### 4. Braterstwo powszechne w perspektywie tradycji katolickiej

Jeśli potencjalna realizacja zarysowanej idei braterstwa prowadzić może do podważenia metapolitycznej roli Kościoła, jak również sprzyja realizacji celów grup politycznych dalekich i często wprost wrogich wierze Kościoła, warto rozważyć czy punkt wyjścia encykliki jest w teologicznym aspekcie wystarczająco dopracowany. Nietrudno choćby zauważyć, że idea uniwersalnego braterstwa pozostawać się zdaje w jakimś napięciu ze słowami Jezusa przepowiadającego uczniom, że nastąpią podziały, w wyniku których będą pozbawieni wszelkiego ziemskiego braterstwa i miłości krewnych (Mt 10,21).

Prezentując wizję powszechnego braterstwa, Papież Franciszek odwołuje się do postaci św. Franciszka. W pierwszych akapitach encykliki przywołuje zatem „epizod w jego życiu, który ukazuje nam jego serce bez granic, zdolne do wyjścia poza dystanse wynikające z pochodzenia, narodowości, koloru skóry czy religii. To jego wizyta u sułtana Malik-al-Kamila w Egipcie... Nie lekceważąc trudności i niebezpieczeństw, św. Franciszek poszedł na spotkanie z sułtanem z taką samą postawą, jakiej wymagał od swoich uczniów: aby, nie negując własnej tożsamości,

«pośród Saracenów i innych niewiernych [...] nie wdawać się w kłótnie ani w spory, lecz być poddanymi wszelkiemu ludzkiemu stworzeniu ze względu na Boga». W tamtym kontekście było to żądanie niezwykle. Uderza nas, jak osiemset lat temu Franciszek zalecał, by unikać wszelkich form agresji czy sporów, a także, by żyć pokornie i po bratersku «w poddaniu», także wobec tych, którzy nie podzielają ich wiary” [Franciszek 2020: nr 3].

W tym fragmencie encykliki Papież przywołuje fragment Niezatwierdzonej Reguły św. Franciszka, na jej podstawie referując czytelnikom istotę braterstwa wedle Biedaczyny z Asyżu. Rzecz w tym, że owa reguła formułowała kwestię sposobu zachowania u Saracenów nieco szerzej, niż referuje to encyklika. Mianowicie czytamy w niej: „Bracia zaś, którzy udają się [do Saracenów], mogą w dwojaki sposób duchownie wśród nich postępować. Jeden sposób: nie wdawać się w kłótnie ani w spory, lecz być poddanymi wszelkiemu ludzkiemu stworzeniu ze względu na Boga (1 P 2,13) i przyznawać się do wiary chrześcijańskiej. Drugi sposób: gdyby widzieli, że tak się Panu podoba, niech głoszą słowo Boże, aby [ludzie] uwierzyli w Boga wszechmogącego, Ojca i Syna, i Ducha Świętego, Stworzyciela wszystkich rzeczy, w Syna Odkupiciela i Zbawiciela i aby przyjęli chrzest i zostali chrześcijanami, ponieważ kto nie odrodzi się z wody i z Ducha Świętego, nie może wejść do Królestwa Bożego (por. J 3,5). Bracia mogą głosić tym i innym ludziom te i inne Bogu miłe prawdy, bo Pan mówi w Ewangelii: Każdego, kto Mnie wyzna wobec ludzi, i Ja wyznam wobec Ojca mego, który jest w niebie (Mt 10,32). Kto będzie się wstydził Mnie i moich słów, tego i Syn Człowieczy będzie się wstydził, gdy przyjdzie w majestacie swoim i Ojca, i aniołów (por. Łk 9,26)” [św. Franciszek 1221: nr 16].

Warto podkreślić, że w obu przypadkach – choć w różnej formie – istotą działania franciszkanów miało być głoszenie wiary chrześcijańskiej, albo swoim życiem, albo życiem i słowem. Zniesławienie tej kwestii w encyklice *Fratelli tutti* (przez pominięcie drugiego sposobu działania i zastąpienia jasnego stwierdzenia o przyznawaniu się do wiary chrześcijańskiej ogólnym sformułowaniem o nienegowaniu swojej tożsamości) jest o tyle znaczące, że ostatecznie modyfikuje sens braterstwa według św. Franciszka. Tymczasem widać wyraźnie, że miłość mogła mieć u niego wymiar uniwersalny, bo braterstwo miało wymiar chrześcijański. Wyrażone jest to wprost w regule mówiącej o „braciach, którzy udają się do Saracenów”: franciszkanie nie udawali się do braci; udawali się do tych, którzy braćmi we właściwym sensie nie byli. Jest to istotne, bo w regule św. Franciszka, jak i w całym chrześcijaństwie, odślaniają się – charakterystyczne dla

chrześcijaństwa – dwie sfery etycznej postawy. „W przeciwieństwie do oświecenia i do stoików chrześcijaństwo opowiada się najpierw – pisze Joseph Ratzinger – za istnieniem dwóch różnych sfer i «braćmi» nazywa tylko wyznawców tej wiary” [Ratzinger 2013: 83]. Braterstwo ma tutaj charakter faktu wiary i opiera się na wszczęciu wiernych poprzez chrzest w Chrystusa. „Chrześcijańskie braterstwo – stwierdza zatem Ratzinger – różni się od wszystkich pozostałych, znajdujących się poza kręgiem braterstwa opartego na pokrewieństwie, swym ściśle realnym charakterem. Jego rzeczywistość jest ujęta w wierze i w sakramentach” [tamże: 62]. Oczywiście, w przeciwieństwie np. do związków misteryjnych, w chrześcijaństwie nie dąży się do bycia celem dla siebie samego. Odrębność ma sens wyłącznie w kontekście służenia innym, których los został chrześcijanom powierzony. Ów „inny” jest, oczywiście, w najgłębszym sensie „drugim bratem”, zarówno na mocy wspólnego ojcostwa Boga, jak i – o czym szerzej niżej – chrystologicznego uzasadnienia podwójnego braterstwa. Tym niemniej, w sensie ścisłym, owo podwójne braterstwo oznacza dwie różne sfery etycznej odpowiedzialności. Realne braterstwo chrześcijan jest tutaj przesłanką i podstawą miłości względem bliźnich. Albowiem – podkreśla Ratzinger – „najpierw [musi] istnieć taka odrębność jako określona, uchwytna wspólnota braterska, bo ona dopiero wydobywa całość z czczego marzycielstwa i umożliwia konkretną realizację” [tamże: 76].

Zobowiązania braci (chrześcijan) wobec każdego człowieka wyrazić można – za Ratzingerem – triadą: misja – miłość – cierpienie, w której jednak zarówno misja, jak i cierpienie są wyrazem miłości. Podstawową formą służenia niechrześcijaninowi jest misja. Jako, że każdy człowiek jest przez Boga umiłowany i zaproszony do jedności i szczęścia w Nim, miłość ku innym przynagla przede wszystkim do ukazania im miłości Boga objawionej w Chrystusie. Odsłania to, dodajmy, inkluzywny charakter chrześcijańskiego braterstwa: każdy jest doń zaproszony, bo każdy zaproszony jest do poznania i pokochania Chrystusa. Można zatem powiedzieć, że niewierzący są „jeszcze nie-braćmi” [tamże: 75]. Warto zauważyć, że właśnie o realizację obowiązku misyjnego dba św. Franciszek w obu strategiach podejścia do Saracenów. Odpowiadają one przy tym, domagającej się poważnego rozważenia, dialektyce nakazów Zbawiciela: „Z jednej strony mamy dane przez Jezusa Chrystusa polecenie upubliczniania: «Co wam mówię w ciemności, powtarzajcie w świetle»... Z drugiej strony są również te słowa Chrystusa, które służyły za podstawę starochrześcijańskiej *disciplina arcani*: «Nie dawajcie psom tego, co święte» (Mt 7,6)” [tamże: 83]. W owej dialektyce zakorzeniona jest dwoistość rad św. Franciszka dawanych w regule jego braciom: jednej nakazującej świadczyć życiem, a drugiej nakazującej głosić Słowo Boże.

Drugim, a istotowo pierwszym, zadaniem chrześcijanina wobec każdego niechrześcijanina jest miłość *agape*. Chrześcijanie nie mogą poprzestawać na miłowaniu braci, czyli wyznawców wiary. „Idąc w ślady swego Pana, który czynną miłość okazywał tym, którzy go nie znali ani nie kochali, powinni okazywać miłość wszystkim, którzy jej potrzebują, nie oczekując podziękowań ani odpowiedzi. Każdy potrzebujący ich pomocy jest z tego właśnie tytułu bratem Chrystusa, a nawet obecnością samego Pana (Mt 25,31-46). Rzeczywista «paruzja» Chrystusa dokonuje się wszędzie tam, gdzie człowiek widzi i uznaje wezwanie do miłowania Go, pochodzące od tego, który znajduje się koło niego i jest w potrzebie” [tamże: 84]. Braterstwo w Chrystusie nie wyłącza nikogo z miłości, w tym miłości „do końca”, daru z siebie, aż do oddania życia. Przeciwnie, umożliwia je. Włączenie w Chrystusa otwiera bowiem na łaskę nadprzyrodzoną, «która wspiera i umacnia dobrą wolę ludzi» [Paweł VI 2003: 20].

Trzecim zadaniem chrześcijanina w stosunku do niewierzących – pisze Ratzinger – „jest – za wzorem Pana – cierpienie dla nich i za nich. Na ostatniej drodze swego życia, niewiele już dni przed swą Męką, Chrystus wyraził zadanie swego życia: «Syn Człowieczy nie przyszedł, aby mu służyli, lecz żeby służyć i dać swoje życie na okup za wielu» (Mk 10,45). W słowach tych zawarte jest nie tylko podstawowe prawo życia Jezusa, lecz także podstawowe prawo życia uczniów Jezusa” [Ratzinger 2013: 85]. Warto zwrócić uwagę, że ten wymiar posługi czyni Kościół rzeczywiście powszechnym. O ile bowiem „pod względem zewnętrznej liczebności nigdy nie będzie w pełni „powszechny”, to „przez swą miłość i cierpienie Kościół jest jednak zawsze «dla wielu», dla wszystkich. Przez swą miłość i cierpienie przekracza wszystkie granice, jest naprawdę «katolicki»” [tamże].

Podsumowując zarysowany sens chrześcijańskiego braterstwa, zauważyć przyjdzie, że specyficzne dla uczniów Chrystusa braterstwo nie jest związane przede wszystkim z pochodzeniem naturalnym czy nawet stworzeniem przez Boga. Wiąże się natomiast z przynależnością do Boga, ze wszczęciem w Chrystusa. Nie jest to zatem jedynie braterstwo źródeł, ale nade wszystko braterstwo celu, celu ostatecznego<sup>2</sup>, wspólnego podporządkowania własnej woli Bogu. Nie jest zatem w pierwszym rzędzie ukierunkowane na kształtowanie tego świata, a na wszczęcie kolejnych ludzi („drugiego brata”) w Chrystusa. Oczywiście, przy okazji, chrześcijańskie braterstwo może zmieniać świat, może się wiązać również z zadaniami politycznymi. Ostatecznie, „wewnętrzny kontakt z Bogiem przez

<sup>2</sup> Spostrzeżenie to zawdzięczam dr. Mariuszowi Sulkowskiemu.

Chrystusa, z Chrystusem i w Chrystusie otwiera w nas rzeczywiście nowe możliwości, czyni szerszymi nasze serce i naszą duszę” [Benedykt XVI i Seewald 2011: 184]. Nie chodzi tu o automatyzm, jakąś formę „duchowej inteligencji” możliwej do mechanicznego wyćwiczenia, ale o fakt, że „wiarą nadaje naszemu życiu szerszy wymiar” [tamże]. Polityczne znaczenie tego wymiaru odkryć można, jak się wydaje, choćby w historii integracji europejskiej. Polityczna doniosłość działań Roberta Schumana i Alcidego de Gasperiego, jakościowo po prostu nieporównywalnych z możliwościami dzisiejszej – znacznie lepiej finansowanej i instytucjonalnie zorganizowanej – europejskiej polityki, warta jest w tym kontekście zapewne głębszej uwagi. Tym niemniej, to nie polityka aktualizuje potencjał chrześcijańskiego braterstwa. Jego istota i misja, a zatem również zadania Magisterium względem działań politycznych, lokują się w takim ujęciu w zupełnie innej, metapolitycznej sferze.

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Atrakcyjna może być propozycja, by braterstwo nie pociągało za sobą dwóch różnych sfer etycznej postawy; by w jego imię usunąć wszelkie bariery i wprowadzić całkowicie ujednoczony etos, w tej samej mierze obowiązujący wszystkich ludzi. Przywołując raz jeszcze Ratzingera stwierdzić można, że „w tym stanowczym zniesieniu granic jest niewątpliwie coś bardzo wielkiego, osiąga się to jednak za wysoką cenę: zbyt szerokie braterstwo staje się nierealistyczne i pozbawione znaczenia... Braterstwa, w którym wszyscy są tacy sami, nikt rzeczywiście nie chce poważnie traktować” [2013: 40]. Wydaje się, że teza ta została w istotnym stopniu pozytywnie zweryfikowana w kontaktach międzyreligijnych Stolicy Apostolskiej. Wracając z Iraku od „wielkiego i mądrego człowieka Bożego”, jak określił imama Sistaniego Papież, Franciszek podzielił się myślą przywódcy duchowego Irakijczyków. Stwierdził, iż „Ajatollah Al-Sistani powiedział coś, co staram się dobrze zapamiętać: ludzie są albo braćmi ze względu na religię, albo równi ze względu na stworzenie” [2021]. Myśl ta, pozostająca w wyraźnym napięciu do uniwersalnego pojmowania braterstwa, wydaje się warta rzeczywiście poważnego przemyślenia również w kontekście katolickiej tradycji „podwójnego” braterstwa.

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*The state's attitude towards religious  
communities in a health crisis:  
pursuing toward new  
interpretative approaches?*

**Państwo wobec wspólnot religijnych w sytuacji kryzysowej  
dotyczącej zdrowia. W stronę nowych podejść interpretacyjnych?**

**Abstract:** As a sort of watershed, since 2020, the outbreak of COVID-19 has deeply altered our ordinary idea of social life. Such an unprecedented health emergency has also raised a serious challenge in terms of fundamental rights and liberties, acting as a stress-test for modern constitutional pluralistic systems. With specific regard to religious freedom, it has revitalized concerns about the “special” role of religion in post-secular democratic societies. Through a comparative analysis, the aim of this paper is to investigate the implications of the pandemic age as an opportunity to reflect on the need to revisit the role of religious organizations within the network of social actors. The paper shows that cooperation among political actors and faith communities can contribute to the implementation of new ways of living together, where all social actors promote shared commitments to common goals with a view to building a more sustainable future.

**Keywords:** health emergency, restrictive measures, religious communities, cooperation

**Abstrakt:** Jako swego rodzaju przełom wybuch COVID-19 w 2020 r. głęboko zmienił nasze zwykłe wyobrażenie o życiu społecznym. Taki bezprecedensowy stan zagrożenia zdrowia stanowi również poważne wyzwanie w zakresie podstawowych praw i wolności, będąc testem radzenia sobie w skrajnych warunkach dla nowoczesnych konstytucyjnych systemów pluralistycznych. Ożywił obawy dotyczące „wyjątkowej” roli religii w postsekularnych społeczeństwach demokratycznych, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem wolności religijnej. Celem tego artykułu jest zbadanie, poprzez analizę porównawczą, implikacji ery pandemii

jako okazji do refleksji nad potrzebą ponownego przyjrzenia się roli organizacji religijnych w ramach sieci aktorów społecznych. Artykuł pokazuje, że współpraca między aktorami politycznymi i wspólnotami wyznaniowymi może przyczynić się do wdrożenia nowych sposobów wspólnego życia, w których wszyscy aktorzy społeczni promują wspólne zaangażowanie na rzecz wspólnych celów z myślą o budowaniu bardziej zrównoważonej przyszłości.

**Słowa kluczowe:** stan zagrożenia zdrowia, środki ograniczające, wspólnoty religijne, współpraca

## 1. Introduction

As a sort of watershed, since 2020, the outbreak of COVID-19 has deeply altered our ordinary idea of social life: lockdowns, social distancing and, most of all, wearing masks for sanitary reasons have imposed a new, dystopic notion of “living together” [ECHR 2014]. Such an unprecedented health emergency has not only deeply undermined the feeling of safety of modern democratic societies coming from the evolution of technology and medicine but has also raised a serious challenge in terms of fundamental rights and liberties, whose protection is founded on a complex international framework [Martínez-Torrón 2021a: 1]. Although the restrictive measures have been aimed at protecting the “supreme good” of life [Colaianni 2020: 32], the pandemic has emphasized underlying legal, political, social and economic tensions [Madera 2020: 115]. With specific regard to religious freedom, it has revitalized concerns about the “special” role of religion in post-secular democratic societies, where it seems less and less acceptable and reasonable that religion should enjoy special treatment and exemptions from general rules [Ibidem:110]. In an era where “cultural wars” are expanding, claims for religious accommodation are seen as a means of protection of values and convictions that are becoming progressively politically divisive in a highly secularized and multicultural society [Bean and Fretwell Wilson 2020: 247]. Such a never-ending debate has been exacerbated during the pandemic: should the exercise of religious freedom be equalized to that of other secular activities or does its legal regime deserve special treatment? [Schwartzman 2012: 1351].

However, during the health crisis due to the COVID-19 infection, religious communities have played a key role. In many cases, such groups have provided guidelines to their faithful to limit the spread of the virus, as well as being deeply engaged in providing primary goods and services to vulnerable classes [Madera 2021: 6].

The aim of this paper is to analyze the implications of the pandemic period as an opportunity to reflect on the need to revisit the role of religious organizations within the network of social actors, and to develop new strategic partnerships between religious and public actors in the pursuit of shared goals [Martínez-Torrón 2021b: 30-32].

## **2. The restrictive measures aimed at reducing the spread of the infections**

The coronavirus pandemic has often been associated with the idea of an exceptional global crisis which has deeply affected societies, economies and legal frameworks. First, the exceptionalism and the severity of the situation has provoked an “aggrandizement” [Petrov 2020: 71] of the jurisdiction of the executive powers, with little parliamentary control, raising concern about the subtle boundary between broad discretion and arbitrariness [Martínez-Torrón 2021a: 1-16.]. Commentators questioned whether legislative reluctance to provide clear standards has been the effect of a broader marginalization of the role of the lawmaker [Casuscelli 2021: 1-16.]. Other scholars have seen the health crisis as an opportunity for a reflection on the adequacy and effectiveness of emergency rules in distinctive legal frameworks, their role being connected with their place within the hierarchical system of the sources of law: in some cases, emergency rules have been provided at a constitutional level; in others, at the level of ordinary legislation [Consorti 2021: 167]. In any case, many legal experiences have shown the weakness of their legal provisions aimed at regulating a health emergency.

Indeed, restrictive measures, due to the need to reduce the spread of the infection, have resulted in a drastic suspension of the exercise of fundamental freedoms: mobility, association, education, privacy, raising the question of whether and to what extent fundamental rights can be subject to restrictions. Several governments have had to take decisions, due to the state of emergency, resulting in “tragic choices” [Calabresi and Bobbit 1978] in the search of a difficult balance of conflicting rights, which are the expression of fundamental values in a democratic and pluralistic society, notwithstanding the lack of scientific certainty and evidence-based medical standards and guidelines.

Second, there has been an unimaginable medicalization of law, as political choices have been entangled with scientific data. Such an entanglement has provoked the need for a continuous follow-up, trying to keep up with the successive phases of the pandemic, the epidemiological data, the level of scientific knowledge, the workability of public health systems [Madera 2021: 5]. However, such measures

have been the object of a harsh debate: they have been criticized because of their lack of clarity, ineffectiveness, and self-serving nature [Martínez-Torrón 2021: 3].

In any case, the coronavirus health emergency has been qualified as a valuable opportunity to assess the scope and workability of the constitutional framework during the management of a dramatic health crisis [Ruggeri 2020: 210-211]. Acting as a stress-test for modern constitutional pluralistic systems, the health emergency has raised new unique legal challenges [Madera 2021: 1].

### **3. The management of religious freedom during the pandemic crisis: is religion still special?**

With specific regard to the management of religious freedom, the pandemic crisis has provided a valuable opportunity to question the controversial relationship between law and religion.

As a global crisis, it has allowed distinctive state responses to be compared, where public policies have had to reconcile “reasonableness” with “precaution” [Lazzaro 2021: 107.], “contingency” and “proportionality” [Ventura 2021]. Governments have offered various legal responses, ranging between two opposite poles: a full interruption of religious assemblies and an accommodation of religious worship [Madera 2021: 1]. Indeed, scientific uncertainty, the unavailability of effective treatments and a pandemic context in continuous evolution, where the only available option to reduce the spread of the infection was to impose social distancing and restrictions on mobility have resulted in a fragmented legal response.

In the US context, a discrepancy has arisen between federal general guidelines and more pervasive state restrictive measures. Such a divergence was emphasized during phase-two of the pandemic, underlining that Trump administration’s accommodationist approach towards the claims of mainstream religions clashed with state executive powers’ decisions, charged with the hard job of providing legal responses aimed at restraining the spread of the infection [Haynes 2021: 1-15].

On the other side of the Atlantic, European states have resorted to various procedural techniques, grounded on the ECHR’s legal framework, to impose restrictions on fundamental freedoms. Some states have asked for a derogation to the application of the ECHR’s guarantees resorting to article 15 of the European Convention; others have tried to manage the pandemic crisis with ordinary legal mechanisms,

namely, they have taken advantage of the principles of necessity and proportionality to balance competing rights [Van Drooghenbroeck 2020].

Legal commentators have analyzed whether a more or less benevolent state attitude toward claims for accommodation of religious exercise has been affected by the model of church-state relationships adopted [Mosquera Monelos 2021: 6-7]. There is little doubt that specific views of religious freedom can have an impact on public policies [Fornerod 2021: 6-7]. However, the variability of restrictions has been affected by multiple and not only legal factors, giving rise to a complex mismatch of different state provisions and grounds, which in some cases “challenges stereotypes” [Ventura 2021], showing the dynamic nature of church-state interplay [Madera 2021: 5]. It goes without saying that where a fair level of religious freedom has been guaranteed to all religious communities, states have given a higher level of consideration to religious needs [Mosquera Monelos 2021: 6]. However, in certain legal contexts, the pandemic crisis has emphasized a disparate treatment between mainstream religions and minorities, and has provoked increasing repression, even persecution, of already marginalized groups, empowering a “new dimension of hate speech” [Ahmad 2021: 2].

From a legal point of view, the key question is whether religious freedom still deserves special protection and requires accommodation toward religiously neutral, generally applicable law. As is known, the place of religious freedom in the scale of values in a modern democratic post-secular society is the object of lively debate. On one hand, there is an increasing pressure to consider religious and secular values on the same footing for the sake of a secular egalitarianism [Schwartzman 2012: 1351]. On the other hand, the uniqueness of religion as a “marker of collective identity”, embedded with “compelling affective experiences and a moral authority”, has been emphasized [Ysseldyk, Matheson, and Anisman 2010: 60-71].

Thus, the pandemic has emphasized the coexistence of conflicting views on this issue as a result of a pluralistic society, where academic arguments have ranged between complaining that during the health crisis religion has been considered a good people can do without, so its protection has often been unduly compromised, and claiming that religion has been granted a privileged position compared to other secular activities, enjoying an undue exceptional status [Balsamo and Tarantino 2020].

Restrictions on religious exercise have not been implemented with the intent to target religion *qua* religion [Madera 2020: 114]. Religious exercise has been affected

within a broader framework of unparalleled restrictions on public gatherings and collective social activities. However, religious gatherings have often been deemed as super-spreader events (mass gatherings, religious festivals, burial practices), requiring a high level of monitoring. This approach has given rise to the risk of a discriminatory treatment of religious gatherings compared to other secular activities [Licastro, 2021. 130]. However, the question is still open, as to whether this governmental approach has been the result of the secularization of civil society, namely of a deep change of the role of religion in society, affecting public policies or, instead, whether a split has developed between a government “blind” toward religious claims coming from civil society [Ventura 2021].

#### **4. The key role of the courts during the pandemic crisis**

The judiciary has played a difficult role during the pandemic, as they have been charged with the negotiation of conflicting interests. Courts have often adopted an attitude of deference toward executive powers, showing reluctance to second-guess the restrictive measures [Madera 2021: 5].

In various cases, courts have resorted to the neutral standard of the comparable threshold of risk. On this point, courts have often been charged with the hard job of identifying a reasonable secular comparator for churches: in such a dystopic pandemic age, they have referred to stores, cinemas, theaters, and even casinos.

Therefore, churches have been deemed as analogous to theaters, as both are indoor spaces where people gather and sit in proximity for two-three hours, but have been considered different from stores, where people walk around for a few minutes to buy what is necessary. Also, the judicial scrutiny of activities has been more often strictly entangled with the location where activities take place (capacity of a building, indoor-outdoor, organizational ability to guarantee the respect of sanitization measures), avoiding any value judgements. Such a minimalist judicial approach led to the paradoxical result, in certain legal contexts, that during the reopening stage, economic activities have been privileged, raising concern about the relevance accorded to religious activities.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the emergency situation has given rise to a new categorization of activities as essential, whose continuation has to be guaranteed, and non-essential, which can

<sup>1</sup> Supreme Court of the United States, *Calvary Chapel Dayton Valley v. Steve Sisolak*, Governor of Nevada; Supreme Court of the United States, *South Bay Universal Pentecostal Church v. Newsom*..

be postponed or exercised in an alternative way [Licastro 2021: 126]. In any case, such standards of assessment have had an unavoidable impact on the exercise of the rights connected with those activities: thus, a new class of essential rights has arisen, whose protections cannot be suspended, even during an unprecedented health emergency, while the exercise of other less compelling rights can be postponed or satisfied through alternative means [Licastro 2021: 127]. The real question is whether and to what extent fundamental rights can be subject to restrictions.

In the US context, the pandemic case law deserves careful analysis, as in some cases it has provided the opportunity for a significant reconsideration of the usual standards of review, giving rise to serious concern about their implications in the near future [Blackman 2021: 637].

Should religious freedom be neutralized where a generally applicable law is concerned? Soon, the US courts will have to face the key question of whether and to what extent there is still room for a balancing process of competing rights. Also, the pandemic case law has emphasized that third-party burdens, provoked by the practice of religion have an increasingly significant weight in the equation [Corbin 2020: 1].

In the European context, according to article 52 of the EU Charter, limitations to rights cannot affect their essential content as an insurmountable barrier aimed at protecting rights against legislative discretion [Castelli 2021: 454]. Have the pandemic measures affected the core of fundamental rights? What are the boundaries of the protection?

The question is not easy, as the essential content of rights is not clearly defined: some commentators resort to the essential dignity of every human being, while others invoke a fair proportion between the strength of a limitation and the severity of the circumstances which caused the restriction [Castelli 2021: 467]. We cannot underestimate the fact that in several countries such as France, Belgium, Greece, Croatia, Scotland, Slovakia, Romania and Ireland, the proportionality of the restrictions (and in some cases blanket bans) on religious worship during COVID-19, has provoked litigation, and some cases, originating from Greece, Croatia and Slovakia, have culminated in complaints before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

On both the sides of the Atlantic, during the pandemic, the principle of precaution has received predictable consideration in the balancing process. Although



the adoption of neutral precautionary standards has found a strong justification in the need to prevent the spread of the infection, the weakening of any value judgment testifies a high risk of the neutralization or relativization of the importance of religion, undermining the recognition of its unique role [Madera 2020: 138].

In Europe, the courts have often resorted to the standards of necessity, proportionality and effectiveness; however, the application of these standards has given rise to disparate results, as it is extremely difficult to quantify the right amount in different legal environments. It cannot be underestimated that courts have had to reach a proper balance between unity (complying with uniform European standards) and diversity (taking into account domestic history, tradition, and culture, which can result in a local dimension of human rights) [Ventura 2021].

There is little doubt that during a serious health emergency the protection of public health has been given priority, provided that the sacrifice of other competing rights has a temporary nature. However, in the long run, a hierarchy of rights is not sustainable [Haynes 2021: 1-15]. Given the interdependence and indivisibility of all human rights, western scholars are aware that no right can be absolutized to the detriment of other competing rights. Infringing certain rights will inevitably have a negative impact on other rights [Neves-Silva, Martins, and Heller 2019: 14].

On both sides of the Atlantic, judicial decisions have raised concern about the risk of undue state interference in church matters. In democratic states, churches enjoy a space for self-governance, free from state interference. During the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictive measures have often underestimated the inner importance of religious rituals and practices, intruding in what is central and essential for a faith community, and arbitrarily imposing alternative means, which, in some cases, do not satisfy the spiritual needs of believers. Courts are not equipped to judge what the genuine message of a religious tradition is, what is a religious obligation is, which principles and doctrines are not negotiable [Durham 2020]. Furthermore, the dichotomy between essential or nonessential activities can easily become a strategic means for states to exercise pervasive monitoring on religious groups, or to adopt selective deference (privileging some religious groups and discriminating others) [Ventura 2021]. The issue is extremely complex, and it can also give rise to an internal crisis, namely to internal disputes within religious communities about what is essential on the basis of religious tradition [Ventura 2021].

### **5. The role of religious communities during the pandemic and the renewed need for a cooperation between religious and political actors**

A sociological study has identified a macro-level, a meso-level and a micro-level of involvement of religion in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic. At each level “best practices” and “worst practices” have been focused [Yendell, Hidalgo, Hillenbrand 2021]. Extreme religious groups in a few cases have promoted “worst practices” in terms of resistance against restrictive measures, violation of anti-COVID-19 provisions, spread of conspiracy theories, reluctance toward vaccination [Ibidem: 34 ff.]. However, the study shows that the best synergic strategies come from the implementation of “involvement, dialogue, networking” [Ibidem: 101]. During the pandemic, religion has proved to be a powerful driving force to face new social challenges, as they can affect people’s lives and social activities [Wijesinghe et al. 2021: 1-16]. The organizational dimension of religion (religious communities and Interfaith initiatives) has given a robust contribution during the health emergency [Martínez-Torrón 2021b: 30-32].

First, during the pandemic, various faith communities have shown their resilience: they have solicited their faithful to comply with restrictive measures, and they have self-imposed restrictive measures, anticipating state provisions and showing religious creativity in adapting their rituals and practices to the unprecedented situation of the health emergency [Hill 2020: 8-9]. They have played a pivotal role as “trusted agencies for communication, interaction, and information provision” [Yendell, Hidalgo, Hillenbrand 2021: 100].

Furthermore, the role of religious leaders cannot be underestimated. Given the trust and influence they enjoy in their communities, they have facilitated the spread of correct information with regard to COVID-19 appropriate behaviors, and they have had a positive impact on the adoption and acceptance of precautionary measures by their believers [Ibidem: 100]. In various social contexts, religious leaders have been deemed as “key stakeholders in community engagement activities”, as they have not only provided spiritual guidance and psychological support, but have also supported and coordinated prevention campaigns, cooperated in building trust with regard to COVID-19 appropriate behaviors, and been deeply involved in message dissemination and in countering discrimination and hate speech [Wijesinghe et al. 2021: 1-16].

Furthermore, religious communities have been traditionally involved in charitable apostolates (education, healthcare, social assistance), and during the pandemic,

they have given a significant contribution in providing primary goods and services to vulnerable classes [Madera 2021: 6].

Finally, a fruitful dialogue between religious actors and political decision makers has developed. Such a dialogue has taken different forms and has not always reached the highest level of institutional cooperation. Different options have been adopted in various legal contexts: institutional cooperation, advisory boards, task forces which included religious actors, and various models of consultation or concertation [Ventura 2021]. In some cases, consultation has been extended not only to religious groups but also to organized secularism [Christians and Overbeeke 2021: 97]. The possibility for religious organizations to have access to public relief on a par with secular undertakings, even in separationist environments, testifies state recognition of the vital social role of religious organization during the health emergency [Chopko 2021: 1-12].

The Italian solution has been the negotiation of memoranda (“*protocolli*”) with various faith communities, to facilitate the resumption of religious gatherings in the respect of safety measures. The State concluded these memoranda, irrespective of the previous enjoyment by the groups involved of church-state agreements. Furthermore, the state preferred to sign a protocol for every religious group instead of adopting a single act for all religious groups, although the content of all the memoranda is quite uniform [Lo Giacco 2020: 107-114].

In any case, a comparative analysis shows that faith-based organizations can affect the individual dimension of faith, its organizational dimension and can also have a positive impact on public policies, with a view to offering benefits to the population as a whole [Wijesinghe et al. 2021: 1-16].

## **6. Concluding remarks: a lesson from the pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the most challenging crises modern societies have faced, and its implications have affected not only our individual lives but also our legal frameworks. The pandemic has emphasized that an “*absolutization*” of principles risks giving rise to “*irresolvable conflicts*” [Lo Giudice 2021: 139]. On this point, the Italian Constitutional Court [2013] has argued that no right can become tyrant to the detriment of other competing values. In a pluralist perspective, there cannot be room for the crystallization of a hierarchy of absolute values, but a balancing process of competing interests is required, which takes into serious consideration the specific circumstances of the case [Haynes 2020: 9].

Following this perspective, various approaches can be followed regarding those who can be charged with the composition of competing interests. The pandemic has emphasized a dangerous change of balance among the three branches of the government, where the role of the lawmaker is increasingly marginalized, and the reconciliation of conflicting interests is left to the courts [Casuscelli 2021: 1-16]. The *status quo* has heightened the risk of the establishment of a kind of “juristocracy” [Hirschl 2004], where the judicial arena has become the preferential place where “tragic choices” [Calabresi and Bobbit 1978] are addressed.

The lawmaker should re-appropriate his role and should be charged with the search of an (even imperfect) composition of the conflicting values. Indeed, the democratic processes are the proper arena for a depolarization of the conflict of values. However, an open dialogue with all components of society is required to prevent the risk of legislative processes becoming just guarantors of majority views, underestimating dissenting voices [Casuscelli 2021: 1-16].

The lesson from the pandemic is that the knowledge of all the perspectives involved is necessary [Ventura 2021]. Mediation of conflicts requires the participation of all the actors concerned in the decisional processes [Lo Giudice 2021: 148]. Thus, the pandemic has emphasized the need to develop communicative channels between public and religious actors in the pursuit of shared goals [Martínez-Torrón 2021a: 8-9].

However, mediation implies that all stakeholders can be active participants in the decisional processes, claiming protection for their cultural-religious heritage but being aware that they cannot impose their values on others who do not share the same set of values [Lo Giudice 2021: 148].

Furthermore, the pandemic has highlighted the need for a re-visitation of the role of religious communities within the network of social actors and the advantageous effects coming from the development of partnerships between public authorities and religious groups [Madera 2021: 6].

On this point, the health-emergency has driven states to develop a constructive dialogue with religious groups in different legal contexts, regardless of their institutional models of church-state relationships. The more faith communities are involved in political decision making, the more effective can their contribution be [A. Yendell, O. Hidalgo, C. Hillenbrand 2021: 100 ff.].

Therefore, there is an increasing need for a three-party cooperation between religious actors, civil society and the government, with a view to reassessing the role of the institutional dimension of religion in the public sphere within “a model of participatory citizenship” [Herbert 2016: viii].

However, commentators underline that cooperation should not be selectively limited to the management of a health crisis but should become a “method” of interaction between the government and faith communities: in this way, religious communities would not act reactively when government measures affect them but could proactively participate in their definition, facilitating their acceptance and their implementation [ibid.: 100 ff.].

Also in the post pandemic era, the development of strategic partnerships between religious and political actors may become a key element in the pursuit of common goals [Madera 2021: 6]. As is known, religious communities are playing a impactful role in the immunization process, promoting correct information to overcome vaccine hesitancy, developing religious arguments which underline the importance of hygiene regulation, strengthening social values, building trust, and making available religious premises into vaccination centers [A. Yendell, O. Hidalgo, C. Hillenbrand 2021: 100 ff.]. Faith actor engagement can become a game-changer in the fight for immunization in low-income countries [Melillo et al., 2021]. Interreligious dialogue can give a powerful contribution in strengthening cooperation and combating discrimination in “fragile contexts” (Holden 2021). In the same way, faith communities can offer renewed support in facing both new and never-ending legal challenges (defense of new disadvantaged groups, overcoming of social injustice and structural inequalities, reduction of poverty, addressing the implications of climate change) government [A. Yendell, O. Hidalgo, C. Hillenbrand 2021: 100 ff.].

Such a model of cooperation among political actors and faith communities can contribute to the implementation of new ways of living together, where all social actors promote shared commitments to common goals with a view to building a more sustainable future.

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## *Iranian Sunni Muslims and the 2021 Presidential Election: Paradigm Shift or Political Compromise?*

**Irańscy sunniccy muzułmanie wobec wyborów prezydenckich 2021:  
zmiana paradygmatu czy polityczny kompromis?**

**Abstract:** In 2018, Iran saw a series of popular uprisings, with particularly notable discontent among the Sunni minority in Iran's peripheries. Approaching the 2021 presidential election, as Iranian Sunnis' preferred candidates were disqualified by the state, the risk of Sunni violence intensified. However, their political allegiance shifted, leading to widespread support for Ebrahim Raisi, a Shia hardliner cleric. This paper examines the Sunnis' role in this election, demonstrating how religious actors and institutions were mobilizing factors in the political campaign. During the campaign, Sunni elites focused exclusively on the allocation of power to specific elite groups, ignoring ordinary Sunnis' demands to address inequality. The entire process illustrates the flexibility of Iranian Sunnis' political decision-making and their ability to reach agreements. As such, I conclude the Sunnis' change of allegiance is better understood as political compromise rather than an epochal paradigm shift.

**Keywords:** Iran, Sunni, Shia, minority groups, geopolitics, elections

**Abstrakt:** W 2018 roku w Iranie doszło do serii powstań ludowych, przy czym szczególnie widoczne było niezadowolenie wśród mniejszości sunnickiej na peryferiach Iranu. W miarę zbliżania się wyborów prezydenckich w 2021 r., gdy preferowani kandydaci irańskich sunnitów zostali zdyskwalifikowani przez państwo, wzmożło się ryzyko przemocy sunnickiej. Jednak ich lojalność polityczna uległa zmianie, co doprowadziło do powszechnego poparcia dla Ebrahima Raisiego, szyickiego dogmatycznego duchownego. Niniejszy artykuł analizuje rolę sunnitów w tych wyborach, pokazując, w jaki sposób aktorzy i instytucje religijne mobilizowały czynniki w kampanii politycznej. W trakcie kampanii

sunnickie elity skupiały się wyłącznie na alokacji władzy w określonych elitarnych grupach, ignorując żądania zwykłych sunnitów, by zaradzić nierównościom. Cały proces ilustruje elastyczność podejmowania decyzji politycznych przez irańskich sunnitów i ich zdolność do osiągnięcia porozumień. W związku z tym dochodzę do wniosku, że zmiana lojalności sunnitów może być lepiej zrozumiana jako polityczny kompromis niż jako epokowa zmiana paradygmatu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Iran, sunnici, szyici, mniejszości, geopolityka, wybory

### Introduction

At the turn of the 21st century, the overall debate on Islam has focused mostly on its anti-modern characteristics. Yet Islamic civilization is highly pluralistic, and the structures found in today's Islamic societies are developing competing conceptual approaches which vary in their ability to engage with societal change. Indeed, in the last decades, political Islam has demonstrated its ability to adapt to new circumstances and engage with political developments. This paper focuses on the latest developments in Iran in the context of inter-confessional dynamics, specifically the political role of the Sunni minority in Iran's peripheries, located at the borderland. The overall goal is to develop a better understanding of Islam and politics in the context of epochal change. Before addressing this political situation in detail, the paper first provides some historical background on Sunni-Shia relations in Iran.

The methodology of this paper relies on descriptive research and qualitative exploration. Further, discourse analysis and genealogy techniques combined with ethnographic fieldwork are used to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. This includes a combination of literature review, data analysis, and in-depth unstructured interviews and observations made while undertaking field work. Moreover, the research process of the paper involves collecting and analyzing data from multiple sources, including the study of relevant primary and secondary documentary sources as well as interviews with people from Iranian Sunni communities (religious leaders, tribe chiefs, informal community authorities, and activists). The interviews were conducted in Persian and Kurdish by the author. The interviewees were from Sunni communities from Sistan-Baluchistan, Kurdistan, and Khorasan as well as southern provinces such as Hormozgan and Bushehr.<sup>1</sup> To bring first-hand information on Iranian Sunnis' political behavior

<sup>1</sup> Almost all interviewees asked to remain anonymous, and in certain cases, they also asked that province of origin, which considered in this paper, be anonymized.

during the election, the author joined diverse groups in Telegram/WhatsApp, where various topics are debated on a daily basis.

Many scholars [e.g., Johnson 1994: 123-4; Newman 2008: 2; Dudoignon 2017: 202-4] have claimed the Safavid dynasty (1501-1722) was the starting point of the history of modern Iran, during which Shia Islam was adopted as the empire's official religion. This transformation functioned as a barrier against the Sunni Ottoman Empire from the west and Uzbeks from the east. However, the new ideology did not expand nationwide without difficulty; it created a divergence which is still reflected in Iran's peripheries, where the majority of Iranian Sunnis are located. Despite the lack of comprehensive research on the conversion of Iranian Sunnis to Shia Islam, there is nonetheless valuable historical research pointing out that confessional tension derived from socio-economic factors in Iran's diverse society, particularly in relation to Baluch Sunnis [Johnson 1994; Dudoignon 2017]. As Dudoignon [2017] has explicitly shown, the instability of relations with the central state was based on various factors. The distance (both physical and ideological) between Sunnis living in the periphery and the central government caused a disconnection with border regions, which were transformed "into mosaics of spatially segregated but mutually influential creeds" [Dudoignon 2017: 11]. Even the fundamental socio-political changes of the Persian Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911) barely reached the empire's peripheral areas such as Baluchistan [ibidem], where the unpopularity of the Qajar dynasty (1789-1925) is reflected to this day among certain Sunni Baluch communities.

The Pahlavi dynasty (1925-1979) operatively advanced the process of state-building and Western-inspired nationalism as Iran's major state ideology [Litvak 2017a: 2; Elling 2013: 25]. This nationalism, which mostly focused on an official language and unique identity, was based on notions of a specifically Persian sense of history. During the Reza Shah (r. 1925-1941) Sunni religious institutions in Baluchistan and Khorasan had a strategic function as a bulwark against influence from the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia. It was also during this period that local tribal leaderships were replaced by Sunni *ulama* (clerics), who have remained as influential social and political factors among their communities to this day [Sabahi 2013: 164].

Already in the early days of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, a gap between the center and periphery was observed by scholars [Dudoignon 2011; Sabahi 2013; Dudoignon 2013]. In the shadow of foreign pressure and geopolitical rivalry, the question of

ethnicity and confession became a security concern for the central government. In addition, the combined issues of sectarianism and ongoing armed conflicts with leftist militants created a securitized society which particularly affected the Iranian Sunnis and some other ethnic groups in Iran's post-revolutionary era.

After the revolution, the Islamic Republic reemphasized a shared national identity rooted in Shia Islam [Rahimieh 2017: 48]. In this context, Iranian Sunnis were among the first communities to express concerns. Representing about 10-15% of the population, Iranian Sunnis predominantly have a different ethnicity than mainstream Persians (e.g., Kurd, Baluch, Turkmen, Arabs, as well as Persian-speaking Sunnis from Khorasan, whose social and historical identity differs from mainstream Persians). They are economically and ecologically disadvantaged and mostly live in peripheral parts of the country<sup>2</sup>. This continues despite the fact that the founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini, rejected ethnicity and nationalism (*qomiyat va milliyat*) for being divisive and inspiring hatred among Muslims in Iran and beyond.

In response to the exclusion of Sunni minorities, clashes between the security forces and local communities continued after the revolution in the regions of Kurdistan, Khuzestan, and Sistan-Baluchistan and among Turkmen communities to the south-east of the Caspian Sea [Ladier-Fouladi 2009: 164; Dudoignon 2013: 134-4; Elling 2013: 47-50]. In this case it is important to mention the heavy fights between the central government with Kurdish opposition in Iranian Kurdish areas, which took place in August 1979. As the conflict in that region increased, Khomeini, as the commander in chief and religious leader, issued a Fatwa sending armed forces to the Kurdistan to control the situation<sup>3</sup>. Dudoignon [2011] described this permanent instability in the border areas as the result of the Shia "colonialization" of Iran's border provinces where Sunni communities lived next

<sup>2</sup> About Sunni exclusion compare with Sabahi [2013: 297, n.9]. A clear example in this regard is Sunni exclusion from high-level political participation. Based on the Islamic Republic's constitution, which (in Article 12) indicates the Shia Jafari school of jurisprudence as the official confession (*mazhab-i rasmi*), the president of the country must believe in the fundamentals of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the official religion of the country (Article 115). The latter here refers to loyalty to the concept of *vilayat-i faqih* or Rule of the Jurisprudent, which is derived from Shia ideology and refers to the fact that the highest authority in the country must be a Shia cleric with insight into the Shia Jafari school of law. This excludes all non-Muslims and non-Shia, as well as all women, from the higher level of the political system; see also Elling [2013: 51] and Sabahi [2013: 165].

<sup>3</sup> Regarding the opposition and demands from other ethnic groups, which were less pronounced compared to Kurdish minorities, see: [Entessar 2010: 36]

to predominantly Sunni countries in their neighborhood<sup>4</sup>. From the perspective of the Iranian authorities, Iranian ethnic groups are subjects of “infiltration by the country’s enemies,” including the secret services of foreign powers such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Israel, as well as neighboring Arab countries, who want to undermine Iran’s territorial integrity by meddling in its religious and ethnic issues. Against this background, in 2017 Ebrahim Raisi (then head of the Judiciary and current president as of August 2021) claimed in a public speech given to influential Sunnis:

Our unity [between Sunni and Shia] is a divine blessing. The security in our country is beholden to awareness of *ulama* and the people, because without their presence, security will be destroyed by the enemies’ infiltration. But you, *ulama*, must sound the alarms in your tribune [so] that no one can infiltrate into the lines of people. This guarding of geographical and ideological borders is very valuable<sup>5</sup>.

The eight-year Iran-Iraq war, starting in 1980, combined with continuous fighting with contra-revolutionary armed guerrillas, meant that minority issues were temporarily overlooked. The focus shifted to the main priority: defending the country and enforcing “national unity”. In this environment, driven by security concerns nationwide and in the peripheral borderlands in particular, all ethnic and confessional demands remained in the shadow of a vulnerable securitized society. In these intensified circumstances, the last thing the Islamic Republic needed was additional internal sectarian conflicts [Elling 2013: 45-6 &54]<sup>6</sup>.

After the war and death of Khomeini in 1989, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei became the new supreme leader. In this context—defined largely by the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in February 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991—new waves of Islamo-nationalism flourished within the country [Elling 2013: 83-5]. Additionally, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani’s presidency (1989-1997) saw the beginning of the reconstruction of the country’s infrastructure in war-affected areas [Litvak 2017b: 18]. During that time, a general approach

<sup>4</sup> Dudoignon [2011: 332] used the term “colonization” in order to show the characteristic of the Shia Persian settlement in the Sunni border provinces: “Depuis trente ans, celles-ci sont en proie à un intense phénomène de colonisation persane chiite en provenance du plateau central, à la faveur de la croissance continue de la population.”

<sup>5</sup> Ebrahim Raisi (1396/2017), *khatkishiha-yi mazhabi va siyasi bi naf-i hichkas nist*. <https://raisi.ir>.

<sup>6</sup> On the perspective of the Iranian Baluch *madrasas* to the Iran-Iraq war see: [Dudoignon 2017: 217]

was embedded by the authorities to ease the Islamic Republic's relations with other countries and bring socio-political liberation to Iranians. Nonetheless, the question of ethnic and confessional minorities and their demands remained a part of Iranian social reality and the country's socio-political future.

### **Sunni political allegiances since the 1990s**

Rapid geopolitical changes since the 1990s have brought a new dynamic between Iran's Sunni minority and Shia majority [Dudoignon 2009, 2013, 2017: 226; Sabahi 2013]. Precisely since 1993, the resurgence of the "Sunni Vote" made Sunnis part of the project for public participation and vote mobilization<sup>7</sup>. Iranian Sunnis have formed a significant voting base and have tended to support the Islamic left (later reformist) and modernist conservative (moderate) politicians, at least until the last presidential election. In doing so, they have shown their interest in the socio-cultural promises of reformists instead of supporting the traditional conservatives (Principalists)<sup>8</sup>. This support placed Sunnis more or less on the opposition's side, as reformists often criticized the establishment, albeit without crossing any red lines.

Since the fifth presidential election in 1997, during which social demands became a major topic, younger generations, women, and ethnic and confessional minorities have been increasingly inspired to vote. The reformist president Mohammad Khatami's (who served from 1997 to 2005) new discourse of "Iran for all Iranians" (*iran bara-yi hami-yi iranian*) focused on the idea of including all citizens by relaxing social and cultural policies. This led to increased female participation in public life and the discussion of minority rights. In 2001, in the Sunni-majority province Sistan-Baluchistan, 90.97% of people voted for president Khatami's second term. During this time, Iranian Sunnis gained a certain independence through the establishment of decentralized city councils. In addition, the promotion of local languages gave further support to ethnic and religious minorities, for whom Khatami remains their preferred politician<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> For the 1993 presidential election and Iranian Sunni participation, see Ladier-Fouladi [2009: 255-6, 261-2, 289-90], Dudoignon [2009: 50-2, 2013: 154-7, 2017: 222-3, 233], and Gheissari and Sanandaji [2009: 287-96].

<sup>8</sup> On Iran's reformists see Posch [2010: 2-4 (general); 17-20 (clergy); 34-39]. For the historical development of Hizbullah, a radical current of Iranian conservatives with a focus on Rouhani's era, see Posch [2021]. For the reformists and their factional conflicts see Rivetti [2020: 51-7].

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Jalal Jalalizada, May 2021.



During the controversial 2009 election, Mehdi Karrubi came to be known as the protector of all minorities, especially Iranian Sunnis. He visited Sunni-majority cities and met some Sunni leaders including the Shaykh al-Islam Mawlana Abd al-Hamid Ismailzayi [Sabahi 2013: 174-5], Sunni Imam Juma of Zahedan, and the head of Dar al-Ulum Makki<sup>10</sup>. Mir Hossein Mousavi, the former prime minister, also counted on the Sunnis. He travelled to different Sunni-majority cities, prayed in Sunni mosques, and followed Sunni clerics in prayer. In this context, Iranian Sunnis predominantly voted for Mousavi. For instance, around 52% voted for Mousavi in Sistan-Baluchistan. After the 2009 presidential election won by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, during the so-called Green Movement, Iran saw protests in Tehran which were the largest public demonstrations since the 1979 revolution started; they continued on a smaller scale in other major cities such as Mashhad, Isfahan, and Shiraz. Despite their initial support for the Green Movement leaders, Karrubi and Mousavi, Iranian Sunni leaders such as Mawlana Abd al-Hamid played their “double moral benefit” [Dudoignon 2017: 27]: voting for the Green Movement Leaders but recognizing Ahmadinejad’s reelection and inviting the opposition to calm themselves and stop demonstrating.

In 2013, former presidents Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami supported the candidacy of Hasan Rouhani, a moderate politician. Meanwhile, there was a major mobilization for his candidacy among Iranian Sunnis through the Sunni Fraction (*fraktion-i ahl-i sunnat*) of the Iranian Parliament, Mawlana Abd al-Hamid (and his influence among the Hanafi Sunni Muslims), and Abd al-Rahman Pirani (b. 1954, a Kurdish politician and the head of officially established *jama’at-i dawat va islah* [Society of Appeal and Reform], i.e., the Iranian Muslim Brothers)<sup>11</sup>. In this environment, Rouhani won a landslide victory. In Sistan-Baluchistan, Rouhani got approximately 73% of the votes while his opponent, the conservative candidate Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (the current head of parliament), obtained second place with only around 10.5% of the votes.

<sup>10</sup> Established in 1971 by Abd al-Hamid’s father-in-law Mawlana Abd al-Aziz Mullazada, Dar al-Ulum became the main center of Sunni education. Since 1989 it has been the most important Sunni higher religious school in the Persian-speaking world and a Sunni political institution in Iran [Dudoignon 2017: 220-1, 2013: 152].

<sup>11</sup> The Muslim Brothers (*ikhwan-i muslimin*) appeared in the Kurdish Sunni community and has been active in Iran since the 1970s. For details on the Muslim Brothers among Kurdish Iranian Sunnis, see Dudoignon [2017: 241, 260-63]; regarding the Society for Appeal and Reform and the role its members played during the 2013 presidential election by supporting Rouhani, see *ibidem* [238-46]. For detailed information about the Muslim Brothers in Iran see Dudoignon [2017: 238-46].

In the 2017 election for his second term, Hasan Rouhani got around 73% of the votes in Sistan-Baluchistan, whereas his main opponent, Ebrahim Raisi, won approximately 26%. However, four years later in June 2021, Ebrahim Raisi beat Sistan-Baluchistan with 52.11% of the votes.

### **From reconciliation to oppression (the Rouhani era)**

Rouhani entered office when state relations with ethnic and confessional minorities were experiencing increased securitization, which had emerged during Ahmadinejad's presidency. In this social environment, Rouhani [1392/2013 May] obtained Iranian Sunnis' support by providing a "declaration" (*bayani-yi shumari 3, huquq-i aqvam, adyan va mazahib*) with the overall message of "no intervention in the religious and confessional affairs" of Iranian minorities. Importantly, the declaration focused on the right to use ethnic languages in the education system, which was already declared in article 15 of the constitution but had not been coherently implemented.

Later on, in November 2016, Rouhani published the Citizen's Charter (*manshur-i huquq-i shahrivandi*), which specifically addressed cultural, ethnic, and religious issues (including the variety of confessional groups) without using the word minority. Given that these issues appeared at the beginning of the Charter shows their importance to Rouhani [Citizen's Rights 1395/2016 November]. Rouhani also appointed a Special Advisor of the President in Affairs of Ethnic and Religious/Confessional Minorities (*dastyar-i vizhi dar umur-i aqvam va aqalliyatha-yi dini va mazhabi*). This advisory office was established to assist Rouhani's administration and implement the rights of Iranian citizens belonging to religious, confessional, and ethnic minorities. The first advisor to this institution was Ali Yunesi, who had been the Minister of Intelligence under President Khatami, 2000–2005. Some political hardliners and conservatives among Iranian political elites criticized the Citizen's charter, claiming it undermined the Islamic Republic's "values" [Posch 2017: 1-2]. There were also critics among Iranian Sunnis, who questioned Rouhani's Special Advisor. First, they asked why the post was given to a Shia cleric and not a Sunni. Second, the fact that the Special Advisor had a security background made some Sunni activists claim that Iranian Sunnis were still under the security lens<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with a Sunni religious teacher in Sistan-Baluchistan, June 2021 (interviewee wanted to remain anonymous).

It is clear that Rouhani's reform policies regarding minorities, specifically relating to Iranian Sunnis, failed. The Sunnis were not only excluded from higher posts in Rouhani's ministerial cabinet, but his promise to decrease "the security view" was completely broken; securitization increased dramatically during his second term. Arrests and executions of Sunnis from different provinces proliferated during 2019 and 2020 [Iran Human Rights Watch 2020]. This made the Sunni community as a whole express their concerns and discontent more publicly. The most influential Iranian Sunni leader from Sistan-Baluchistan, Mawlana Abd al-Hamid, enunciated in a 2020 letter to Supreme Leader Khamenei that the Iranian Sunnis were still suffering as "second-class citizens." Ultimately in March 2021, Abdullah Suhrabi, a Kurdish Sunni deputy of the Sixth parliament (2000–2004), personally sent a complaint to the Iranian Supreme Court with claims of Rouhani's inefficiency and unfulfilled promises to ethnic and confessional minorities [Sunnion Online 1400/2021 April].

Among the many candidates of the 2021 presidential election disqualified by the state, Sayyid Mustafa Tajzada had already criticized Rouhani's administration during its first year, pointing out the absence of Sunnis among his ministers and reminding Rouhani that "making use of Iranian Sunnis at different management levels of the country will be a win-win for everyone, especially in times when there are bloody conflicts amongst the various Islamic groups in the region" [Islahweb 1392/2013 September]. He further published on 9 May 2021 a public letter to the Supreme Leader reflecting on some of the political issues related to the election, citizen's rights, gaining the public's trust, and other ideas similar to those of Rouhani, indicating that "if we want a civic and peaceful life, we do not have any other way than to talk with each other and ensure participation in the country's management of people from all religions, confessions, ethnicities, races, languages, classes, and women and men" [Instagram sayed.mostafa.tajzade]. His statement has been to some extent reflected by Sunni communities, for example by Mawlana Abd al-Hamid after the Eid prayer on 13 May: "we do not accept that Iran belongs to just one group, confession, or clan" [Abdulhamid 1400/2021 May].

One of Rouhani's main promises, together with improving the economy and mending Iran's relationship with the West, was enhancing the state's relations with its minorities. This included guarantees of public freedom of political association and thought, and more liberty for the religious activities of non-Shia confessional groups. One of Rouhani's main policy slogans from the beginning was the notion of "Win-Win policy." He used this in his election campaign, during the nuclear

deal process, in domestic communication with his political rivals, and in relation to minorities. However, the end of his era, at least with regards to minorities, turned into a “Lose-Lose” situation. Unsatisfied socio-economic promises, for instance the absence of Sunnis from the higher posts and the general center-periphery disconnection, raised critical voices among Sunni communities. During the last two years of Rouhani’s presidency, economic hardship caused increased smuggling, especially fuel from Iran to Pakistan, through the border in Sistan-Baluchistan, causing several incidents between the security forces and smugglers. The deaths of fuel smugglers (called *sukhtbar*)<sup>13</sup>—either shot by security forces or following accidents on dangerous roads—were reflected in the public religious sermons of Sunni clerics.

In fact, from 2017 onwards, the discourse of Sunni *ulama* in Sistan-Baluchistan became more critical. Towards the end of the Rouhani era (2019-2021), the state’s approach to Iranian Sunnis became more securitized, which made sense in the international, regional, and domestic context. Internationally, the situation was defined by rivalry with Saudi Arabia and the military escalation with the US (started by Donald Trump’s policy of “Maximum Pressure” following his withdrawal from the Nuclear Deal [JCPOA], reached in 2015). Domestically, since 2017, due to economic and political grievances, there had been hundreds of demonstrations in Iran, especially in rural areas, leading to oppression in the public domain, including among Iranian Sunni communities. The tremulous socio-political situation peaked on 15 November 2019, when petrol prices tripled. Civil protests erupted across Iran soon after. Sunnis were among the first critics of the state, for example, Mawlawi Fazl al-Rahman Kuhi, Imam Juma and the headmaster of Anvar al-Haramayn *madrasa* (seminary) in Pashamag in Iranian Baluchistan, who was arrested in Mashhad at the end of November 2019 and sentenced to six years’ imprisonment. For Iranian Sunnis this event, together with underlying socio-economic issues, brought Rouhani’s era to an unhappy end. An Iranian Sunni from the city of Khwaf summarized the situation as follows:

<sup>13</sup> *Sukhtbr* (lit. energy carrier) transporting gallons of diesel with their cars and motorcycles to Pakistan where it is sold at higher prices and mostly paid in US dollars. According to the 2017 Islamic Republic state media reports, around 100 million liters were smuggled from Iranian Baluchistan on a monthly basis. See IRNA [1396/2017 November], *qachaq-i mahani hudud-i 100 million litr sukht az sistan va baluchistan*, <https://www.irna.ir>. A similar situation also exists in Iran’s western border areas, where cross-border porters (*kulbar*) carry heavy goods between Iran and Iraq. Based on a UN [2019] report on human rights in Iran, there are up to 84,000 *kulbar* in Iranian Kurdistan and 75 of these were killed and 117 injured in 2018 alone. Further details are elaborated in Habibi Doroh [2020].

“What was brought to the Iranian Sunnis after eight years? Nothing but empty promises and security pressure. In eight years, [Rouhani] had several reformists in his cabinet, but the Iranian Sunnis got nothing. Where were all the reformists, who claim they support Sunnis, in these years? The reformists should receive a big no from our side [i.e., withdrawn electoral support] to show that we are deciding for ourselves”<sup>14</sup>.

### **2021 presidential election: A paradigm shift?**

As Rouhani’s presidency came to an end, there was a sense of insecurity regarding the Iranian Sunnis’ situation. First, supporting reformist-minded politicians would have involved repeating their usual, unsuccessful strategy, not to mention the minimal chance that reformists would be qualified by the Guardian council<sup>15</sup>. Second, supporting hardliners could put the Sunni elites in Iran in a difficult position. As a Sunni activist in Sistan-Baluchistan told the author: “a political shift among Sunni *ulama* could impact the people in their communities and decrease the credibility of *ulama*. Although reformists failed to satisfy Iranian Sunnis, the idea of reformism is part of Sunnis’ political worldview”<sup>16</sup>.

During the five days of candidate registration, 592 men and women signed up, even though the law only allows only men to run for presidency. From these, the Guardian Council announced seven approved candidates on May 25; at the forefront was the cleric and current head of the Judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi. Based on a national survey conducted around a month before the election, Raisi was the most well-known politician among all the candidates [Akharinkhabar 1400/2021 May]. Further, 47.7% of those surveyed said that they would vote for him. Raisi also had strong support from the Iranian parliament; 208 out of 290 signed a paper inviting him to be a candidate in the election. On the other side of the fence, the reformists tried to encourage the foreign minister Javad Zarif to register, although he decided not to run. All other candidates were disqualified, including the main candidates who were suggested by the moderates/reformists, such as Tajzada, Rouhani’s Vice President Eshagh Jahangiri, and even the ex-parliamentary speaker Ali Larijani, supposedly a trusted politician and regime loyalist. The latter was one of the potential candidates whom Iranian Sunnis would have supported<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> Interview, June 2021 (interviewee wanted to remain anonymous).

<sup>15</sup> A 12-member council (selected by the Supreme Leader and the head of the Judiciary) in charge of supervising elections, i.e., approving candidates.

<sup>16</sup> Interview, June 2021 (interviewee wanted to remain anonymous).

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Jalal Jalalizada in June 2021.

The decision by the Guardian Council basically leveled the playing field in such a way that Raisi remained the only realistic candidate for president and, as public rumors suggested, a potential Supreme Leader successor.

Accordingly, around a week before the election on June 11, Iranian Sunnis faced limited possibilities. The first option was boycotting the election and discouraging people to participate. This idea was present among Iranian Sunni communities and other communities in Iran who did not vote. For the Sunni elites, however, this was not an option. They certainly did not want to put themselves on the same side as the opposition, especially those in favor of regime change. The major argument against the boycott was that “the Iranian Sunnis are already under the security prism and boycotting the election would certainly make the situation worse”<sup>18</sup>. A softer version of this option, i.e., encouraging people to vote without supporting a specific candidate, was also mostly rejected by the Sunni elites, as it would exclude Iranian Sunnis from participating in vote mobilization processes and establishing a channel of communication with the potential president. The second option would be to play the old game and support candidates backed by reformists (Abd al-Naser Hemmati and Muhsen Mehralizada). This option was unappealing because of their general dissatisfaction with Rouhani and reformists/moderates in general. In addition, it was understood that only Ebrahim Raisi had a realistic chance of winning; as such, voting for him was the third, last, and only rational option.

However, choosing Ebrahim Raisi as preferred candidate was a difficult decision for Iranian Sunnis. Furthermore, as there is no centralized community or association which can bring all Iranian Sunnis together, making a united decision was quite a challenge. In a spontaneous manner, an unofficial council was constituted approximately two weeks before the election. The Strategic Council of Iranian Sunnis (SCIS; *shura-yi rahburdi-yi ahl-e sunnat-i iran*), later named the Consultatory Council of Iranian Sunnis (*shura-yi hamandishi-yi ahl-i sunnat-i iran*), played an extremely important role in this regard. The council, which acts as a self-organized unregistered association, has been active since the 2008 election. In this council, influential Sunni elites from religious communities across Iran gather in Tehran to identify which presidential candidate they should support in the election. In the 2021 presidential election, the council had 15 members, with approximately two people from communities in provinces with many Sunni residents, and some from Tehran. The 2021 council’s members included former and current members

<sup>18</sup> Interview with a teacher at a religious school in the city of Khwaf in July 2021 (interviewee wanted to remain anonymous).

of parliament, as well as religious figures or their representatives from Sunni *madrastas*. However, during the election period, certain Iranian Sunnis claimed that they had not been informed about the council. Among them, a Sunni cleric from Iranian Kurdistan, Kak Hasan Amini, published an official statement criticizing the non-democratic character of the council [Telegram Kak Hasan Amini 1400/2021 June]. Jalal Jalalizada, a Kurdish reformist politician, scholar, intellectual, and deputy member of Sanandaj to the sixth parliament had mixed feelings about SCIS: “The existence of this council is important as its members talked with a majority of candidates (except Raisi, Zakani, and Jalili) and managed to reflect a major concern of Iranian Sunnis. But in their decision making they failed to reach a goal, which was unifying Iranian Sunnis in reaching a final decision”<sup>19</sup>.

Ten days prior to the election, while the SCIS could not agree on their preferred candidate, Raisi sent his advisors to meet them and convinced them to mobilize voters. Raisi’s representative Muhammad Asefi Yazdi met with Mawlana Habib Al-Rahman Mutahhari (the most prominent Iranian Sunni figure and head of Ahnaf of Khwaf, one of Iran’s major Sunni educational institutions), which was reflected in Mutahhari’s Telegram [1400/2021 June] channel together with certain demands regarding Iranian Sunnis’ rights<sup>20</sup>. Meanwhile, another representative of Raisi, Musa Qazanfarabadi<sup>21</sup> went to Zahedan and visited Mawlana Abd al-Hamid, though this did not lead to immediate support for Raisi. Mawlana Abd al-Hamid’s son-in-law, Mawlana Hafez Ismail Mullazayi, claimed on June 9 that Shaikh Al-Islam of Zahedan was still observing the situation and remained undecided [Ina News 1400/2021 June], which was also reflected in Mawlana Abd al-Hamid’s Friday sermon<sup>22</sup>. Following Abd al-Hamid’s speech, another important figure among Iranian Sunnis, Shaykh Al-Hadith Mawlana Muhammad Hussein Gurgij, at that time the Imam Juma of Galikesh in northern Iran and the headmaster of Dar al-Ulum of Faruqiyya, also indicated that the decision was in the Council’s hands:

<sup>19</sup> Interview June 19.

<sup>20</sup> In this statement Mutahhari described the issue of Iranian Sunnis’ exclusion from higher positions as cabinet members or even the president. Furthermore, he raised another issue regarding the independence of Sunni educational institutions: “[Sunni] higher religious schools must be independent and no one shall intervene in their affairs ... based on the constitution, ethnic and confessional groups are free in their religious affairs.” For Raisi’s speech see: [Raisi 1400/2021]. He mostly emphasized that these issues were more related to the economy and mismanagement and to a certain extent repeated slogans from his 2017 presidential campaign: [Raisi 1396/2017 May] (*khatkeshiha-yi mazhabi va siyasi bi naf-i hichkas nist*).

<sup>21</sup> Head of the legal and judicial commission of the Iranian parliament.

<sup>22</sup> See his full speech on Friday June 11 on Telegram [Telegram Mawlana Abdulhamid 1400/2021 June].



“The Iranian Sunnis will not boycott the election, as the destiny of the country has to be decided. However, we have requests and expectations. The strategic council is in Tehran negotiating with candidates and the decision will be communicated. If there is no agreement with any candidate, then the people are free to choose by themselves”<sup>23</sup>.

Independently of SCIS, certain Sunni communities immediately supported Raisi, leading to criticism and dissatisfaction from other Iranian Sunnis. In the province of Kermanshah, Shahab Nadiri, the deputy for the city of Pave in the 10<sup>th</sup> parliament, was appointed as the head of Raisi’s presidential campaign for ethnic groups and confessions on May 29 and was made responsible for mobilizing voters in Iran’s western Kurdish areas [Telegram Shahab Nadiri 1400/2021 June]. Soon afterwards, Sheikh Khalil Afra, the Imam Juma of Kangan in Bushehr province, was appointed as Raisi’s representative among Iranian Sunnis in Bushehr. On June 7, 11 days before the election, a group of Turkmen *ulama* of North-Khorasan province stated their participation in the election and support for Raisi in a published letter. In Iran’s northeastern borderland in Raz and Jargalan county, which share 165 km of borders with Turkmenistan, Haj Akhund Galdi Kamali played an active role in mobilizing the Sunni Turkmen communities [Dana 1400/2021 June]<sup>24</sup>. To complete Raisi’s vote mobilization on June 10, around 500 Iranian Sunnis, from religious communities in various regions, were invited to meet with Raisi and brought by a private airplane to Tehran (Mutahhari Mosque)<sup>25</sup>. However, influential and well-known figures from Iranian Baluchistan were absent. On the same day, the Sunni parliamentary group of the 11<sup>th</sup> parliament also met with Raisi, presenting him the Sunnis’ overall demands and their general interest to vote for the Principalists (*usulgarayan*).

<sup>23</sup> His speech on Friday June 11 essentially encouraged people to participate and described the importance of the election, as well as the “unity” of people in Sistan-Baluchistan with other Iranians, without showing support for any specific candidate [Telegram Mawlana Gurgij 1400/2021 June].

<sup>24</sup> In an interview (June 2021) with a Sunni cleric from the Turkmen community of Golestan province, the interviewee mentioned that among Bandar’s Turkmen Sunni community of Turkaman (the major city and capital of Turkaman County in Golestan province), Sunni clerics were still undecided.

<sup>25</sup> For a visual detail, see: [Mashreghnews 1400/2021 June] Iranian Sunnis who had not agreed to support Raisi at that stage criticized this participation and described the scene as “humiliating rather than productive” (from a conversation with an event participant on June 11). Another participant described the whole event as well-arranged and important, as Iranian Sunnis from western and eastern parts of Iran were present and had the chance to talk on stage and send their message to Raisi (interview with a participant in the event from Iranian Kurdistan on June 12).

On June 12, SCIS identified Raisi as the preferable candidate, undoubtedly after being given the green light by Mawlana Abd al-Hamid. The Sunni parliamentary group also declared their immediate support for Raisi [ISNA 1400/2021 June]. To finalize the decision from the Dar al-Ulum Makki, Mawlana Abd al-Hamid's representative met on the same day with Sayyid Hamed Alam al-Huda (director of Raisi's Headquarters in Affairs of Ethnicities, Confessions, and Religious Minorities), the older son of Sayyid Ahmad Alam al-Huda (Raisi's father-in-law, Mashhad's Imam Juma, and Khamenei's representative in the province). Although certain people could not accept this decision, the office of Mawlana Abd al-Hamid issued a statement confirming his approval of the decision [Abdulhamid 1400/2021 June]. Consequently, the majority of Sunni *madrasas*, as well as influential people close to Dar al-Ulum Makki, declared their support for Mawlana and his political decision<sup>26</sup>. In this way, the main decision of the most important Sunni institution and its leader spread through his channels all over social media—an effective and often-used strategy which shows the connectivity of certain Sunni institutions and their main figures.

Subsequently, critical voices were raised within Sunni communities. The first and among the most important claims came from The Society for Appeal and Reform (*jamaat-i dawat va islah*). In a short and clear statement, published on June 13 on the website of the society and their social media [Islahweb 1400/2021 June], the first point they made was that a decision by a single civil organization should not be presented as a collective decision of all Iranian Sunnis. Further, the last point clarified, “the Society for Appeal and Reform, as lots of other [Sunni] organizations and Sunni figures, did not intervene in the process of the creation and management of this decision and is worried about its outcomes and their impact.” Following that, the general director of a Turkman Sunni association, United Front of Sympathetic People of Sahara (*jibhi-yi muttahir-i hamdilan-i sahra*), Abd Al-ghaffar Radmehr, reacted more critically in a statement on June 15, which was distributed in several Turkman Sunni community channels. He states the decision from SCIS was “far away from the political and electoral ethic” [Ulkamiz 1400/2021 June]. The main assertion of the text was that following reformist currents is part of Iranian Sunnis' political thinking and they should continue to support reformism even if reformist politicians had fallen short of expectations. Regardless of their low chance of winning, the Turkman association suggested supporting Hemmati and Mehralizade

<sup>26</sup> See statements from Mawlana Mutahhari [Ahnaf Khaf 1400/2021 June]; Mawlana Gurgij [Sunni Online 1400/2021 June]; the headmaster of Anvar Al-Ulum Khairabad [Anvarweb 1400/2021 June]; and Imam Juma of Saravan, Mawlana Sayyed Abd Al-Samad Sadati [Avayesunnat 1400/2021 June].

as the two remaining reformist/moderate candidates [ibid]. Some people went even further and connected reformism to their ethnic and religious identity. A Kurdish Sunni intellectual from Sanandaj emphasized, “I cannot understand how some Sunni elites came to this conclusion to support hardliners (*tundra-ha*)! But I am even more surprised by the Kurdish Sunnis ... I believe a Kurd, who does not support reformism, is not a real Kurd!”<sup>27</sup>.

By supporting Raisi in Iran’s 2021 presidential election, Iranian Sunni elites supported a preferred candidate of the establishment, instead of supporting the opposition, as they had generally done since 1993. However, before jumping to the conclusion that this decision represents a paradigm shift, we have to consider the following points which were reflected in this section:

- 1) The decision to support Raisi was not a full reflection of all Iranian Sunni communities. As already discussed, several people among the Sunni elites came to a different conclusion and disagreed with the SCIS’ final decision.
- 2) As the result of the election has shown, despite generally high levels of support for Raisi, not all Iranian Sunni voters followed their leaders’ suggestion. As Figure 1 shows, compared to the 2017 presidential election, Raisi’s vote in Sistan-Baluchistan and Kurdistan in 2021 almost doubled, while the vote for the reformist/moderate candidate decreased dramatically (approximately 11% for Hemmati in Sistan-Baluchistan and 15% in Kurdistan) compared to 2017 (approximately 73% for Rouhani in Sistan-Baluchistan and 67% in Kurdistan). The Iranian Sunnis described this outcome as resulting from “political wrath” (*qahr-i siyasi*) with reformists/moderates<sup>28</sup>. Looking at total participation, we see a significant decrease in Kurdistan (by almost 37%) and Sistan-Baluchistan (by 17.5%). The numbers in these two provinces represent a general trend in Iran. Another phenomenon which was also significant in the 2021 election was the issue of blank (or invalid) votes. In Sistan-Baluchistan and Kurdistan, almost 15% and 26% of the total votes were blank, respectively.
- 3) Because several candidates were disqualified by the state, the pre-election calculation was clear: Raisi was going to win. Thus, for the Iranian Sunni elites, supporting him was the only rational option to not lose their connection with the state. In addition, the Iranian Sunni elites correctly observed the lack of interest in reformists/moderates among the wider population. One SCIS member described the situation as follows:

<sup>27</sup> Interview on June 15, 2021 (interviewee wanted to remain anonymous).

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Jalal Jalalizade on June 17, 2021.

“What is the point of supporting the reformists anymore? What will they bring us except security issues and problems with the state? Look at the current situation of reformists themselves! Most of their politicians are either in exile, in jail or house arrest, or were disqualified. The situation of reformists is like a grave with no dead body inside [a Persian metaphor for describing something pointless] ... A reformist president cannot work under this situation and cooperate with the parliament, and this is the expediency for the establishment [to have a conservative government] ... Iranian Sunni communities are active and dynamic, know our interests and understand the situation of our society. It was difficult to take this decision, but we had to think beyond our ethnic and confessional preferences and think about our national interest and future challenges. We should not create a barrier between us as Sunnis and the state and the supreme leader”.

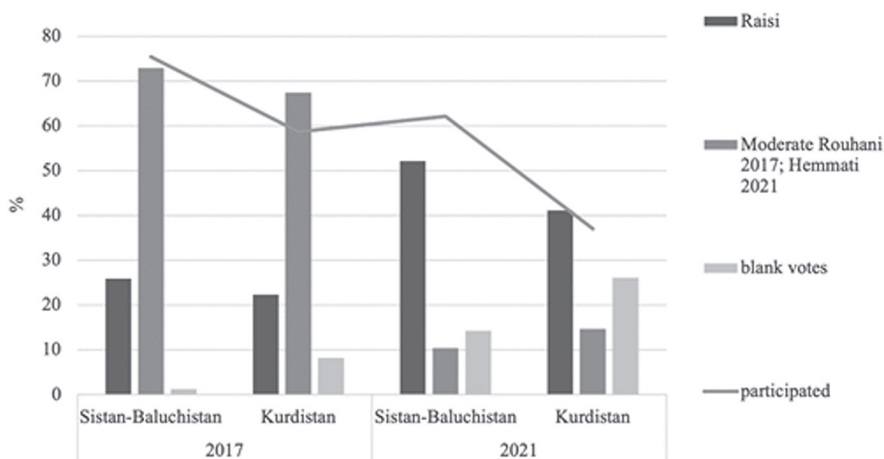


Figure 1. Changing vote share among Iranian Sunni communities: 2017 and 2021 elections

Source: [Irandataportal 2017; MOI]

### The big picture

The decision by the Iranian Sunnis to support the traditional conservative current (i.e., the right) in the 2021 presidential election can be observed as a political shift within the Islamic Republic. Further, the election has demonstrated once again the authority of Dar al-Ulum Makki in Zahedan and the role of Mawlana Abd al-Hamid, and the way he and his other Sunni counterparts operate politically. In the light of different regional and international developments—renegotiating the historical nuclear deal, ongoing talks with arch-rivals Saudi Arabia—it is reasonable to ask whether a new Sunni-Shia dynamic is being shaped.

However, despite the attempt to change the political behavior of Iranian Sunnis, the situation might not represent a paradigm change at this stage. Indeed, a wider socio-political shift has still not occurred. The recent decision by Iranian Sunnis should be understood mainly as a rational act based on political compromises with Iran's dominant political current. This decision may open a new chapter in relations between Sunnis and the state in Iran. However, as of February 2022, six months after Raisi came to office, the taboo of having a Sunni in the presidential cabinet has yet to be broken. Raisi has made no significant Sunni appointments, except for a new religious minority advisor, Mamusta Abd al-Salam Karimi [Dolat 1400/2021 October] from Kurdistan. More welcoming was Ali Khamenei's appointment on 17 August 2021 of Amir Shahram Irani, a Kurdish Sunni from Sanandaj, as the Commander of the Iranian Navy, which is to this day the highest position achieved by a Sunni in post-revolutionary Iran. Nevertheless, prominent Sunni scholar Mawlana Gurgij was dismissed on 17 December 2021 from his role as Imam Juma, which raised major concerns among the Sunnis. This decision came from the office of Ali Khamenei's representative in Golestan province and led to protests in the city of Azadshahr<sup>29</sup>, and a wide range of reactions from Iranian Sunni communities on social media. In the latest move, Mawlana Abd al-Hamid sent a public letter to Ali Khamenei asking him for "urgent measures to solve the issue" [Abdulhamid 1400/2021 December]. On 9 January 2022, Khamenei signaled his awareness of Sunni-Shia dissonance in Iran, but warned that people should approach it cautiously and not "prolong the issue" [Nournews 1400/2022 January].

As has always been the case, the religious and political dimension of Sunni-Shia relations in Iran is related to regional geopolitical evolutions. Indeed, in the wider Middle East sectarianism has played out on different grounds and created conflicting relations between the religious and political field. Similar to Iran, Iraq's 2021 parliamentary election saw a record-breaking low turnout destabilize the political domain, which also put Tehran in a paradoxical situation – as the Fatah coalition of the Iran-backed Popular Mobilization Units saw a defeat in the election, which they claimed was caused by election rigging. Meanwhile, the Taliban's victory in Afghanistan provided Iran with new opportunities but also potential threats. Although Sunnis and Shias have coexisted in the face of their shared goals and threats, the new geopolitical and ideological transformation may challenge their relations in Iran in the long run. On the one hand, the 921

<sup>29</sup> For background information to this event see: <https://www.radiofarda.com/a/protest-over-dismissal-sunni-clergy/31634791.html>

km border with Afghanistan and the ideological ties between Iranian Sunnis in eastern provinces with the Taliban has put Iran in a difficult position. Specifically, in light of Mawlana Abd al-Hamid's welcoming message to the Taliban, followed by other Sunni clerics aligned with him, we see the complexity and connectivity of sectarian relations. In summary, different sides from the state and confessional groups are playing different political games for their own interests to build their own capabilities. If any side miscalculates or has their interests ignored, increasing sectarian division and tension is inevitable.

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## *Faith Based Organizations as Instigators of Development: the contribution of Alfagems Secondary School in Morogoro (Tanzania)*

**Organizacje motywowane wiarą jako inicjatorzy wzrostu.  
Wkład szkoły średniej Alfagems w Morogoro (Tanzania)**

**Abstract:** The study attempts to capture the impact of the religious element upon the development of a developing country. Due to the range of difficulties in outlining the field of study, from the outset it was assumed that the pro-developmental activity of Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) is carried out as an immanent part of the socio-economic processes of development. As FBO insiders target a given developmental goal, they start to act upon the secular proponents which are continually being reinforced from within the religious dimension. As indicated, this leads to measurable goals (the results of state examinations).

**Keywords:** development and religion, Faith-Based Organizations, Alfagems Secondary School, Fr. Riccardo Ricconi, Tanzania

**Abstrakt:** Opracowanie stanowi próbę ukazania wpływu pierwiastka religijnego na wzrost, który dokonuje się w warunkach rozwijającego się kraju. Ze względu na liczne trudności w definiowaniu pola badawczego w punkcie wyjścia założono, że prorozwojową działalność Organizacji Motywowanych Wiarą (FBO) należy ujmować jako immanentną część społeczno-ekonomicznych procesów wzrostu. Wraz z wyznaczeniem określonego celu rozwojowego, członkowie określonej FBO zaczynają oddziaływać na swoich świeckich partnerów, a oddziaływania te pozostają pod stałym wpływem impulsów wyłaniających się z wnętrza sfery

religijnej. Jak zostało to wykazane, działania te prowadzą do wymiernych celów (wyniki egzaminów państwowych).

**Słowa kluczowe:** rozwój i religia, Organizacje Motywowane Wiarą, szkoła średnia Alfagems, ks. Riccardo Ricconi, Tanzania

Periodic bursts of literature, regarding a specific area of interest, usually trigger a justified increase in interest. This is true in relation to this study, but only partially. Our initial interest emerged when having to face the various manifestations of the religious factor within the social conditions of a developing country. Thus, as we started the critical matching of the descriptions, within the literature on the subject, to the most visible facets of surrounding reality, we noticed a recurring regularity. Most obviously, the role of religion in development, mediated by both the institutions and individuals who declare that their engagement is inspired by religious faith, is marked by a peculiar ambivalence. This stems from the combination of two elements which closely permeate each other. One is oriented towards crossing the existential reality of people (religious) and the other is immanently tight but with various aspects of this reality (secular).

As the decision has been made to focus rather more upon the institutional facets of the involvement of religion in the dissemination of development, than on individual engagement motivated by religious faith, our attention has been attracted by Alfagems Secondary School. This was mainly due to certain plainly visible incoherencies - as we assumed - significantly affecting the organization of the school and the climate inside it. The first of the striking observations was the general lack of tidiness inside and around the school. This picture was difficult to align with its reputation as a place of academic excellence [Asantebwana 2014: 45]. Already, the very sight of its founder Fr Riccardo dressed in a piece of clothing resembling a Franciscan habit and usually walking barefoot, reinforced by the crude appearance of the school buildings, gave rise to an impression of austerity. Thus, it is difficult to take on board that it is here that there are working teachers who are so well-qualified and motivated that the education on offer stands out as being above that of other schools in the country [ibidem: 57-58].

In line with the gradually emerging perspective of the study, this and other incoherencies are recognised as not being incidental. They are the result of the

overlapping axio-normative order proper to both the constitutive – religious and secular - counterparts [Torry 2016: 2-7]. Thus, in line with our perspective, this school may be classified as one of those religious organizations that, by highlighting the indispensability of the role of the religious element, carry the name of Faith Based Organizations [Torry 2014: 19-20, cf. Michell 2017: 165]. The charm of this term must not misguide anyone, however, because the stress put on the religious element does not cancel out their second essential - secular - dimension. Therefore, by using this institution as an example, it is intended to demonstrate that the close combination of the religious and secular elements, despite the occasional eye-catching incoherencies, is the basic foundation of the exceptional quality and scope of the contribution to development delivered by religious organizations. This contribution gives a guarantee which goes beyond that which may be achieved when it is devoid of the religious ingredient, and only the rules of non-metaphysical rationality and empirical pragmatism are employed. This is because those rules, with all their instrumental purposefulness, are lacking the existential reinforcement that is needed for a proper entrenchment of specific projects into a given social environment. The religious provenience of FBOs enables that reinforcement because its natural area of operating lies in between what is strictly rational and what goes beyond pure rationality [Hovland 2008: 171-186].

When we recall the literature on this subject, at its starting point, we realise how it significantly stands out from that which preceded it. This was achieved through its systemic approach to the complexities and multidimensionality of the linkages joining elements of a transcendent and supernatural nature to that of a temporal and natural character. In addition to the fact that both, the religious and the secular, are the components being conceptualised as fully legitimate institutional counterparts, similarly as actors they are subject to two-sided inter-dependencies and inter-actioning [Dyck 2013: 8-9]. That way of perceiving them was not so obvious, a while ago, during the period of the unquestionable rule of the paradigm of secularisation [Wilk-Mhagama 2016: 290-291]. The systemic approach received its theoretical enrichment through the simultaneous attempt to observe the relationship formulated by both the religious and the secular element, from the standpoint proper to the discrete disciplines of theology, the humanities, and the social sciences. As unveiled by an analysis of the collective studies entrenched within this approach [Clarke and Jennings 2013, Carbonnier 2013, Boddie and Cnaan 2006, Marczewska-Rytko and Maj 2018, Koehrsen and Heuser 2020] they have adequately expanded the capture of the role of religion and religiosity in development, while enlarging the comprehension of the dynamics of psycho-social

changes. This dynamic is no longer perceived as being a series of activities, disconnected from the wider context of the socio-economic and political, but as fully human acts emerging out of the uniqueness of particular social groupings, with experiences marked by historical circumstances and cultural, anthropological, and moral determinants. Perhaps the most explicit profile in this regard was worked out by social anthropologists [Swantz, 2016].

Nonetheless, when formal research procedures are applied, one may not only term religion and religiosity as independent or dependent, but foremost as having capricious variables [cf. Jarosz 2019: 71-73]. This stems from the correctly asserted observation by Bernard Grom who said that religion, as a causative ingredient of the psycho-social engagement of individuals and the dynamism of intra-group interfaces, is a factor intimately entwined with numerous related factors, exemplified by the social, demographic, economic, professional, and structural. It is difficult to estimate and measure exactly which one of these, at any given moment, is playing the more important role in a stipulated progress. This observation, with reference to our field of interest, can be extended by the problem stemming from the complexity of the phenomenon of religious observance itself. This complexity is responsible for the difficulties in pointing out which dimension of the religious element induces a given outcome: whether it is the axio-normative factor, enclosed for direct sensual perception, by being immersed within the inner layer of a religious institution, or perhaps the formal and material, the more tangible, as being a part of its organizational externality [Grom 2020, Cipriani and Prüfer 2021: 520].

In view of these conditions, subsequent descriptions of this study are going to be submitted from a holistic perspective [Deneulin, Bano 2019: 5]. On the one hand this perspective will facilitate the formulation of the variables operationalising the axo-normative and structural-organizational components of the investigated institution to form a case study (3). On the other hand, it will be flexible in so far as it will include the peculiar input of those transfers conducting the development that, although causative, is still not included sufficiently into research procedures [cf. Gifford 2015: 7-8]. The tasks of the study's components that will precede the case study are meant to expose the ambivalence of the elements, of a religious and a secular nature, reciprocally interfacing each other. This ambivalence expresses itself when it happens that an activity, bearing a feature of religious entrenchment, could be a part of an efficacious action within a purely secular sphere, even political. The same is true in that a purely religious involvement might entail making

use of the secular, that is, in the instrumental rules of a given branch of know-how (1). All of that is to harness the tools and methods of how to gain a realization of which given component of its broader religious mission has led to the formation of an FBO and which essence it will be attempting to determine (2).

### **1. The co-occurrence and permeation of the religious and secular elements**

To begin with, a small comparison will be made between two personalities who, at first glance, seem very similar. However, it appears that underneath the surface of this external similarity there are important differences. The first personality is the universally known charismatic politician, widely known as ‘the father of the nation’, the first long-term president of the country and author of the original version of African socialism, Julius Kambarage Nyerere. The second personality, although equally charismatic, is only known locally within the municipality of Morogoro. This is a Catholic priest, Riccardo Riccioni, renowned for his ascetic lifestyle as a friar, inspired by the spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi that was skilfully translated by him into charitable service.

The stereotypical image of Nyerere is his role in state-creating and fostering the development which emerged from his technocratic attitude based on the assumptions of modernity, skilfully adapted to local African conditions [Vorbich 2012: 282-289]. This attitude is one that can easily fit the paradigm of the theory of modernization, along with a debasing approach to religion and religiosity. This came to light when Nyerere did not hesitate to nationalise Church-run schools [Górka 2016: 306 – 310]. Although it was done on the pretext of equalising educational opportunities, if the scope of authoritarianism characterising postcolonial countries is included accurately, it appears that it was, in fact, one of the many steps aimed at submitting the subsequent aspects of socio-political life into the control of the mono-party system [cf. Bambwenda 2018: 124-125]. However, from the point of view of our study, the meaning of the decision for the appropriation of the schools, hospitals and other properties owned by the Church, including land, goes far beyond current politics, that is the implementation of utopian African socialism (*ujamaa* which in Swahili stands for familyhood). The reason for this stems from the establishment of a distinct pause in religious organizations manifesting their existence and activity. Namely, just as by the time of the nationalization a considerable part of Church properties and their organizations enjoyed complete freedom in exerting charitable work, so too with the phase of socialism, cemented by the Arusha Declaration (1967), not only did their liberty of action come into question, but even their very survival.

At this point, however, the strength of the religious element became apparent. As has been narrated by Ernest Mallya, in his comparison between related institutions of the third sector and those of religious lineage which not only had the ability to preserve their existence but also to become partners of the state in delivering services to the locations where the state could not reach. However, in his view their only advantage lay in the fact of them owning material resources which allowed them to deliver a range of services [ibidem]. Meanwhile, it seems that an indispensable role was also played by distinctive intangible assets, such as reputation and social legitimacy followed closely by trust, which were shared among enlarged circles of society. During this, let us say, survival phase, the dominant religious communities tried hard to come back into the educational sector. Nonetheless, this was by no means easy. Within the next phase, let us term it, of the rapidly progressing atrophy of the redistributive function of the state, which occurred, as already mentioned above, during the global crisis of the 1970s, there was a return of a significant number of school facilities, strained by the lack of adequate maintenance by the state administration, which coincided with the Adjustment Programmes whereby the socialist philosophy of top-down socio-economic management was replaced by the logic of the free market. The limits on public distribution, then imposed by the institutions of the international economic order, created a natural environment for the organizations of the third sector. As they started to take over the tasks that seemed to cross over the overstretched state budget and organizational capacity of central and local administration, the organizations of faith provenience could come back into the public scene with increased vigour. The catalyst for this return stemmed from within the new neoliberal approach to the democratising ideal that loosened a little the administrative and political control of the state, insofar as to undertake a much more progressive attitude towards pro-developmental action. Exactly within this process can be placed the origin of the Alfagems school and this will be the subject of our further interest below.

With recourse to what has been observed about Nyerere above, it might be inferred that the profile of the technocrat, instrumentalising religion and not valuing its developmental potential, does not explain his personality satisfactorily. To enable the unveiling of his complicated religious entanglement, there is the need for a slight enlargement of our viewpoint through the lens of a certain observation by Goran Hyden. It was made in his analyses of the permanent crisis of the institution of an African state. In his view the problem lies in the range of inconsistencies between the style of acting of African socio-political leaders and the principles of



Max Weber in his classical theory of bureaucracy. This is particularly evident when the actions which followed the script of ‘big man rule’ were stemming from the leaders’ quasi-religious conviction about their own extraordinariness. It posited them towards a disparaging approach to some rules of the theory in question, for example the procedures or day to day obligations tied to the office they occupied [Ficek 2007: 178, Hyden 2004: 53]. Undoubtedly, the personal profile of Nyerere does not fall far away from this observation, particularly regarding the aspect that was evident in his quasi-religious mode of acting. This expressed itself in the style of his public self-presentation, frequently performed by him on the pattern of self-styled prophet<sup>1</sup> [cf. Górká 2016: 422, 425–428]. It was particularly evident during difficult moments triggered by him when imposing a political agenda which was unpopular in society, as exemplified by the decisions proceeding villagization [cf. Górká 2016: 420–421, Thomson 2010: 53–54].

The inherence of that quasi-religious factor, within his personal political profile, makes that of Nyerere appear similar to the public profile of Fr Riccardo, at least partially. It pertains foremost to leadership aspect of the profile. Although both were grounded in alternative departure points (secular and religious), at the end of the day, in both cases of leadership engagement, their lasting imprint was marked by the religious element.

As already signalled, despite the unveiled external affinity of both, Fr. Riccardo began with the spirituality and theology which oriented him in the opposite direction to that of Nyerere. Namely, to fulfil in the best possible way this part of the pastoral mission of his religious denomination (Roman-Catholic Church), that is a charity, he equipped the school, run by himself, with the modern instruments and methods of education and management. In effect, for relatively low fees, the educational offer delivered by him not only stands out but exceeds the attainment of other public and private schools [Rweyemamu 2016]. This is testified by the

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<sup>1</sup> The astonishing power of prophet and thinker styled images, once created for current political discourse, has preserved its enchanting power: Nyerere „epitomized what Plato termed as a philosopher-king who combined great intellectual prowess with a healthy disdain for material wealth and ostentation; a man who could not be bought by money and who lived like what Tanzanian writer Jenerali Ulimwengu recently described as <a fakir when the lesser mortals of his age hid their philosophical emptiness and intellectual nakedness behind Rive Gauche suits and Hollywood villas>.” [Wanda 2020: 5]. Bringing all of these paeans to reality, must be said, that as adherent of Roman-Catholicism Nyerere stood out as above-average personal piety, indicated by day to day Mass attendance, good knowledge in actual Church’s doctrine, especially social.

results of the official state exams run at the end of the school<sup>2</sup>. In addition, there is the possibility of further educational development for children coming from the lowest societal rungs; because of the standard delivered by the school, there is a realistic chance of them successfully passing the national examinations, which opens for them the gates of tertiary level institutions, thus creating undeniable added value [cf. Rweyemamu].

The comparison provided exposes the complexity of the mechanisms determining the processes of development. Telic elements of developmental projects, so frequently adopted from the outside world, remain in tension with the autotelic elements of local cultures. Thus, what is marked by the idea of modernity and progress, based on scientific abstractness and the broad scope of disclosed perspectives, interacts with what emerges from within traditional cultures, together with their endogamous orientation to direct, locally limited, interpersonal relations and ties [Jarosz 2014: 122-124].

The emerging perspective gradually discloses the added value of religion-formatted institutions. It draws from the participation of religious bodies, carried out simultaneously within both settings: the pre-modern and the modern [cf. Gifford 2015: 11]. And this is due to the specificity of religion, derived from the most distanced times, as it continuously progresses her tradition based on carefully collected and stored historical records. There then emerges, from this tradition, a message that concerns present times, a message that concerns both the purely spiritual and supernatural issues as well as the temporal and natural. However, it is done in such a way as to hold open the prospect that transcends into the ultimate future of an afterworld, which basically has only a spiritual and supernatural character [cf. Kulisz 2021: 104-120].

According to the description of the self-perpetuating actions of religious institutions, which aim to facilitate their further proliferation, they not only extend in time maximally but also coherently entwine elements of both a spiritual and material character. Precisely because of the entwining of these counterparts, the process of the self-manifestation of religious institutions is directly related to the processes of general social and cultural development. Both remain in a relationship of two-sided inter-dependence and inter-action. However, religion, as the greater

<sup>2</sup> Yearly, The National Examinations Council of Tanzania delivers secondary level examination results at <https://onlinesys.necta.go.tz/>. Data from this portal will be used to indicate the quality of education offered by Alfagems on the background of neighbouring schools.

inner part of a given psycho-cultural background and socio-political ethos, used to play the initiating role within the entire developmental processes. It is through her mediation that the epistemological and methodological frames of collective action were formulated, fostering the continuity of growth. This is demonstrated by Thomas Woods in the case of the processes of the consolidation of modern science as a specific type of knowledge framed by Medieval Christianity, more precisely the scholastic [Woods, 2005: 67-114]. In similar vein, Lucyna Chmielewska brought closer the instrumental role of the biblical concept of the covenant that has been playing its part within the process of shaping the axio-normative basis of modern political philosophy. As specified by her, it was during the era of reformation when this notion was denoted, as both a secular and religious concept, thus creating a bridge allowing the transformation of an estate system, based on birth descent, into the class system. And this became possible because, even before the legitimacy of the theory of social contract, more and more dimensions of public life were based on social relations sustained by an agreement and a commitment. This culminated in the rationally grounded axiomatic assumption about the necessity for ruled people to legitimise a given political authority [Chmielewska 2021: 21].

Nonetheless, the role of religion does not exist merely in establishing the underlying basis of societal functioning, it also encompasses the functioning itself. Therefore, along with characteristic of modern society for the unprecedented increase in the density of social relations, there then followed their further crystallisation and consolidation leading to a mushrooming in the setting up of various types of social organizations and institutions of public interest, including religious organizations. They became a part of a picture that was facetiously remarked upon by Piotr Sztompka when he said about contemporary people that 'they not only cannot survive without organizations, but they are not even able to die without them' [Sztompka 2012:157]. Also established religious bodies (churches, religious associations, sects), responding to in-depth socio-political transformations, have developed differing types of modernized and professionalised activities. While the dynamism of societal differentiation and modernisation has challenged their time-honoured status within both public and individual spheres of secularising societies, so too have they specialized in conducting the subsequent elements of their mission. Starting with that geared to reinforcing the vitality of conscious and active participation within the liturgical acts of a cult (local community of worshippers), it was then followed by the socialisation of religious faith (missionary organizations) and, following on from those, by the focus upon charity. As specified by Malcolm Torry, regarding the latter, despite it all still being linked

to the central element of religion, that is, the liturgical worship, they actually go beyond the essentially religious sphere by providing different types of services to the general public, and not only to fellow sharers of the same creed [Torry 2014b: 51–53]. With all the vagueness of the term FBO, one must bear in mind that, when specifying its type of engagement, it could possibly be placed in the charity sector, rather than the missionary. However, in practice, both are intersecting and interacting, as will be pointed out in the instance of Alfagems school. The remainder of the study will be an attempt to clarify the concept of the FBO.

## **2. Identifying the essence of the concept of FBO**

As signalled by the above ambiguities, associated with explications of the content correlated with the term of FBO, they have been manifested in the scale of difficulties accompanying the definition of this concept itself. From an analytical point of view, the various assorted definitions, characterised by a raised level of generality and high abstraction, is highly unsatisfactory. Usually within this situation the elements that form both sides of a concept, in our investigation the religious and developmental, are amalgamated together in quite broad-ranging terms.

No one, therefore, ought to be surprised that a sizeable group of authors, in contrast to that not very fertile approach, decided to undertake subsequent efforts aimed at enclosing the essence of the concept at stake in the form of an operational definition, as the initial step of the research being conducted. One of commonly utilised ways of working it out was pegged, at its outset, upon abandoning yet another attempt to create a definition which followed a specific definitional formula. Instead, in its second attempt, it strove to take hold of the contents reflecting the constitutive features of the organization in question. This is a path that was taken by Elisabeth Ferris, who elaborated the following traits of the FBO: as having ‘affiliation with a religious body, a mission statement with explicit reference to religious values, financial support from religious resources, and/or governance structure where selection of board members or staff is based on religious beliefs or affiliation and decision-making processes based on religious values’ [Ferris 2005: 312].

Yet another approach, although starting from a generical definition at its departure point, was delivered in such a way as to facilitate the further specifying of the contents creating this definition, in order to gain the desired level of operational utility in the research. In principle, this attempt does not go far beyond dealing with the features of the institution in question, but it does help to specify them

more precisely. The merit of this attempt lies in skilfully taking advantage of the content-related background of the organizational sociology. Owing to that, for the first time it became possible to define the various types of organizational units forming a broader religious community/association (as Church). This was followed by distinguishing the types of engagement of the organizational unit under investigation within their developmental agenda. That theoretically and methodologically entrenched handling has enabled the differing smaller organizational units, that form a given entire religious organization, to be placed in order in a vertical perspective. In top-down view they present themselves as demonstrated representative and apex bodies, followed by charitable development organizations, closely followed by missionary organizations and eventually ending with radical and illegal terrorist organizations [Jennings 2014: 360].

In turn, the application of a horizontal perspective facilitates the identification of the specificity of the services delivered by the analysed entities. This specificity derives from the commonly shared convictions of the members of the given organization in question towards the inspiring role of religious faith. If this is ascribed considerable meaning, then it can be expected that its direct daily experience, together with the religious teachings, will play a decisive role in the functioning and efficacy of a given organization. If there is ascribed, however, a rather more relative role to the same experience and teachings, then the functioning and efficacy will be exacted by a combination of religious and non-religious values. Besides, the very specific direct context of a given organisation, playing the decisive role in determining the unique plights to be resolved as well as the resources that can be used to figure them out, the key role in the specifying, functioning and agency of the given organization in question is foremost its religious tradition. As correctly noted by Julia Berger, the organizations entrenched in some traditions are more prone to defining themselves in strictly religious terms (Christian, Islamic) while others tend to opt for more socio-culturally imbued self-identification (Judaic, Buddhist) [Berger 2003:19].

Another important aspect of organizational involvement, on which a religious faith imprints its mark, expresses itself in its attitude to the receivers of its developmental agenda. At one end of the extreme are placed such organizations which, apart from providing given services or products, would also strive to attain a purely religious outcome, for example religious conversion. More or less subtle proselytising is the most common feature of such an agenda and it might be related, but not necessarily, to another important aspect, that is to the exclusiveness whereby the distribution of

the services and products is confined only to members of a given religious community or denomination. At the other end of the extreme are placed those organizations that focus only upon the provision of commodities and services without prioritizing extra gain in the form of adherents being attracted to their creed. An activity which is organized in this way is most frequently accompanied by inclusiveness in its attitude to the recipients of the developmental agenda, with each individual being confident he can count on the assistance provided by an organization regardless of his religious affiliation [Jennings 2014: 361].

Although the author, of the denotations of the notion in question, presented quite a broad list of factors that can undermine the research utility of the matrix formed by them, it can still serve, as he himself asserted, as an irreplaceable source for approximating varying types of organizations scattered within a faith sector [Jennings 2014: 361- 362]. The most serious difficulties, in grasping the essence of a given faith related organization, are associated with the dynamic of the two-sided exchanges that take place within its local and wider surroundings. This dynamic requires an altering of the mode of comprehending the role of the religious element itself, within a changing socio-cultural and economic context, similarly the mode of understanding the evolving trajectories of the changes continuously transforming these contexts. The point lies in that it is here that the meaning of a current stage of secularization, modernization and differentiation becomes revealed, specifying a given societal encirclement.

From the point of view of this study – attempting to seek the essence of the FBO within an entanglement of religious and secular elements - specific shortcomings are becoming revealed. Namely, while placing the foremost stress on the subjective aspect of the entity in question, associated with its axiological and normative underpinnings, it does not leave much room for the exploration of the objective aspect of the same entity, which relates to various forms of its activity. As well as the act of entering the organization into a specific segment of the public and social realm, it must also follow the logic of the mode of operating which is proper to this segment. In addition, in preparing its development agenda, the same organisation strives to do it each time by responding to the current state of the socio-economic processes. It certainly might be said that the socioreligious activity of a given organization, which relies on faith, is determined by the reasonably harmonious amalgamation of the lofty purposes, of the spiritual and moral orientation of this organizational unit, and the mundane needs that are filling subsequent levels of Maslow's pyramid, as existential security [Wood 2003: 388–389].

As gradually it becomes self-disclosing, the essence of the scrutinised concept of the FBO is specified by the acts of adequately adapting the methods and tools for acting within the religious and moral values discussed so far. Thus, when characterising this *instrumentarium*, the high level of specialization and professionalization entails the dilemmas that are not always seen in proper perspective. Namely, the juxtaposition of the transcendental values, going beyond what is terrestrial and temporal, together with instrumental and utilitarian values that are immanently grounded within the existential dimension of human existence, entails conflict that ought wisely to be approached in such a way that it is resolved by skilful adjustment to the current state of the societal surroundings. What is at stake here is the further development of the religious identity of a given organization, on the one hand, and the socio-economic instrumental efficacy in the market of delivered products and services, on the other. Any lack of compromising equability, between both distinguishing aspects, leads either to the loss of the socio-cultural transparency of a given organization in the eyes of society (too much stress on axio-normative aspects) or to the gradual loss of the sharpness of the religious element (too much stress on technocratic aspects). In both cases the functional purposefulness of a given organization becomes debased [Michell 2017: 165].

Given the difficulties, as presented, to close let us briefly focus on the modes of activity that are characteristic to the institutions in question. From an ideational point of view, it must be admitted that, as closely as possible, they follow the principles of instrumental rationality. Hence, a continuous striving is undertaken to make adjustment, of a religious orientation, to a given organizational entity, to meet the requirements of the specific professionalised area of activity. In this respect, the rules of functioning within certain structural determinants, as well as the operating methodology of a given procedure, ought to be put into practice. For instance, in the case of Alfagems school, the teaching delivered in the classroom must follow the rules of modern pedagogy, accompanied by sound factual knowledge, in accordance with the academic criteria of the given subject. Therefore, in line with the standards of the theory of management, each one of the structures or operational modes of the FBO ought to be in place, as is the case in any other (secular) organization. Of course, as far as the extent of the specialized competences of those involved in their completion are considered, all of that will be affected by the recognition of the scientific grounding of a specific organizational structure and the procedure for performing a given operation. These procedures will be closely followed, with due acknowledgment of the autonomy of the specific type of professionalized operation, within its own boundaries. These boundaries



are between the strictly specialised activity of a professional expert and the activities of a person whose involvement is inspired mainly by religious motivation, as in the case of a volunteer [Pessi 2009:932; Martens, 2002: 279, 282].

### **3. Tracing the dynamics of the multi-layered development launched by Alfagems**

From the descriptions scattered within the preceding parts of the study, certain insights into the functioning of Alfagems school can be acquired, similarly into the life of its founder Fr Riccardo. These are to be supplemented by two interviews made with Fr Riccardo himself, with members representing the management of the school, participatory observation, and a review of school documents. Then, using the technique of bricolage they will be augmented by delivering further information from the resources deemed as carrying the most suitable informative value at that moment.

Fr Riccardo is a Catholic priest who, after leaving an order of Capuchins in 1978 and being incardinated into the Diocese of Morogoro, has worked at establishing a new religious association dedicated both to mission and to charity. As the principal orientation of that new community is very close to the Franciscan spirituality at the heart of Fr Riccardo's motivation for establishing it - in accord with ideal of inculturation - it is a more than adequate adjustment of the universal profile of the religious mission of Catholic Church to the socio-cultural requirements of local conditions. As specified by the charismatic founder himself, the point lies in giving testimony to a life entrenched in the evangelic virtue of poverty, but poverty closely adjusted to the surrounding socio-economic conditions.

Fr Riccardo possesses two charisms closely related to each other. As stipulated in the previous paragraph, he is the founder of a religious community known as Ndugu Wadogo wa Africa (Little Brothers and Sisters of Africa) that derives its subjectivity from its affiliation to the Morogoro Diocese with its status as a public association of the faithful. Moreover, as has been indicated elsewhere, he is also a founder of Alfagems school, with its primary orientation being secular and, owing to its affiliation to the Morogoro Diocese, having the status of a Catholic school. Hence, although elements of religious formation, including religious instruction, are also a part of the school curriculum, this part of the overall educational process is considered as one of the elements integral to shaping the individual personality of the students. As the adherents of a specific creed, they have the right to receive instruction to deepen their religious knowledge, as stipulated by the country's legal regulations. In this regard, as has been made clear to

us on a few occasions, the school sticks strictly to the government administrative regulations. The only problem, which arises from time to time, is associated with the lack of qualified teachers for the religious instruction of students from another religion or denomination. In such a case, students from a specific religious group are exempted from the religious education classes. Just to properly contextualise this problem, it should be added that around 40% of students are Catholics, 25% are Muslims, with the remaining members being of different protestant denominations. It is to the latter that there is difficulty in providing lessons of religious education. Taking all of that together, it must be noted that the linkages between both of the organizational entities, the Little Brothers and Sisters of Africa, and Alfagems School, are impinging on the uniqueness of the functioning of the school and the quality offered by its educational services.

To complicate matters, but only slightly, it is necessary to balance the clearly stated policy of the school management with the essential secular orientation of the school to provide the knowledge and capabilities useful in the development of the secular life. Apart from the afore mentioned lessons of religion, provided in accord with state stipulations, from our exploration of the school we discovered other organised religious events. There are two Holy Masses which occur within its facilities, one obligatory on a Sunday and a second not obligatory on a Friday. We should add that this obligation is limited to Catholic students. Apart from that, the school gives space for various religious groups, such as the associations of Franciscan Youth, Tanzanian Young Catholic Students, liturgical altar services, and choirs from various denominations. The activities of all of them could be treated as an extension of the socialization functions of the school, where they are a legitimate component of holistic socio-cultural socialization.

However, this situation, as painted, is changed if and when we take into account the openness of the school to those willing to join the liturgy of the Eucharist whenever it is celebrated. The presence of people, coming from outside of the school, makes it a place of pastoral and evangelizing activity which is carried out in the style of inculturation proper to the spirituality of Fr Riccardo. In this regard, the school takes on a missionary character. An essential role is played here by Riccardo's striking preaching and dedication to the cause of the poor, celebrated by him and his closest co-operators. Within this layout, the two orientations of the school, religious and secular, still give the impression of being arranged as on two separated tracks. However, for the external observer, the consciousness of the participants in these activities of a religious nature and open to the general

public, present themselves as being marked by the strong conviction that the acquiring of pro-developmental secular skills and virtues is closely related to the in-depth experience of religious faith, as if they were flowing from the more or less direct contact with transcendency, mediated by personal prayer and communal rituals. Perhaps this conviction has the most important pro-developmental effect? It underlies the personal choices of acting in accordance with the rules, leading do self-improvement and to undertaking actions which generate the necessary skills and capabilities, especially soft capabilities such as orientation towards the realization of measurable ends, punctuality, persistence, and self-efficacy. These soft capabilities in turn determine the individual to acquire skills of the hard character, foremost being the knowledge offered by taught subjects.

After all that has been said about the Little Brothers and Sisters of Africa, as well as Alfagems School, it is necessary to say that while both preserve their autonomy towards each other, still they remain related to each other. This is through the mediation of their founder. While he is forming the religious identities and personalities of the members of both branches of the religious community, not one from the religious association participates within the work of the school. At the same time, the functioning of the school seems to be impossible without his subtle guidance, persistent direction, and modelling supervision. What seems to be instrumental stems from the experience he has acquired during his formation work within his religious community, a greater length of time than his managing of the school that was established in 2007. From the former engagement, the possibility of getting in-depth familiarity with the personalities of candidates formed by him to the religious life, does facilitate him for school management. As the latter is embedded within an environment dominated by the type of relationships oriented towards values rather than at means, and this finds its reflection in individual attitudes that are community-centred, the overall school governing must rely on an adequately shaped strategy. Its subsequent steps need to be based more on direct management of interpersonal communication and an interactional dynamic characteristic of small groups, rather than merely on formal procedures and highly standardised proceedings. Despite these dependencies, the school management takes place within the domain of secondary rather than primary relationships. And this is due to the much more formalised environment of the school than within the environment created within the community of the Little Brothers and Sisters of Africa, as required by the country's educational system and by the professional rules of modern education. However, the in-depth knowledge regarding the acquisition of basic ways of the reasoning, valuing and acting of individuals within

the closer and wider environment of the school - enabled by the role continuously played by Fr Riccardo within both settings - could be a factor in the greater than average educational attainments of the school. Because Fr Riccardo managed to encompass, within his perspective, the experience of external (European) and internal (African) psycho-social conditions, undoubtedly it helps him effectively to manage the school functioning. Within the layout of a religious environment arranged by him, the community being formed by him serves as a suitable locus for collecting necessary observations, experiences, and reflections. And then all of them find their utility within the area of school management.

If both the religious and the secular endeavours could be seen as interesting experiments, then they ought also to be conceived as a creative attempt at transforming the ineffective tools for inculcating Christianity into the reality of local socio-cultural conditions that were in use during the colonial era (accommodation) into those more adequate to the requirements of contemporary conditions (inculturation) [Jarosz 2014: 125-126]. It is therefore an inculturation experiment par excellence. It transforms the ineffective tools of the past into those more suitable to the requirements of today. A particularly sensitive part of this transformation refers to the replacement of the ambiguous entailment of the Church and State administration, as it was practiced during the colonial past, into interactions initiated at the elementary level of socio-cultural subsoil. In this respect, the status of the organization of the third sector creates the possibility for a grassroots initiative that expresses itself in that organizational inventiveness of Fr Riccardo which emerges from his direct relationships with the members of the congregation founded by himself, on the one hand, and the people forming the closer and wider environment of the school, on the other [Mallya 2010:140-142].

Just how far the status of the institution in question has changed is indicated by the consequent and consistent financial policy pursued under the leadership of Fr Riccardo. During the era of the patronising distance of the faith-related charitable initiatives from the everyday life of served communities, which was mainly caused, as stipulated above, by maintaining close links with the government, with the typical educational initiatives being entirely or at least partly rendered due to external sponsors. Under the influence of the inculturation ideal of Fr Riccardo, the school relies on its own source of income, that is coming from the fees paid by the students. In this situation the necessity for inventiveness becomes more apparent, the fees of the school being very low, as signalised in the initial part of this study and now it will be get further elaborations. Well, in accordance with the

information obtained by us, students of the ordinary secondary level are paying 500,000 Tanzanian shillings (100.000 Polish zł) per year while those in Advanced level secondary school paying 600,000 Tz sh (120000 Pl zł) per year. This amount is higher when we compare it with public schools where in according to the national law there are no school fees but in practice there are the so-called 'minor contributions' of slathers, hoes, desks and chairs, buckets, and brooms which can cost up to 100,000 Tz sh (203 Pl zł) are necessary.

However, the amount of school fees paid at Alfagems secondary is cheaper compared to other private schools, be it secular or non-secular. It is actually equal to the amount paid in the cheapest level of nursery school, as the normal amount paid in prestigious nursery schools in Morogoro ranges between 1,200,000/= and 1,800,000 (2,435 - 3,652 Pl zł) per year. The amount of school fees paid in private secondary schools in Morogoro is between 2, 200,000 (4,463 Pl zł) (for example La Miriam secondary school) and 2,765,000/ (5,610 Pl zł) (Kitungwa Adventist secondary school) per year. Therefore, the lower amount of school fees at Alfagems, together with the quality of education given, enables the school to be the best choice especially for the poor families who cannot afford to enrol their children in prestigious schools.

Teachers are the particularly important group from the point of view of the overall educational process, yet in Tanzania they are also the most vulnerable. This is not only because many of them have not acquired academic professional competences. The gravest problem lies in their weakened motivation to fulfil their curriculum duties. Their main reason for becoming burned out is that they are not paid sufficiently to ensure their own existence and that of their families. Sometimes their pay is delayed, and some have difficult conditions at work, especially those working in rural areas. The financial stability and decent work conditions offered by Alfagems school undoubtedly institute a solid base for their engagement. Nonetheless it must be pointed out that this stability results not so much from a notably higher salary - because within entire country the salary of a newly qualified teacher with a degree, inside both public and private settings, varies at the level of 600.000-700.000 Tz sh (1,217-1,420 Pl zł). The key role in ensuring stability is played by the regularity of payment and that entire sum being given at once and not in separated instalments. However, to be in line with current situation it must be admitted that this regularity has been shaken during the last few months and the stipulated amounts are not certain anymore. This is caused by the employment of the manual economy control characteristic of the presidency of John P. Magufuli (1959-2021).

Because of the policy, initiated in 2015, the government administration had not hired graduates of teaching colleges during the entire five years. Put simply, the recruitment of new staff had not taken place; in the case of teachers leaving, either the remaining staff were meant to fill the gap, or the classes were combined. As, after the change of leadership at the top of state management, the decision was made to overcome this plight. Many more recently educated teachers have been employed during recent months but this has not yet balanced the unprecedented disproportion between supply and demand. Meanwhile, the private sector schools have started to make use of the malaise caused by the government and they are employing newly qualified teachers. However, the bad news is that they have been offered a salary of only 400.000 Tz shillings (811 Pl zł).

Returning to the school in question, suffice it to say that by meeting the basic social security requirements this allows the school management to set some requirements for newly selected teaching staff. As we were informed, the primary principle underlying the process for the recruitment of new staff, referring, to all types of jobs that need to be done, expresses itself in general fitness for duty. The generality of this role might be seen as meaningless; however, when adequately adjusted to the socio-economic context of a post-socialist country it preserves its value. And it is exacted by the fact that within a number of related institutions, individuals, in not-infrequent cases, find employment just for employment's sake, not to be effectively working, or they are on the payroll but only fictitiously as ghost workers [Bambwenda 2018: 145]. The principle to be followed refers to religious values and focuses on the moral decency of a given candidate that stems from his religious engagement. However, for the school management it does not matter which religion or denomination a given individual practices. The teachers are selected according to these rules and are later supervised not only by using set Tanzanian procedures (e.g. class hospitalizations or pupils' evaluations) but through their day-to-day direct contact with Fr Riccardo they are motivated to do good work.

The passage of time will indicate if this transformation of the general method of working with people will be helpful in attaining one more deeply anchored within the Christian tradition and from within the personalities of the believers, rather than in indifferent and superficially engaged adherents, as was characteristic of the colonial phase of conveying evangelization and providing pastoral care. Time will also show how far elements of his charisma will be taken over by the members of the religious community formatted by Fr Riccardo, with them working within

developing charity works in general and educational endeavours in particular. Indeed, the expansion of the Alfagems is now being carried out with the new facilities registered as owned by the community, not the Morogoro Diocese. It could be assumed that all school responsibilities are gradually going to be taken over by members of the community. Indeed, some of them are already being educated in Jordan University College, placed within the close neighbourhood. But will they be able to integrate the founder's charism to such an extent that their educational endeavours will be managed as is presently done by the founder himself? In other words, are the schools to be led by them going to ensure more than average results during the state examinations as is the case at present?

Let us leave for a while the person of Fr Riccardo, and the potential continuators of his mission, to turn for a while to the adduced performance of the school founded and managed by him. Starting with its ordinary level examination results; in 2019 among 240 students, in division one there were 34, in division two there were 130, in division three there were 67, and in division four there were 9 with no failures. In 2020, among 221 students, in division one there were 98, in division two there were 109, in division three there were 13, and in division four there was 1 with no failures. In 2021, among 230 students, in division one there were 55, in division two there were 138, in division three there were 31, and in division four there were 6 with no failures. The results of the advanced secondary from 2019 to 2022, were as following: in 2019 among 329 students, in division one there were 88, in division two there were 130, in division three there were 103 and in division four there were 6 with no failures. In 2020, among 331 students, in division one there were 41, in division two there were 209, in division three there were 80 and in division four there was 1 with no failures. In 2021, among 338 students, in division one there were 54, in division two there were 183, in division three there were 95, and in division four there were 5 and 1 student failed (0,29%). In 2022, among 346 students, in division one there were 40, in division two there were 185, in division three there were 115, and in division four there were 5 and 1 student failed (0,28%).

To further our analysis, it is necessary to compare it with the performance of secular schools with similar and varying criteria. It is important to understand that secondary schools in Tanzania are generally categorized as either public or private schools. However, in these two major categorizations, there are other categorizations as well. First, public schools can be either schools for special talented students or Ward owned schools known as Shule za Kata. In special talented schools, students have the privilege of adequate access to learning and



teaching facilities while the latter suffer from inadequate of the same. Moreover, private schools, can be categorized as secular schools and non-secular schools. It is thus necessary to compare the performance of Alfagems secondary school with other schools identified by the above criteria. Luckily, Morogoro has all categories of the identified schools, and it was easy to pick a school randomly from the listed schools based on identified criteria. In this regard, Kilakala secondary school is used to represent public schools for especially talented students, Morogoro secondary school has been used to represent Ward owned schools or Shule za Kata, and Ngunya Open school center has been used to represent private secular schools.

To begin with Kilakala secondary school (public school for talented students): Ordinary secondary level results, in 2019 among 69 students, in division one there were 48, in division two there were 14, and in division three there were 7 with no division four or failed students. In 2020, among 86 students, in division one there were 69, in division two there were 13, and in division three were 4 with no division four or failed students. In 2021, among 88 students, in division one there were 77 and in division two there were 11 with no division three, four or failure students. Coming to Advanced level secondary results, in 2020 among 98 candidates, in division one there were 61, in division two there were 30 and in division three there were 7 with no division four or failed students. In 2021, among 111 students, in division one there were 63, in division two there were 42 and in division three there were 6 with no division four or failed students; and in 2022 results among 123 candidates, in division one there were 92, and in division two there were 31 with no division three, four or failed students.

In Morogoro secondary school (in category of Ward Owned Schools/Shule za Kata), Ordinary secondary level results of consecutive three years are as follows. In 2019 among 290 candidates, division one there were 54, in division two there were 72, in division three there were 44, in division four there were 89 and there were 31 failed students (10,68%). In 2020, among 305 candidates, in division one there were 35, in division two there were 73, in division three there were 47, in division four there were 119, and there were 31 failed students (10,16%). In 2021, among 511 candidates, in division one there were 49, in division two there were 109, in division three there were 115, division four were 211 and there were 27 failed students (5,28%). Regarding their Advanced secondary level results, in 2020 among 260 candidates, in division one there were 13, in division two there were 164, in division three there were 80, in division four there were 2 and there was one failed student. In 2021, among 183 candidates, in division one there were 27,

in division two there were 99, in division three there were 53, in division four there were 3 and 1 student failed (0,54%); while in 2022 among 220 candidates, in division one there were 31, in division two there were 134, in division three there were 53, and in division four there were 2 with no failed students.

The final school, for the purpose of comparison, is Ngunya Open school center (private secular school). Their Ordinary secondary results from 2019 to 2021 were as follows. In 2019, among 90 candidates, there were none in division one, in division two there were 2, in division three there were 10, in division four there were 72, and there were 6 failed students (6,66%). In 2020 among 94 candidates, there were none in division one, in division two there was 1, in division three there were 7, in division four there were 79 and there were 7 failed students (7,44%). In 2021, among 88 candidates, there were none in division one or in division two but in division three there were 10, in division four were 73 and there were 5 failures (5,68%). However, in their Advanced secondary education results, in 2020 among 93 candidates, in division one there were 4, in division two there were 61, and in division three there were 28 with no division four or failed students. In 2021, among 97 students, in division one there were 14, in division two there were 69, in division three there were 13 and in division four was 1 with no failed students. In 2022 among the 109 candidates, in division there one were 5, in division two there were 75, in division three there were 28, and in division four there was 1 with no failed students. From these results there emerges a picture in black and white of Alfagems to be as one of the public talented secondary schools, maintained consistent outstanding results. And this refers to both ordinary and advanced secondary levels.

Bearing these presented comparisons in mind, let us turn back to the main character owing to whom they were attained. It is necessary to say that the objectivization and further instrumentalization of the charismatic method of Fr Riccardo needs to be subject to critical reflection that would produce the body of coherent guidance and instructions in the form of written manuals and elaborations.

Exactly this way of proceeding was adopted by the Polish Pallottine missionaries working in neighbouring Rwanda. Attempting to manage the problem of an orphanage that was exacted by the genocide that took place in 1994, it was developed within a parishes programme and run by them, sponsoring the education of orphaned children and named the Heart Adoption Programme. As the programme arose out of immediate need, it was in its initial state meant to give

the most necessary assistance to satisfy basic needs. However, with time it became extended into a much more precisely elaborated undertaking aimed at attaining long term goals of an educational, nurturing and formative character. The dynamics of this transformation is reflected in the profound empirically grounded study of Zbigniew [Babicki 2018] who, drawing on the theory and practice of Catholic social pedagogy, conceived the models of acting meant to further the professionalization of the existing programme. An analogous study focused on the phenomenon of Fr Riccardo's educational activity not only would facilitate a better understanding of this phenomenon but also it would allow the continuing improvement to his methods for the upbringing and education of children. Furthermore, our continuing research could be helpful in planning the extension of its empirical dimension. Indispensable descriptions stretched along the line that separates the religious and secular aspects of the explored organizational unit are intended to be obtained by adopting the analytical framework of Berger [2003: 23-34] as she made this the direct subject of her interest in faith sector organizations affiliated to the UN quarter in New York. The substantial merit of the study - adapted to the conditions of our locality - is to capture the dynamism of the couplings between the religious beliefs and personal religious commitment of the members of a particular faith sector organization and its structural set up (organizational dimension), and its modes of operating (strategic and service provision dimensions).

### **Conclusions**

Drawing to the closing part of our study necessitates recourse to what has been stated at its outset. Progressing the advancement of research, focused on the role of religion in development, is accompanied by the still unresolved dilemmas of a theoretical and methodological character. Difficulties with the adequate capturing of the phenomenon of religion, within humanities and social sciences, arise from religion itself as it is a phenomenon partially immersed within terrestrial reality and partially goes beyond this reality into of what is inconceivable. This imprints its marks on definitional difficulties in grasping the essence of the concept of the FBO, the same being true of operationalising the variables for empirical research.

Being not entirely satisfied with the research that had been done under the influence of the paradigm of secularization, that excessively reduced the role of the religious element in carrying development forward, we tried to set the procedures for our research in such a way as to become more inclusive towards the religious

element, not easily tangible but effective. It was therefore assumed that making use of a holistic perspective would facilitate exposing the impact of the religious factor, as entwined with other determining factors of psycho-social agency. However, a relaxation of the procedure as indicated presented the risk that our descriptions would remain inconclusive. Being perfectly aware of this, we are intending, however cautiously, to arrive at the following inferences: the religious element factually influences the processes of carrying the secular agenda within the school of Alfagems. Religious faith is manifested at different levels of the day-to-day existential experience of the main school participants. Especially, it refers to Fr Riccardo who, apart from being a leader of the new religious community created by himself, is also as the school's founder who determines the trends of its operation. However, as the empirical part of the study discloses, his engagement in the developments forming the school's day-to-day reality is motivated by religious faith embedded within the multitude of intersecting relationships with others in the school. Some of them have a purely religious character and some of them are purely secular. The former refers to advancing the religious teachings, and the moral attitudes and virtues stemming from them. Those of a secular provenience have a purely managerial character and are reinforced by a carefully thought through management strategy for organizing the frames for the actions of the professional teachers. Therefore, the school, while being inspired by religious faith, also draws from the most contemporary patterns and practices of scientific knowledge. Thus, this exemplary faith sector institution delivers a good quality of education to relatively poor students.

In line with the direction of our descriptions and their explications, the pro-developmental actions in the school are closely related to acts of a religious character. For example, Fr Riccardo's fluency in developing contacts stems from his experience when founded his congregation. The religious element exerts its influence when, motivated by faith and a sense of religious morality, individuals take action in the secular sphere, and they are able skilfully to adjust to their professionally obtained activities, such as teaching in class or managing the issues of the school.

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*„My we Francji wiemy, jaką rolę spełnia Kościół w życiu tego drogiego narodu i co uczynił dla jego wielkości”<sup>1</sup>*

O niedoszłym spotkaniu prezydenta Charles’a de Gaulle’a z prymasem Stefanem Wyszyńskim (1967) z perspektywy kościelnej

*«We know in France what role the church plays in the life of this dear nation and what it has done for its greatness»*

About the would-be meeting of President Charles de Gaulle with the Primate Stefan Wyszyński (1967) from a church perspective

**Abstract:** The most important event in Poland in 1967 was the visit of Charles de Gaulle. One of the contentious points concerned a possible meeting with Stefan Wyszyński. Communist authorities were categorically opposed to organizing such a conversation fearing that the increase of the prestige of the Primate in the international arena and to the conflict between the Church and Government of the Polish People’s Republic, which would be transferred to the international arena. For de Gaulle the visit to Poland was to be a meeting with a nation of which the Church was an inseparable and important part. During the preparations for the visit, French diplomats believed that Polish diplomatic intelligence was not effective. Ultimately, the meeting between de Gaulle and Wyszyński did not occur.

**Keywords:** Stefan Wyszyński, Charles de Gaulle, communists, Primate of Poland

<sup>1</sup> Słowa wypowiedziane prawdopodobnie przez Charles’a de Gaulle’a w bazylice w Oliwie w czasie wizyty w Polsce w 1967 r., zob. [F.T.] 1967.



**Abstract:** Najważniejszym wydarzeniem w Polsce w 1967 r. była wizyta Charles'a de Gaulle'a. Jeden z punktów spornych dotyczył ewentualnego spotkania ze Stefanem Wyszyńskim. Władze komunistyczne kategorycznie sprzeciwiały się zorganizowaniu takiej rozmowy, obawiając się wzrostu prestiżu Prymasa Polski na arenie międzynarodowej oraz że konflikt Kościoła – władza PRL zostanie przeniesiony na arenę międzynarodową. Dla de Gaulle'a wizyta w Polsce miała być spotkaniem z narodem, którego nieodłączną i ważną część stanowił Kościół. W czasie przygotowań do wizyty dyplomaci francuscy nie docenili skuteczności działań polskiego wywiadu dyplomatycznego. Ostatecznie do spotkania między de Gaulle'em i Wyszyńskim nie doszło.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Stefan Wyszyński, Charles de Gaulle, komuniści, Prymas Polski

O kulisach wizyty Prezydenta Republiki Francuskiej Charles'a de Gaulle'a w Polsce i jego próbach spotkania z kard. Stefanem Wyszyńskim ukazało się już kilka artykułów. Do najważniejszych można zaliczyć prace ówczesnego ministra spraw zagranicznych Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej (PRL) Rapackiego [1980] oraz Wyrwy [2001]; wspomniał również o nich w swoim artykule, jednak opierając się na wiadomości z prasy francuskiej Stępnik [1974].

Pierwszy z nich uczestniczył z ramienia Polski w przygotowaniach do podróży de Gaulle'a do Polski. Przedstawił on (opierając się na adresowanym do prezydenta Francji liście przygotowanym wraz z Marią Winowską i za wiedzą Wyszyńskiego) kulisy związane z wyborem ewentualnego miejsca takiego spotkania [Rapacki i Winowska 1967; Rapacki 1980: 179-180]. Drugi ze wspomnianych badaczy, na podstawie dokumentu sporządzonego przez francuskie ministerstwo spraw zagranicznych – *Projet de rencontre du Président de la République avec le Cardinal Wyszyński* – oraz wspomnianego wyżej artykułu Rapackiego starał się naświetlić sprawę od strony dyplomacji francuskiej [Wyrwa 2001: 182]. Problematykę spotkania de Gaulle'a z przywódcą Kościoła w Polsce sygnalizuje również w swoim artykule Jarząbek [2000: 148-149, 151]. W niniejszym artykule autor pominął omawianie kwestii politycznych, które decydowały o zaproszeniu de Gaulle'a do Polski w 1967 r., a omówionych szeroko przez Pasztor [2005b: 695-708; 2003; zob. też. Jarosz i Pasztor 2008] i Latosińską [2018: 187-188]. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie poruszanej problematyki z perspektywy kościelnej.

Sprawy polskie nie były obojętne de Gaulle'owi. Zapoznał się z nimi już w młodości, kiedy w okresie od 17 maja 1919 r. do 7 stycznia 1921 r. brał udział we

Francuskiej Misji Wojskowej. Za udział w walkach nad Zbruczem (1919) otrzymał Krzyż *Virtuti Militari*, natomiast w grudniu 1921 r. polski rząd przyznał mu order *Polonia Restituta*. Z pewnością w czasie pobytu w II Rzeczypospolitej, jako praktykujący katolik, poznał cechy polskiej religijności. Wiedział o roli, jaką duchowieństwo katolickie pełniło w narodzie. Sprawy polskie nie były mu również obce, kiedy w 30., pracując w sekretariacie Rady Obrony Narodowej, zajmował się nimi z racji istniejącego sojuszu polsko-francuskiego. W czasie drugiej wojny światowej z uznaniem wypowiadał się o gen. Sikorskim, choć drażniły go spory wśród polskiego wychodźstwa politycznego i wojskowego w Wielkiej Brytanii. Opowiadał się za powstaniem prozachodniego rządu w powojennej Polsce. Jednak, nie widząc szansy na jego powstanie, już 29 czerwca 1945 r. uznał rząd tymczasowy w Warszawie [Kukułka: b.d.; AMSZ 136A]. Był pragmatykiem, który za wartość nadrzędną uznawał interes Francji. W czasie poprzedzającym wizytę w Polsce wyznaczył Edmonda Micheleta<sup>2</sup> do śledzenia spraw rządowych na odcinku religijnym [Rapacki 1980]. Na decyzję generała o konieczności zorganizowania spotkania z Prymasem Polski miało wpływ jego spotkanie z Pawłem VI w czasie wizyty w Rzymie na przełomie maja i czerwca 1967 r. Poruszono wówczas również kwestię ewentualnego spotkania Prezydenta Republiki z Prymasem Polski w czasie planowanej wizyty tego pierwszego w Warszawie. Papieżowi zależało, by de Gaulle spotkał się z Wyszyńskim, a tym samym wsparł swoim autorytetem politykę Watykanu wobec krajów obozu moskiewskiego, w tym wobec Polski [Bułhak 2019: 327-328].

Warto wspomnieć, że w pierwszej połowie 1967 r. relacje między komunistami a hierarchią kościelną w Polsce należały do bardzo napiętych. W czasie wizyty Podsekretarza Stanu Stolicy Świętej Agostina Casaroli<sup>3</sup> w PRL (14 lutego – 7 kwietnia 1967 r.) władze partyjno-państwowe uzależniały poprawę relacji z Watykanem od ograniczenia wpływu kardynała na duchowieństwo i osłabienia jego autorytetu [*Tajne dokumenty Państwo – Kościół*: 261]. Władze dążyły do rozbięcia jedności episkopatu. Sekretarz Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej (KC PZPR) Zenon Kliszko<sup>4</sup> na posiedzeniu Prezydium Komisji KC ds. Kleru w lipcu 1967 r. stwierdził „Jeśli chodzi o rozbieżności w episkopacie

<sup>2</sup> Edmond Michelet (1899-1970) – francuski minister stanu (1967-1968), przed wojną przewodniczący organizacji młodzieży katolickiej w Béarn (1922-1925) i w Corrèze (1930) [zob. Druto do Ogrodzińskiego].

<sup>3</sup> Agostino Casaroli (1914-1998) – pracownik Watykańskiego Sekretariatu Stanu, arcybiskup (1967), odpowiedzialny za politykę Stolicy Apostolskiej z krajami bloku wschodniego.

<sup>4</sup> Zenon Kliszko (1908-1989) – członek Biura Politycznego KC PZPR (1959-1970), przew. Komisji Ideologicznej KC PZPR (1963-1970).

i niezadowolenie niektórych arcybiskupów i biskupów, to na pewno zjawiska te istnieją, lecz nie należy ich przeceniać. Faktem jest, że Casaroli po rozmowach przeprowadzonych z wszystkimi biskupami odniósł wrażenie, że Episkopat jest zwarty wokół Wyszyńskiego” [*Tajne dokumenty Państwo – Kościół*: 311]. Jedną z propozycji było, aby przewodniczącego Konferencji Episkopatu Polski wybierali biskupi w „demokratycznych” wyborach zaś władza miałaby prawo zatwierdzenia lub odrzucenia zaproponowanego kandydata [*Tajne dokumenty Państwo – Kościół*: 264]. Dążono więc nie tylko do decydowaniu o obsadzie stanowisko w episkopacie, ale również władzy komunistycznej zależało na uwypukleniu rozbieżności między jej członkami. Z powodu braku pozytywnego odzewu ze strony watykańskiego Sekretariatu Stanu na wspomniane propozycje nie doszło do spotkania przewodniczącego Rady Państwa Edwarda Ochaba<sup>5</sup> z Pawłem VI w kwietniu 1967 r. na Watykanie. Jak pisali komuniści w notatce z 1969 r., „scholastyczne stanowisko zgrzybiałego Sekretarza Stanu Cicognaniego<sup>6</sup> wizytę tę uniemożliwiło” [*Tajne dokumenty Państwo – Kościół*: 316].

3 sierpnia 1967 r. miało miejsce spotkanie Marii Winowskiej<sup>7</sup> z Edmundem Micheletem. Przekazała ona zaufanemu współpracownikowi de Gaulle’a raport o sytuacji Kościoła w Polsce [*Winowska do Micheleta*; Rapacki 1980: 179]. Polskiej pisarce zależało, by Generał zapoznał się z tym dokumentem, co prawdopodobnie nastąpiło, o czym świadczy miejsce przechowywania dokumentu: (Archives de Gaulle, obok listu Rapackiego z adnotacją de Gaulle’a „widziałem” i datą „9 sierpnia 1967”).

W przekazanym opracowaniu zwracała ona uwagę na trwającą w Polsce w 1967 r. wojnę ideologiczną wypowiedzianą przez władze partyjno-państwowe nie tylko hierarchii kościelnej, ale również wszelkim siłom społecznym dążącym do uszanowania prawa do wolności (np. dziennikarzom zagranicznym czy pisarzom). Władze państwowe wykluczały podjęcie jakichkolwiek dróg dialogu, gdyż zależało im jedynie na pokonaniu przeciwników socjalizmu. Społeczeństwo było zastraszone i niezdolne do normalnego funkcjonowania. Taka sytuacja skutkowałą nieświadomością społeczeństwa Europy zachodniej co do represji stosowanych przeciw Kościołowi, gdyż niewiele informacji na temat działań aparatu

<sup>5</sup> Edward Ochab (1906-1989) – przewodniczący Rady Państwa (1964-1968).

<sup>6</sup> Amleto Cicognani (1883-1973) – watykański sekretarz stanu (1961-1969).

<sup>7</sup> Maria Winowska (1904-1993) – pisarka i publicystka katolicka. Od 1940 r. we Francji, współpracowniczka kard. Wyszyńskiego. W swoich książkach opisywała m.in. politykę władz wobec Kościoła w Polsce.

partyjnego w PRL przedostawało się za granicę, w tym do Francji. Każda próba pisania o prześladowaniach traktowana była przez komunistów jako przestępstwo. W relacjach z zagranicą przedstawiciele PRL wypracowali zaś swoisty język – na określenie relacji z Kościołem używali sloganów takich jak: „gotowość do dialogu”, „wolność religijna”, „Wsteczny duch polskiego episkopatu, a zwłaszcza kardynała Wyszyńskiego, który uniemożliwia prawdziwe zrozumienie i pokojową współpracę”.

W rzeczywistości, jak pisała Winowska, położenie Kościoła w 1967 r. niczym nie różniło się od czasów stalinowskich. Lata 40. i 50. – w jej opinii – były czasami „męczenników za wiarę” (do których zaliczała Wyszyńskiego i innych więzionych księży w kraju i za granicą), natomiast – jak sądziła – w latach 60. władza, stosując represje administracyjne, zmierzała do „uduszenia się” (*étrangler*) Kościoła [*Winowska do Micheleta*: 2]. Podawała przykłady walki zewnętrznej prowadzonej przez komunistów w postaci np. obciążeń fiskalnych przerastających możliwości parafii, braku pozwoleń na budownictwo kościelne, monopolu władzy na środki przekazu, szerzenia propagandy ateistycznej wśród dzieci i młodzieży, próby wewnętrznego rozbicia Kościoła, czemu służyła działalność katolików postępowych zgrupowanych w PAX, którzy, całkowicie podlegli partii, występowali przeciwko hierarchii kościelnej. W opinii Winowskiej działania te, sterowane z Moskwy, miały doprowadzić do całkowitej zależności Kościoła od państwa. Jako przykład podawała ona sytuację radzieckiej Cerkwi prawosławnej. Bliska współpracowniczka Wyszyńskiego żywiła nadzieję, że władze francuskie w czasie zbliżającej się wizyty w Polsce nie dadzą się zmanipulować pozorami i spowodują rozpoczęcie dialogu między Prymasem i rządem [tamże 3-4:]. W rzeczywistości oczekiwała ona, iż dojdzie do spotkania de Gaulle’a z Wyszyńskim. Prezydent Republiki zdawał sobie sprawę z położenia Kościoła w Polsce. Był świadom wagi prośby, którą skierował do niego papież, oraz tego, że sama wizyta będzie uważnie śledzona przez Watykan. Pozostawało mu jedynie odpowiedzieć na pytanie, co będzie najkorzystniejsze dla Francji – spotkanie czy jego brak.

Termin wizyty zmieniał się wielokrotnie. Pierwotnie planowano ją od 5 do 12 czerwca [*Notatka z rozmowy z Pérolem*], następnie między 7 a 13 czerwca [*Notatka z rozmowy z Burin des Roziers*]. Ostatecznie, z powodu wybuchu wojny izraelsko-arabskiej na Bliskim Wschodzie, na wniosek de Gaulle’a odbyła się jesienią w terminie od 6 do 12 września 1967 r. Zachowano w mocy wszystkie poprzednie ustalenia dotyczące programu [*De Gaulle do Ochaba*].

Już w połowie marca 1967 r., kiedy jeszcze nie był ustalony termin wizyty ani jej program, polskie władze przewidywały, na podstawie informacji pozyskanych od włoskiego ambasadora w Warszawie Enrica Aillauda<sup>8</sup>, (który zresztą systematycznie przekazywał władzom polskim informacje na temat planowanej wizyty de Gaulle'a i jego ewentualnego spotkania z Wyszyńskim) [Rapacki 1967], iż Prezydent Republiki zechce spotkać się z Prymasem Polski. 18 marca 1967 r. Aillaud sugerował, że może ono mieć miejsce w czasie niedzielnego nabożeństwa, w którym uczestniczyłyby Generał. Jako źródło informacji podał ambasadę francuską w Warszawie [*Pilna notatka, Amb Willmann*]. Dla polskich komunistów informacja przekazana przez ambasadora była na tyle cenna i wiarygodna, że postanowiono niezwłocznie podjąć działania wykluczające możliwość takiego spotkania. Już dwa dni później (20 marca 1967 r.) ambasador polski we Włoszech Adam Willmann<sup>9</sup> próbował wypytać się o tę sprawę u ambasadora francuskiego Arnaulda Waplera<sup>10</sup>. Francuski dyplomata (prawdopodobnie nie wiedząc o wiadomościach przekazanych przez Aillauda stronie polskiej), wyrażając zdziwienie, próbował blefować, oskarżając Wyszyńskiego (a równocześnie polski episkopat) o politykierstwo. Stawiał on za wzór do naśladowania postawę neutralności reprezentowaną w relacjach z władzami przez episkopat francuski [Wilmann 1967]. Tym samym, prawdopodobnie, starał się on przekonać polskiego rozmówcę iż strona francuska nie planowała spotkania z Wyszyńskim. Jednak temat ewentualnego spotkania de Gaulle – Wyszyński został podjęty już dwa dni później po spotkaniu w ministerstwie (22 marca 1967 r.). W czasie obiadu wydanego w ambasadzie francuskiej zaproszony na spotkanie Józef Winiewicz<sup>11</sup> poruszył w rozmowie z Waplerem sprawę „pogłosek równie nonsensownych co szkodliwych” o zamiarze de Gaulle'a, by w czasie pobytu w Polsce podjąć rozmowę z kardynałem Wyszyńskim [*Pilna notatka z rozmowy z ambasadorem Francji*]. Francuski dyplomata, podobno niezaskoczony pytaniem, nie wykluczył możliwości takiego spotkania, sugerując nawet, że jeżeli miałyby do niego dojść, to z inicjatywy Wyszyńskiego. Doradził nawet stronie polskiej pominięcie niedzieli w przygotowywanym programie. W wyniku tego z wizyty wykluczono by udział Generała w nabożeństwie. Ambasador francuski uspokajał polskiego gościa, że

<sup>8</sup> Enrico Aillaud (1911-2004) – ambasador włoski w Warszawie (1962-1968) i w Wiedniu (1970-1973).

<sup>9</sup> Adam Willmann (1908-1995) – ambasador PRL we Włoszech (1962-1967), wiceminister spraw zagranicznych (1969-1972).

<sup>10</sup> Arnauld Wapler (1912-2014) – dyplomata na placówkach w Rzymie (1955-1959), i Londynie (1959-1965), ambasador francuski w Polsce (1966-1970).

<sup>11</sup> Józef Winiewicz (1905-1984) – ambasador PRL w USA (1947-1956), wiceminister spraw zagranicznych (do 1972 r.).

„de Gaulle nie zrobi niczego, co mogłoby zaambarasować rząd polski lub rzucić cień na jego wizytę”. Jednak strona polska nie pozostawiła złudzeń. Winiewicz poinformował ambasadora, „że spotkanie de Gaulle-Wyszyński, z jakich by nie miało się odbyć okoliczności, wykluczamy. Spór państwo-kościół ma charakter polityczny; Wyszyński uzurpuje sobie rolę polityczną, jego posunięcia oceniamy jako akcję przeciw istniejącemu ustrojowi” [tamże]. Do rozmów na temat programu wizyty przystąpiono w kwietniu 1967 r.

14 kwietnia 1967 r. w Paryżu – w czasie spotkania ambasadora PRL Jana Druto<sup>12</sup> z Gilbertem Pérolem<sup>13</sup> – strona francuska przekazała sugestie, iż de Gaulle chciałby prócz Warszawy odwiedzić Kraków i Gdańsk; co do wizyt w innych miastach – zdecydować miała strona polska. Wydaje się, że podana w luźnej rozmowie propozycja była nieprzemyślana z powodów logistycznych. Zwłaszcza, że de Gaulle nie miał zbyt wielu możliwości co do wyboru dat przyjazdu do Polski z powodu zaplanowanych wcześniej obowiązków. Zakładając rozpoczęcie wizyty w środę 7 czerwca 1967 r. i program obejmujący tak odległe od siebie miasta jak Kraków i Gdańsk, nie byłaby możliwa obecność Prezydenta Republiki w niedzielę 11 czerwca 1967 r. w Warszawie. A przecież taki dzień byłby najbardziej naturalny na spotkanie z Wyszyńskim. Dlatego w Pałacu Elizejskim postanowiono nie tylko przedstawić sugestie co do miejsc pobytu Prezydenta Republiki, ale też zaskoczyć stronę polską przygotowaniem szczegółowego programu wizyty. Już cztery dni później, bo 18 czerwca 1967 r., miało miejsce spotkanie Étienne’a Burina des Roziers<sup>14</sup> i Jacques’a Delarüe-Carona de Beaumarchais’go<sup>15</sup> z Janem Drutem, podczas którego brali pod uwagę różne miasta, które ewentualnie mógłby odwiedzić francuski gość.

Prócz wspomnianych już (Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk) rozważano pobyt w Katowicach, Oświęcimiu, Wałbrzychu<sup>16</sup>, Opolu, a nawet Nowej Hucie czy Wrocławiu (na czym bardzo, z powodów politycznych – sprawa Ziem Zachodnich – zależało stronie polskiej). Tuż przed zakończeniem spotkania francuscy urzędni-

<sup>12</sup> Jan Druto (1909-1985) – ambasador PRL we Włoszech (1952-1959) i we Francji (1961-1969).

<sup>13</sup> Gilbert Pérol (ur. 1926) – szef informacji w gabinecie de Gaulle’a (od 1963) odpowiedzialny za przygotowanie oficjalnych wizyt Prezydenta.

<sup>14</sup> Étienne Burin des Roziers (1913-2012) – w latach 1958-1962 ambasador francuski w Polsce. Od 1962 r. sekretarz generalny Urzędu Prezydenta Francji.

<sup>15</sup> Jacques Delarüe-Caron de Beaumarchais (1913-1979) dyrektor gabinetu w ministerstwie spraw zagranicznych (od 1964 r.).

<sup>16</sup> Z powodu znacznej liczby polskich robotników z Francji przybyłych do tego miasta w pierwszych latach po zakończeniu II wojny światowej.



cy przekazali zaskoczonemu ambasadorowi gotowy program wizyty<sup>17</sup>. Pominąwszy w nim wizytę w Gdańsku, zaproponowano, by już w sobotę 10 czerwca 1967 r. de Gaulle udał się do Warszawy. Natomiast program na niedzielę przewidywał „dzień wolny, poświęcony zwiedzaniu miasta, rano prywatna msza. Obiad. Żelazowa-Wola. Prywatne przyjęcie osobistości” [Notatka z rozmowy z Burin des Roziers] Warszawa dokładnie zdawała sobie sprawę z celu tych zmian. Zaniepokoiło ją zwłaszcza „zwiedzanie miasta” oraz „prywatna msza” (świadczą o tym podkreślenia w sprawozdaniu z rozmowy Druto – des Roziers) tym bardziej, że w czasie tej samej rozmowy des Roziers stwierdził, iż de Gaulle „nie lubi pustych miejsc, luzów w programie” [tamże]. Co więcej, jak odnotowały polskie służby dyplomatyczne w Paryżu, dwa dni wcześniej – bo 16 maja 1967 r. – w poczytnym francuskim tygodniku popularnym „Paris Match” w dziale „Telegramy” ukazała się krótka informacja, że w przypadku uniemożliwienia przez władze polskie spotkania de Gaulle’a z Wyszyńskim w katedrze św. Jana, ten pierwszy – jak miał oświadczyć – „złoży wizytę kardynałowi w Arcybiskupstwie” [Druto do Wiecheckiego]. W odpowiedzi na propozycję paryskiej dyplomacji (złożoną 18 maja 1967 r.) w Warszawie przygotowano zarys programu, w którym wykluczono obecność Prezydenta Republiki na niedzielnej mszy w Warszawie. Strona polska zaproponowała, by w sobotę 10 czerwca 1967 r. de Gaulle udał się z Katowic do Gdańska, a do Warszawy powrócił w niedzielę późnym wieczorem. 19 maja 1967 r. Druto przedstawił propozycje strony polskiej w Pałacu Elizejskim. Tym razem, jak wynikało z relacji ambasadora PRL, to de Gaulle nie krył zaskoczenia: „Reagował bardzo spokojnie, rzeczowo. Rozumie zagadnienie i nie chce absolutnie dawać pretekstu do jakichkolwiek manifestacji o charakterze publicznym, angażując go w nasze sprawy wewnętrzne. Ze względów czysto kurtuazyjnych nie mógłby jednak zupełnie pominąć osoby prymasa. Dlatego sądził, że przy zwiedzaniu miasta wejście do katedry i ew. kilka zdań powitania z kardynałem wyczerpałoby i dla nas i dla niego sprawę, jako spotkanie prywatne” [Druto do MSZ]. W rozmowie zaś ze współpracownikami miał wręcz wyrazić niezadowolenie z próby „wyreżyserowania” przez polskich komunistów każdego punktu programu wizyty w Polsce [Staniszewski 1967a]. Na początku maja 1967 r. wysłannicy Prezydenta Republiki (ówczesny szef protokołu Bernard Durand, Gilbert Pérol i Jacques Aubert<sup>18</sup>) przekazali polskim władzom na spotkaniu 5 maja 1967 r. życzenie de Gaulle’a, by w programie wizyty uwzględniono niedzielny wypoczynek w Warszawie. Co więcej, miał on stanowczo (*fermement*) domagać się uwzględnienia w tym dniu kurtuazyjnego (a nie

<sup>17</sup> Objęłyby ona Warszawę, Kraków, Katowice, Oświęcim lub Wałbrzych.

<sup>18</sup> Jacques Aubert (1913-1996) – dyrektor generalny bezpieczeństwa narodowego (1962), sekretarz generalny w ministerstwie spraw wewnętrznych.



o charakterze politycznym, jak argumentowali francuscy wysłannicy) spotkania z Wyszyńskim. Miało ono odbyć się „na progu katedry św. Jana w czasie zwiedzania tej świątyni” [*Pilna notatka z rozmów amb. Bartola*]. Delegacja z Paryża wiedziała, że sprawa jest przegrana i de Gaulle nie poświęci celu wizyty, która wpisywała się we francuski projekt nawiązania przyjaznych stosunków z państwami zza żelaznej kurtyny [Pasztor 2005a], dla spotkania z Wyszyńskim. Świadczy również o tym mętne tłumaczenie Waplera, który jeszcze tego samego dnia w rozmowie z dyrektorem protokołu dyplomatycznego Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych Edwardem Bartolem twierdził, że „zmuszony jest postawić sprawę spotkania [de Gaulle’a] z Wyszyńskim, mimo że rozumie trudności jakie to stwarza”, a nie chcąc, by spotkanie to odbyło się w ambasadzie francuskiej, „prosił w związku z tym, abym [– pisał Bartol –] przekazał tę sprawę wyżej” [tamże].

Ostatecznie pod koniec maja 1967 r. strona francuska przyjęła program zaproponowany przez Warszawę. Oficjalnie władze polskie zgodziły się na udział Generała we mszy świętej odprawionej (11 czerwca 1967 r.) w bazylice w Oliwie i na podanie w prasie zagranicznej ogólnego programu wizyty, jednak – celem uniknięcia pytań o spotkanie z Prymasem – zażądały pominięcia w relacji wzmianki o planowanym nabożeństwie. Dały również do zrozumienia francuskim urzędnikom z otoczenia de Gaulle’a, iż wiedzą, że to oni byli źródłem ukazujących się w prasie informacji na temat ewentualnego spotkania z Wyszyńskim. Sugerowano nawet, że dalsze insynuacje na ten temat mogą niekorzystnie wpłynąć na pobyt Prezydenta Republiki w Polsce [*Willman do Druto*].

Upokorzony Pérol miał obiecać, iż nie będzie więcej publicznie poruszać sprawy kard. Wyszyńskiego. W rozmowach z prasą podkreślał, że wszelkie dywagacje na ten temat były bezpodstawne i niezrozumiałe, natomiast uczestnictwo Generała w niedzielnej mszy świętej to jego prywatna sprawa, której nie poruszano w trakcie przygotowywania programu wizyty [*Notatka z rozmów z Gilbertem Perolem*]. Miał również stwierdzić, że „sprawa stosunków między kardynałem a Rządem Polskim jest wewnętrzną sprawą polską. Dla Francji «problem kardynała» nie istnieje” [tamże].

Skoro nie udało się zorganizować spotkania de Gaulle’a z Prymasem, francuska dyplomacja próbowała sondować u władz polskich reakcje na ewentualne spotkanie Prezydenta Republiki z kard. Karolem Wojtyłą. Okazją ku temu miała być wizyta francuskiego gościa w piątek (8 IX) w katedrze na Wawelu. Jakież musiało być zdziwienie i zadowolenie francuskiego ambasadora Arnaulda Waplera, kiedy

w rozmowie z nim wiceminister spraw zagranicznych Marian Naskowski<sup>19</sup> (27 czerwca 1967 r.) przyznał, iż władza nie będzie się takiemu spotkaniu sprzeciwiała [*Pilna notatka z rozmowy z ambasadorem Francji*].

W rzeczywistości propozycja wysunięta przez Waplera wpisywała się w plan służby bezpieczeństwa, by wywołać konflikt między dwoma kardynałami, co – w opinii tajnych współpracowników z otoczenia kard. Wojtyły – miało w owym czasie realne szanse powodzenia [Czaczkowska 2013]. Ostatecznie do tego spotkania również nie doszło z powodu zamierzonej nieobecności kard. Wojtyły w Krakowie w tym czasie. W ten sposób zmanifestował on swoją solidarność z Prymasem Polski [*Echange de messages*]. Nieobecność kard. Wojtyły wywołała jednak zdziwienie francuskiej delegacji [*Notatka z rozmowy z C. Perolem*].

Zaakceptowanie przez Paryż programu wizyty de Gaulle'a w Warszawie z pominięciem spotkania z Wyszyńskim było niewątpliwym sukcesem polskiej dyplomacji. Pałac Elizejski próbował „ratować sytuację”, zapraszając Prymasa na przyjęcie wydane przez de Gaulle'a w Wilanowie. Jednak kardynał, akceptując jedynie spotkania na terenie kościelnym, odrzucił zaproszenie, obawiając się wykorzystania proponowanego wydarzenia przez komunistów do celów propagandowych [*Echange de messages*]. Czy decyzja Prymasa była słuszna? Warto przypomnieć wydarzenie z przełomu 1946/1947 r., kiedy to, nieobeznany w stosunkach religijnych w Polsce, nuncjusz apostolski we Francji abp Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (przyszły papież Jan XXIII) przyjął zaproszenia na bankiet wydany przez ambasadę warszawską w Paryżu. Nazajutrz w prasie francuskiej ukazały się fotografie, na których „nuncjusz apostolski z pucharem [Cegiełka miał na myśli raczej kieliszek – przyp. autora] szampana trącał się z gośćmi-dyplomata-mi” [Cegiełka 1977: 190-191], co wywołało zgorzienie wśród niepodległościowego wychodźstwa we Francji. Zrozumiałym było więc, że władze komunistyczne nie sprzeciwiały się spotkaniu de Gaulle'a z Wyszyńskim w Wilanowie pomimo tego, że uważały, „iż stosunki kościół – państwo i postawa W.[wyszyńskiego] są sprawą wewnętrzną polską” [Willmann *do Druto*]. 7 czerwca 1969 r. francuski ambasador w Polsce poinformował Paryż o decyzji Prymasa, zaznaczając, iż Prymas proponował spotkanie na Jasnej Górze lub w zakrystii katedry św. Jana w Warszawie. W świetle powziętych w czerwcu 1967 r. uzgodnień polsko-francuskich projekt ten był nie do zaakceptowania przez de Gaulle'a [Wyrwa 2001: 181-182].

<sup>19</sup> Marian Naskowski (1912-1996) – wiceminister spraw zagranicznych (1952-1968), stały przedstawiciel PRL.

Warto wspomnieć, że nie tylko odwiedzane miasta, ale również trasę (środkii transportu, drogi przejazdu), którą miał pokonać de Gaulle, wyznaczono celem uniknięcia protestów w obronie praw Kościoła czy też nieoczekiwanych wizyt Prezydenta w miejscach kultu. A takie protesty mogły mieć miejsce. W opinii polskich służb bezpieczeństwa de Gaulle „rzadko z reguły trzyma się protokołu i programu, chętnie natomiast wchodzi w tłum, rozdaje uściski i uśmiechy, zachowuje się wtedy jak dziecko” [Kurpierz 2008: 113]. W ramach standardowych działań bezpieki nieprzypadkowo zwracano uwagę na parafie leżące na trasie przejazdu de Gaulle’a [tamże: 116]. Również umówienie wizyty w Gdańsku na niedzielę 11 czerwca 1967 r. było przemyślane. Władze były pewne, że w razie spotkania z bp. Edmundem Nowickim hierarcha ten nie poruszy w rozmowie z Generałem żadnych drażliwych dla komunistów tematów. Miał on w owym czasie dobre relacje z władzą. Był przez nią uważany za przedstawiciela tzw. realistycznego (skłonного do ugody) skrzydła w Episkopacie. Owe kontakty były na tyle dobre, że w czasie spotkania kierownika Wydziału Oświaty i Nauki KC PZPR Andrzeja Werblana z Casarollim 6 kwietnia 1967 r. ten pierwszy zaproponował przedstawicielowi Watykanu mianowanie Nowickiego kardynałem [*Tajne dokumenty Państwo – Kościół*: 262].

6 września 1967 r. prezydent de Gaulle przybył do Polski. W tym samym dniu Prymas – świadom, że nie dojdzie do wspólnego spotkania – wystosował do niego oficjalny list, wyrażając się o nim jako o przywódcy „narodu”, a nie „państwa”. Wyszyński uważał to rozróżnienie za istotne. W jego przekonaniu państwo i ojczyzna – jako rzeczywistości ziemskie – były pochodnymi narodu, który stanowił również wspólnotę nadnaturalną [Wysocki 2012: 55]. Widział on w Generale symbol wolności i nadziei nie tylko dla Francuzów, ale również dla Polaków. Wraz z listem francuski przywódca otrzymał wykonaną w brązie figurę Matki Bożej Częstochowskiej z napisem „Sacrum Poloniae millenium 966 – 1966 – Au Président de la France, l’épiscopat de la Pologne millénaire-Varsovie 1967” („Dla Prezydenta Francji, episkopat Polski Tysiącletniej – Warszawa 1967”) [*Echange de messages*]. Dzień później de Gaulle w liście do Wyszyńskiego również pisał o więziach łączących oba narody (*nation*), zapewniając, że składa wizytę „Polsce Tysiącletniej [...] żywiąc nadzieję, że przyjaźń między dwoma ludami (*peuples*) będzie wzrastała” [*De Gaulle do Wyszyńskiego*]. Jak planowano, pobyt Prezydenta Republiki w Polsce trwał do 13 września 1967 r.

Przebieg wizyty utwierdził władze komunistyczne co do słuszności decyzji o niedopuszczeniu do spotkania w Warszawie. W podsumowaniu tej wizyty

minister Adam Rapacki pisał: „Do spotkania z Wyszyńskim nie doszło i de Gaulle w tym zakresie nie zrobił niczego, co byłoby uznane za niewłaściwe przez rząd polski. Odpowiedź na dywersyjny list Wyszyńskiego utrzymana została w zasadzie w ramach zdawkowej kurtuazji” [Rapacki 1967]. Zaś relacjonując jej oddźwięk we francuskiej opinii publicznej, radca prawny PRL w Paryżu Stefan Staniszewski<sup>20</sup> donosił: „Sprawa kardynała Wyszyńskiego wzbudzała zainteresowanie w pierwszej fazie wizyty. Koła oficjalne zajmowały stanowisko umiarkowane. Po odmowie Wyszyńskiego udania się na przyjęcie wydane przez de Gaulle’a i po wymianie listów nastąpił przełom. O całej sprawie przestało się mówić i pisać. W komentarzach stwierdzano, że Wyszyński wykazał nietakt, iż jego konflikt z władzami jest sprawą wewnętrzną, że de Gaulle przyjechał na zaproszenie rządu i składa wizytę narodowi polskiemu a nie kardynałowi. Przedstawiciele gabinetu de Gaulle’a twierdzili, że Generał ze względu na swe przekonania katolickie chciał się spotkać z Wyszyńskim, ale w żadnym wypadku nie miał zamiaru urazić rządu polskiego” [Staniszewski 1967b].

Polskie władze uznawały za oczywiste, że państwa zachodnie nie były zainteresowane wpływaniem na rząd PRL celem zmiany polityki wobec Kościoła w Polsce. Tuż po wizycie de Gaulle’a Wyszyński pisał: „Rząd zmierza do stworzenia atmosfery, która zmusiłaby mnie do zrezygnowania ze stanowiska lub zebrania materiału, którym można będzie posłużyć się do udowodnienia Watykanowi, że dalsze pozostawanie na stanowisku jest niemożliwe, gdyż sprawy Kościoła nie posuną się ani na krok” [cyt. za: Żaryn 2003: 270]. Francuskie Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych w notach do przedstawicieli tego kraju za granicą wyjaśniało, iż wina za brak spotkania leżała głównie po stronie Wyszyńskiego, który odrzucił możliwość rozmowy zarówno w ambasadzie, jak i na przyjęciu wydanym przez de Gaulle’a w Wilanowie. Argumentowano, iż uczynił to z powodu swych ambicji jako interrex narodu polskiego [Alphand 2008: 379].

Niewątpliwie najważniejszym wydarzeniem w polityce zagranicznej Polski w 1967 r. była wizyta Prezydenta Republiki Francuskiej. Planowano ją na czerwiec. Z powodu wybuchu wojny na Bliskim Wschodzie przełożono ją na wrzesień, jednak z zachowaniem pierwotnego programu. Głównym jej celem – z punktu widzenia polskich władz – było uzyskanie od de Gaulle’a jasnej deklaracji co do trwałości granicy na Odrze i Nysie. Dla władz francuskich wizyta ta stanowiła etap na drodze nawiązania przyjaznych stosunków z państwami komunistycznymi. Jeden

<sup>20</sup> Stefan Staniszewski (1931-2003) – radca ambasady PRL w Paryżu (1963-1969).

z punktów spornych dotyczył ewentualnego spotkania Generała z Prymasem Polski w Warszawie. Inicjatywa wyszła od przywódcy Francji. Władze komunistyczne kategorycznie sprzeciwiały się zorganizowaniu takiej rozmowy, słusznie obawiając się, iż przyczyniłaby się do wzrostu prestiżu Prymasa na arenie międzynarodowej, a konflikt Kościół – władza PRL zostałby przeniesiony na arenę międzynarodową. Dla de Gaulle'a, który znał realia społeczno-polityczne i miał również okazję zapoznać się pobieżnie z położeniem hierarchii katolickiej w Polsce, wizyta ta miała stać się spotkaniem z narodem, którego nieodłączną i ważną częścią był Kościół. Do takiego spojrzenia na wizytę zachęcał go również Paweł VI. W czasie przygotowań do wizyty dyplomaci francuscy nie docenili skuteczności działań polskiego wywiadu dyplomatycznego, który w sprawach dotyczących ewentualnego spotkania Prezydenta Republiki z Prymasem śledził również publikowane we francuskiej prasie popularnej informacje. Ostatecznie do spotkania, ku zadowoleniu polskich komunistów, nie doszło. Jedynym wzajemnym gestem, który wykonali, była wymiana listów, w których obaj zapewnili o więzach łączących naród polski i francuski.

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## **Reviews and discussions**



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## *Czy Kościół zrozumiał swoją najnowszą historię?*

**Paweł Skibiński, *Kościół wobec totalitaryzmów (1917-1989).  
Światowy katolicyzm i doświadczenie Polaków*, Instytut Pileckiego,  
Warszawa 2022, ss. 687.**

## **Has the Church understood its recent history?**

**Paweł Skibiński, *The Church in the Face of Totalitarianisms (1917-1989).  
World Catholicism and the Polish experience*, Pilecki Institute,  
Warsaw 2022, pp. 687.**

### **Wprowadzenie**

Pierwsze, co uderza każdego, kto spotka się z książką *Kościół wobec totalitaryzmów (1917-1989)* Pawła Skibińskiego, to rozległość materiału, który jest przedmiotem refleksji autora. Książka podejmująca się próby analizy stosunku Kościoła katolickiego wobec XX-wiecznych totalitaryzmów wydaje się, z jednej strony, czymś koniecznym do napisania; z drugiej – jawi się jako coś do napisania niemożliwego. Autor, wychodząc od sytuacji Kościoła w dobie rewolucji bolszewickiej (rozdz. 1), poprzez doświadczenie faszyzmu (rozdz. 2), nazizmu (rozdz. 3), oraz stanowisko Kościoła w Polsce dwudziestolecia międzywojennego wobec totalitaryzmów (rozdz. 4) prowadzi czytelnika do analizy reakcji Kościoła na wydarzenia II wojny światowej (rozdz. 5). Następne cztery rozdziały poświęcone zostały okresowi od 1945 r. do upadku „bloku wschodniego”. Autor odnosi się w nich do dwóch strategii podejścia Kościoła do komunizmu, których cezurą jest wybór Jana XXIII na papieża (rozdz. 6 i 7), a następnie omawia problem

współpracy katolików z komunizmem (rozd. 8) i zmagania Kościoła w Polsce do roku 1978 (rozd. 9). Ostatnie trzy rozdziały poświęca pontyfikatowi Jana Pawła II, którego wybór przyrównuje do zastosowania egzorcyzmu (rozd. 10), analizując jego znaczenie dla upadku komunizmu w Polsce (rozd. 11) i globalnych przemian na świecie (rozd. 12). Choć praca – z konieczności – ma charakter przeglądowy, nie tylko zbiera ustalenia już poczynione w rozległej literaturze przedmiotu, ale również – tam, gdzie to potrzebne i możliwe – ją uzupełnia. Jako, że jest napisana lekkim piórem, mimo znacznej objętości dobrze i szybko się ją czyta.

Jednak nie rozległość objętego analizą materiału, czyniąca tę pracę swoistym kompendium podjętego problemu, ani nawet przystępny styl autora rozstrzygają o wadze książki prof. Skibińskiego. Rozstrzyga o niej – w moim przekonaniu – istotny problem teoretyczny, który autor w swojej pracy podejmuje i który porządkuje jego wywód. Dotyczy on roli katolicyzmu w odniesieniu do kształtowania postaw wobec totalitaryzmów, ze szczególnym odniesieniem do polskiego doświadczenia. Wskazane wyżej rozdziały książki dedykowane Polsce nie są zatem „wypadkiem przy pracy”, rozrywającymi wykład o relacji Kościoła do totalitaryzmów. To, że polski opór względem zarówno niemieckiego nazizmu, jak i importowanego ze ZSRR komunizmu, związany był z wiarą katolicką, przynależnością do Kościoła – dowodzi prof. Skibiński – nie jest ewenementem, a – z różnych powodów (doświadczeń historycznych, siły katolicyzmu, osobowości przywódców etc.) – szczególnie wyraźnym przejawem, egzemplifikacją roli, jaką pełni katolicyzm jako zaporę przed totalitaryzmem. Ustalenie to wydaje się współcześnie bardzo istotne. Niedawne badania przeprowadzone wśród młodzieży dowodzą, że np. wśród młodych Niemców, Czechów czy Austriaków dominuje przekonanie o totalitarnych inklinacjach Kościoła, a teza o totalitarnym charakterze religii ma się dobrze [Mazurkiewicz i in. 2021]. Książka prof. Skibińskiego podejmuje polemikę z tą tezą w sposób przekonujący również dlatego, że skutecznie unika „wybielania” plam w historii współpracy przedstawicieli Kościoła z totalitaryzmami, odsłaniając stojące za takimi działaniami przyczyny.

Szczególną wartością pracy prof. Skibińskiego jest wreszcie przyjęta strategia badawcza. Autor, analizując działania Kościoła, poważnie traktuje jego religijną tożsamość, pozostawiając pytanie o Boga naprawdę pytaniem otwartym. Zauważa zatem najgłębszy wymiar zmagania Kościoła z komunizmem, stwierdziwszy np. że przez „liturgiczne zawierzenia i beatyfikacje Jan Paweł II rzucał komunizmowi wyzwanie duchowe, jasno pokazując, że walka z tym systemem i ideologią odbywa

się nie tylko w sferze społecznej czy politycznej, lecz także w najbardziej intymnej dla człowieka sferze metafizycznej” [Skibiński 2022: 489]. W konsekwencji w pracy odnotowane zostają również wydarzenia, których wagę ciężko określić, stosując instrumentarium nauk społecznych, a które – z perspektywy opisywanych postaci – odgrywały istotną rolę w analizowanych procesach. Przykładowo, prof. Skibiński przypomina – związany z prośbą Matki Bożej skierowaną poprzez dzieci z Fatimy do Kościoła, dokonany przez Jana Pawła II 25 marca 1984 roku – akt ofiarowania świata Najświętszemu Sercu Maryi. Papież modlił się wówczas o wybawienie od „wojny atomowej, od nieobliczalnego samozniszczenia”. Autor przywołuje w tym kontekście największą katastrofę w dziejach floty ZSRR, która wydarzyła się 13 maja tegoż roku (wspomnienie Matki Bożej Fatimskiej) w Siewieromorsku, unicestwiająca „z dnia na dzień większą część arsenału nuklearnego” marynarki ZSRR [tamże: 487-488].

Jak do każdej pracy, również do tej można zgłaszać rozmaite zastrzeżenia. Dość zauważyć, że uznanie włoskiego faszystwu i to już z przełomu lat '20. i 30. za totalitaryzm jest co najmniej nieoczywiste. Zastrzeżenia może budzić jednoznaczne rozgraniczenie korporacjonizmu chrześcijańskiego i faszystowskiego, które – w moim przekonaniu – ciężko tak jednoznacznie, jak chciałby autor, przeprowadzić w oparciu o *Quadragesimo anno* i które nieoczywiste było również dla wybitnych katolickich intelektualistów dwudziestolecia międzywojennego – dość wspomnieć w tym kontekście Leopolda Caro [Gierycz 2022]. Wreszcie, można zgłaszać zastrzeżenia do momentami zdawkowych podsumowań rozdziałów etc. Tym niemniej, wszystkie tego typu zastrzeżenia nie zmieniają faktu, że mamy do czynienia z pracą istotną, dostarczającą nie tylko poważnej wiedzy faktograficznej o przeszłości, ale pobudzającą do refleksji nad tym, co z doświadczenia Kościoła ze starcia z potęgami zła płynie dla dnia dzisiejszego, w tym szczególnie dla sposobu rozumienia roli Kościoła.

### **1. Logika polityczna czy ewangeliczna**

Niezwykłe poruszający jest dokonany przez autora opis zmiany kursu Kościoła w Niemczech względem narodowego socjalizmu w okolicach roku 1934. Wówczas, wyszedłszy od jednoznacznego odrzucenia współpracy z nazizmem i członkostwa katolików w NSDAP, Kościół „uleastycznił” swoje podejście, dopuszczając takową współpracę. Ukazuje to istotną pokusę, której – jak mi się wydaje – uległ Kościół również m.in. na Soborze Watykańskim II czy w odniesieniu do *Ostpolitik*, i zdaje się ulegać również obecnie.

O ile przyczynę wyjściowego, jednoznacznego odrzucenia nazizmu u progu lat 30. stanowiły przesłanki doktrynalne – radykalna sprzeczność narodowego socjalizmu z prawdami wiary katolickiej, o tyle przyczyną korekty istotnie łagodzącej kurs Kościoła wobec Hitlera w okolicach roku 1934 była kwestia podpisania konkordatu. Jak zauważa prof. Skibiński, „ceną za konkordat było osłabienie, a w końcu likwidacja (na kilkanaście dni przed przyjęciem konkordatu) katolickich partii Zentrum i BVP, które jednogłośnie poparły ustawę o nadzwyczajnych pełnomocnictwach Hitlera z marca 1933 roku, co było niezbędne do przyjęcia traktatu przez Reichstag”, zgoda na składanie przez duchownych przysięgi na wierność Führerowi, i danie Hitlerowi „poważnego argumentu pozwalającego przyciągać katolików do współpracy z nazistami” [Skibiński 2022: 116].

Przyznam, że nieszczęśliwie przekonuje mnie usprawiedliwienie, które proponuje Paweł Skibiński jakoby „w lipcu 1933 roku nie były jeszcze w gruncie rzeczy państwem totalitarnym”, a „ustawa o przymusowej sterylizacji weszła w życie (dopiero) tydzień przed podpisaniem gotowego już konkordatu”. Można byłoby powiedzieć: właśnie – już przed podpisaniem konkordatu weszła w życie, a pierwsze ustawy rasowe jeszcze wcześniej. Nieszczęśliwy to kontekst dla podpisywania czegokolwiek, a tym bardziej konkordatu, przez Stolicę Apostolską. Nie chodzi mi tutaj o oczywistą polityczną naiwność tego ruchu: bez partii katolickich i kontroli parlamentarnej Kościoła z konkordatem czy bez pozostawał całkowicie na łasce i niełasce Hitlera. Chodzi o to, że – jakby na to nie patrzeć – podpisanie tego traktatu było dla Kościoła moralnie kompromitujące. Znając i dobrze rozumiejąc od progu lat '30. istotę nazizmu; więcej, jednoznacznie odrzucając go przed 1934 rokiem, Kościół – w imię politycznych, doraźnych kalkulacji dążących do zapewnienia sobie „minimum stabilności” (czy nie przypomina to tezy *Ostpolitik* o *modus non moriendi?*) – w celu uzyskania konkordatu zdradził prawdę o niemożności pogodzenia narodowego socjalizmu z wiarą katolicką. Oznaczało to również potencjalne zaryzykowanie zbawienia tych, którzy uznać mogli ten ruch za zachętę do współpracy z reżimem hitlerowskim. Trzy lata później Papież będzie patrzeć z „palącą troską” (*Mit brenender Sorge*) na wydarzenia w Niemczech i wraz z Kościołem w Niemczech stawiać im już dość jednoznaczny opór. Ciężko jednak nie skonstatować, że korygując w 1937 roku ponownie swoje stanowisko względem nazistów, Kościół do pewnego stopnia musiał naprawiać błędy, do których się przyczynił.

Nie jest moim celem ewaluacja decyzji Piusa XI. Chcę tylko podkreślić, że przykład ten dobrze egzemplifikuje stałe wyzwanie dla Kościoła. Sprowadza

się ono do odpowiedzi na pytanie czy – zgodnie ze stwierdzeniem kardynała Kaspera – sprawy świeckie mają być prowadzone przez Kościół “w sposób świecki, sprawy polityczne w sposób polityczny [...] żadna z tych kwestii nie powinna być rozstrzygana teologicznie przez Magisterium” [cyt. za: Rowland 2003: 27] czy też przeciwnie: także sprawy polityczne powinny być w pierwszym rzędzie ewaluowane przez Kościół z perspektywy jego misji zbawczej. Perspektywy te nie muszą, co oczywiste, zawsze stać w konflikcie, ale w niektórych, zazwyczaj istotnych sytuacjach stoją. Dokonanie złego wyboru jest wówczas kompromitujące, bo zamazuje najgłębsze powołanie Kościoła. W czasie Soboru Watykańskiego II dotyczyło to – jak trafnie zauważa prof. Skibiński – np. niezauważenia istnienia komunizmu w deklaracji o świecie współczesnym [por. Besancon 2017]. W czasie *Ostpolitik* zaowocowało natomiast przedłożeniem relacji z państwami postkomunistycznymi nad dobro lokalnych Kościołów i niezdolnością – jak trafnie zauważa Paweł Skibiński – do wyznaczenia „nieprzekraczalnej granicy kompromisu ze złem” [Skibiński 2022: 375].

Dostrzeżenie tego problemu pozwala też w pełni zrozumieć charakter i znacznie zmiany, jaką wprowadził Jan Paweł II do polityki watykańskiej. W istocie, jak zauważał Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde [1985: 3], chodziło tu o „nowy wymiar oddziaływania Kościoła na świat”. Jego podstawą była „rozległa wizja stosunku Kościoła do polityki, która pomimo częstego odwoływania się do poprzedników, różni się od ich koncepcji”. Istotą tej nowości było postrzeganie przez Jana Pawła II zadania Kościoła jako określonego „centralnie i wyłącznie z perspektywy jego misji zbawczej” [tamże: 4]<sup>1</sup>. Choć nieco szokującym wydawać się może twierdzenie, że nowością za pontyfikatu Papieża Polaka było określenie zadania Kościoła z perspektywy jego misji zbawczej (rodzi się kłopotliwe pytanie: co zatem określało je wcześniej?), wydaje się, że kluczowymi słowami są tutaj „centralnie i wyłącznie”. Kościół, pozostając wspólnotą wiary, zawsze spełniał i spełnia wiele społecznych i politycznych funkcji. Niekiedy jednak – np. podczas zwrotu w polityce Kościoła w Niemczech wczesnego Hitlera lub *Ostpolitik* – autonomizowały się one w takim stopniu, że ich znaczenie przysłaniało w praktyce jego zasadniczą misję, nieuchronnie prowadząc do, większego lub mniejszego, nadszarpnięcia wiarygodności Kościoła. Wydaje się zatem, że nowością wniesioną przez Jana Pawła II byłoby przywrócenie wtórnym czy pochodnym funkcjom Kościoła właściwego im miejsca dzięki ich jednoznacznemu podporządkowaniu zbawczej misji, a zatem dzięki ich

<sup>1</sup> Tezę tę rozwija i dokumentuje dekadę później w odniesieniu do znaczenia wiary chrześcijańskiej i roli Kościoła w upadku komunizmu George Weigel [1995] w książce *Ostateczna rewolucja*.



teologicznemu i chrystocentrycznemu zakotwiczeniu. Oznaczało to w konsekwencji nadanie nowego kierunku, a nierzadko także impetu, polityce watykańskiej i – co istotne z perspektywy dyskutowanej książki – pozwoliło ujednoznaczyć antytotalitarny wymiar oddziaływania katolicyzmu [por. Gierycz 2022b].

## 2. Teologiczne przygotowanie flirtu z marksizmem

Inną ważną podniesioną w książce kwestią jest, świadomie pozostawiona bez odpowiedzi, kwestia popularności tez komunistycznych w łonie Kościoła, głównie na Zachodzie i w Ameryce Łacińskiej w latach 70. Jak pisze prof. Skibiński, „skala tego zjawiska do dnia dzisiejszego musi zdumiewać historyków, a przyczyny tak głębokiego i masowego zaangażowania duchownych i świeckich na rzecz realizacji postulatów totalitarnej ideologii niełatwo jest pojąć” [Skibiński 2022: 420]. Nie roszcąc sobie kompetencji do udzielenia pełnej odpowiedzi na tę kwestię, chciałbym zauważyć, że zachłysięcie się różnego rodzaju tezami marksizującymi nie byłoby możliwe w Kościele bez ich uprzedniego teologicznego zakorzenienia. Związane ono było – w moim przekonaniu – z potężnym w owym czasie nurtem teologii moralnej, którego promotorem był m.in. Karl Rahner, a do którego należeli tacy teologowie, jak m.in. Josef Fuchs, Bernard Häring czy Edward Schillebeeckx [por. Szostek 1989: 47 (przypis 7), 49 (przypis 13)]. Teologia ta próbowała, by tak rzec, odnaleźć punkt archimedesowy między tradycyjną doktryną moralną Kościoła a indywidualizmem. W jej ramach antropologia ateistyczna została niejako przeszczepiona na grunt teologiczny, pozwalając części katolików łatwo odnaleźć wspólne zapatrywania z ateizmem systematycznym, by użyć kategorii z *Gaudium et spes*.

Wydaje się, że nie ma wiele bardziej odległych koncepcji antropologicznych od chrześcijaństwa niż marksizm. Przecząc istnieniu Stwórcy, przeczy on również istnieniu natury człowieka, czyniąc go istotą bezkształtną czy plastyczną, zależną od stosunków społecznych, a przede wszystkim ich ekonomicznej bazy. W tym ujęciu znika człowiek jako podmiot moralny, a kategorie dobra i zła, słuszności i niesłuszności stają się względne, powiązane w klasycznym ujęciu marksistowskim z ich zgodnością lub niezgodnością z celami proletariatu, a w ujęciu modnym w toku kulturowej rewolucji 68. roku – po prostu z wolą człowieka. Ten typ antropologicznego myślenia nazywam „antropologią nieograniczoną” [Gierycz 2017]. W latach 60. na zachodzie jej egzemplifikacją było hasło „zakazuje się zakazywać” [Berman 2008: 115], odsłaniające pragnienie całkowitej emancypacji, której kwestionowanie uznawano za jedyną rzecz, jakiej robić nie wolno [Delsol 2017: 25]. Poza tym wyjątkiem wolność miała być zupełna; każdy powinien móc robić właśnie to, co chce. Wreszcie nie musiał myśleć o tym, co powinien. Nie musiał

o tym myśleć, bo *implicite* zakładano, że rzeczywistych powinności nie ma. Dzięki dobrobytowi młodzi ludzie mieli stać się wreszcie „totalnie wolni”, co w istocie oznaczało rezygnację z prawdy i sprowadzenie wolności do swobody. Niezależnie zatem od swoich modalności antropologia nawiązująca do marksizmu pojmowała człowieka jako autokreatora, kogoś, kto poprzez procesy społeczne lub poprzez akt swojej wolności konstryuuje siebie jako osobę.

Jakkolwiek to wydawać się może dziwnie, powyższe założenia antropologiczne znajdowały odzwierciedlenie w myśli ks. Rahnera. Twierdził on mianowicie, że w „oparciu o duchowo-materialną dwoistość człowieka należy rozróżnić między człowiekiem jako inteligibilną osobą, a człowiekiem jako »naturą«. Przez osobę rozumie się człowieka, o ile może on w wolności sobą samym (jako naturą) dysponować i rzeczywiście dysponuje. Przez naturę rozumie się to wszystko, co warunkuje możliwość wolnego działania człowieka jako osoby, a zarazem stanowi normę ograniczającą autonomiczną suwerenność wolności” [cyt za: Szostek 1989: 47]. Jak zauważa ks. Andrzej Szostek, „ten, kto choć trochę obeznany jest z klasyczną Boetiusa definicją osoby (*rationalis naturae individua substantia*) i sposobem jej interpretowania w scholastyce, musi zauważyć m.in. silne przesunięcie akcentu w pojmowaniu osoby z rozumności na wolność oraz odmienny od tradycyjnego sens terminu «natura» (który sam Rahner nie bez racji często opatruje w tym kontekście cudzysłowem). W «naturze» mianowicie upatruje Rahner nie istotę bytu ujawnioną w jej działaniu (jak to czyni filozofia klasyczna), lecz „to, co zastane” przez ludzkiego ducha (wolność); to, co może i powinno być podporządkowane duchowi, choć warunkiem tego podporządkowania jest respektowanie – i w miarę możliwości wykorzystywanie – praw «naturą» rządzących” [tamże].

W kontekście wcześniejszych rozważań, zauważyć zatem trzeba, że antropologia rahnerowska wyraźnie zbliża się do specyficznej dla nowoczesności antropologii nieograniczonej. Tak jak w tej ostatniej, „natura, jako to, co przedosobowe w człowieku, pozbawiona zostaje istotnej moralnej rangi. Trudno się z nią nie liczyć, ale nie należy w jej prawidłowościach upatrywać wiążących wskazówek odnoszących się do — wcielonej w tę «naturę», tym niemniej radykalnie od niej różnej – osoby-wolności” [tamże: 52]. „Natura” oznacza tutaj prawa biologiczne, jak również społeczne czy kulturowe, które jednak człowiek może wykorzystać wedle swego uznania; w sposób odpowiadający jego „podstawowemu wyborowi: całościowo pojętej wizji samego siebie, swemu auto-projektowi” [tamże], będącemu jego osobistym sposobem umiłowania Boga. Miłość Boga bowiem, wedle Rahnera, ma ze swej istoty charakter „transcendentalny, podmiotowy,

a zarazem nieuchronnie twórczy, wolny, nieprzekładalny jednoznacznie na jakikolwiek program działań, który wyznaczałby konkretny, treściowo określony i konieczny sposób wielbienia Boga” [tamże: 51].

Powyższe twierdzenie oznacza, że związek wiary religijnej i obiektywnych wymogów życia moralnego zostaje tutaj *de facto* rozerwany. W konsekwencji kwestia Boga staje się w praktyce nieistotna dla ułożenia spraw ludzkich. Skoro rozumienie sensu i rangi tzw. treściowych ogólnych norm moralnych (takich jak: nie zabijaj, nie cudzołóż, nie kradnij) nie „wiąże” tutaj „osobowej wolności, respekt dla żadnej z nich nie stanowi koniecznego warunku wolnej samorealizacji podmiotu”, to znaczy, że żyjemy tak, jakby Boga nie było, nawet jeśli głęboko wierzymy, że jest. Przykładowo, wedle Rahnera, „poszanowanie życia – własnego lub innych – może być na ogół kategorycznym sposobem wyrażania fundamentalnego wyboru miłości Boga i bliźniego, ale nim być nie musi. I zależy to nie tylko od zewnętrznego układu sytuacyjnych warunków działania człowieka. Bardziej jeszcze zależy od sensu, jaki temu działaniu nada człowiek w imię swego wyboru podstawowego, z natury swej wymykającego się ocenie w świetle norm ogólnych” [tamże: 52]. W świetle powyżej naszkicowanej logiki, nie ma czynów obiektywnie ze swej istoty złych (*intrinsic malum*). To sam człowiek nadaje sens moralny swoim (nawet obiektywnie niegodziwym) działaniom. W konsekwencji człowiek staje się w tej antropologicznej logice autokreatorem, co ostatecznie lokuje to teologiczne myślenie w jednej linii z ateistyczną, nieograniczoną antropologią, wyjaśniając do pewnego stopnia popularność postulatów wyrosłych na obcym Kościołowi gruncie wśród jego pasterzy, teologów i wiernych.

Wydaje się zatem, że opisywany przez prof. Pawła Skibińskiego flirt z marksizmem lat 70. miał – by tak rzec – wypracowane podstawy teologiczne nie w jakichś pobocznych nurtach ówczesnej teologii, ale – by tak rzec – w jej mainstreamie. O skali popularności i znaczeniu tego typu nurtów myślenia w Kościele łatwo się przekonać, gdy weźmiemy pod uwagę, że jeszcze w 1993 r. św. Jan Paweł II napisał encyklikę *Veritatis splendor*, aby dać odpór próbom „globalnego i systematycznego zakwestionowania dziedzictwa doktryny moralnej opartej na określonych koncepcjach antropologicznych i etycznych” [Jan Paweł II 1996: 536]. Owe próby kwestionowania nauki Kościoła w samym Kościele wiązał Papież m.in. z tezą, że można „miłować Boga i bliźniego, nie przestrzegając [Bożych] przykazań w każdej sytuacji”, jak również z „rozpowszechnioną” opinią, „która poddaje w wątpliwość istnienie wewnętrznego i nierozzerwalnego związku pomiędzy wiarą a moralnością” [tamże]. Wbrew tym stanowiskom św. Jan

Paweł II przypominał katolicką naukę o „ściślejszej więzi między życiem wiecznym a przestrzeganiem Bożych przykazań”, które „są pierwszym, niezbędnym etapem drogi ku wolności” [tamże: 543-544], czy o istnieniu czynów wewnętrznie złych [tamże: 602-605].

### 3. Jan Paweł II i prawa człowieka

Profesor Skibiński zauważa, że „w polemice z systemem komunistycznym Jan Paweł II zaczął wykorzystywać kwestię obrony praw człowieka [...] Doszło do swoistego «ochrzczenia» laickiej koncepcji praw człowieka, pogłębianego w porównaniu do jego poprzedników” (s. 458). Wydaje się, iż ta teza wymaga pewnego doprecyzowania.

Idea praw człowieka – od czasów *breve Quod aliquantum* Piusa VI po Piusa XII – była w Kościele traktowana co najmniej z podejrzliwością. Ta opozycja jest dziś wyjaśniana, a jednocześnie relatywizowana, argumentami historycznymi. Na przykład Francesco Compagnoni twierdzi, że brutalne zniszczenie Kościoła przez Rewolucję utrudniło „papieżom odróżnienie treści, które były wartościowe, od intencji lub motywacji wrogich wartościom religijnym”. Wydaje się jednak, że sprzeciw Kościoła wobec praw człowieka miał zawsze ważne względy teoretyczne, a ściślej: teologiczne. Człowiek, zauważa E.W. Böckenförde, w Deklaracji Praw Człowieka i Obywatela, jest świecki i wyempancypowany z więzów religijnych [1994: 115], stając się celem dla siebie. W konsekwencji zajmuje miejsce Boga. Prawa człowieka u swych początków wiązały się więc z antropologicznym przewrotem, zrywającym nie tylko z doktryną grzechu pierworodnego, ale także z zależnością człowieka od Boga. Człowiek, w świetle ducha Rewolucji, nie był już postrzegany jako istota ograniczona, posiadająca swoją niezmienną, daną przez Boga naturę i skażona grzechem pierworodnym, ale jako istota nieskrępowana, o płynnej i indywidualistycznej naturze, uformowana wewnątrz przez procesy społeczne. Można powiedzieć, że zamiast *Homo sapiens* duch rewolucji chciał stworzyć zwierzęcego *Homo Deus*.

Sytuacja uległa pewnej zmianie po II wojnie światowej. W Powszechnej Deklaracji Praw Człowieka z 1948 r., na którą duży wpływ wywarła myśl Jacques'a Maritaina, można odkryć odmienne antropologiczne podstawy praw człowieka. Artykuł 1 Powszechnej Deklaracji przedstawia pojęcie człowieka, którego szczególnymi cechami są już nie tylko wolność i równość, ale także godność, rozum i sumienie. Istota ludzka jest tam zresztą postrzegana nie tylko jako byt indywidualny. Społeczny wymiar człowieka jest w swych fundamentach rozpoznawany. To

znacząca zmiana – prawo przestało być wyrazem nieco niejasnej „woli powszechnej”, jak głosiła Deklaracja z 1789 r. Staje się instrumentem ochrony obiektywnych dóbr ludzkich. Powyższa zmiana umożliwiła odczytanie praw człowieka w logice prawa naturalnego, rozumianego nie w sposób naturalistyczny, ale w taki sposób, który postrzega człowieka w odniesieniu do – przywołując frazę Rémi Brague’a – „tego, co wyższe”: porządku moralnego.

Była to duża i korzystna zmiana, otwierająca możliwość włączenia kwestii praw człowieka jako praw naturalnych, przyrodzonych do retoryki Kościoła. Tym niemniej, również Maritainowskie ujęcie budziło istotne zastrzeżenia Kościoła. Jak zwracał uwagę Pius XII w liście do prezydenta Trumana: „Proponuje się zapewnienie podstaw trwałego pokoju między narodami. Rzeczywiście daremne było obiecywanie długiego życia jakimkolwiek budynkom wzniesionym na ruchomych piaskach lub popękanej i rozpadającej się podstawie. Wiemy, że fundamenty takiego pokoju mogą być bezpieczne tylko wtedy, gdy opierają się na solidnej wierze w jedynego, prawdziwego Boga, Stwórcę wszystkich ludzi. To On z konieczności wyznaczył człowiekowi cel w życiu; to od Niego, z wynikającą z tego koniecznością, człowiek czerpie osobiste, nieodwołalne prawa do dążenia do tego celu i do nieskrępowanego osiągnięcia go... Gdy państwo, z wyłączeniem Boga, staje się źródłem praw osoby ludzkiej, człowiek zostaje natychmiast sprowadzony do statusu niewolnika, zwykłego obywatelskiego towaru, który ma być wykorzystywany do egoistycznych celów grupy który akurat ma moc” [1947]. Nieprzypadkowo po przyjęciu Powszechnej Deklaracji Praw Człowieka papież Pius XII nie odniósł się do niej już do końca swojego pontyfikatu.

Wydaje się zatem, że do czasów Jana XXIII nie doszło do pełnego „ochrzczenia” laickiej koncepcji praw człowieka. Również encyklika *Pacem in Terris* raczej w znacznym stopniu przyjęła laicką perspektywę, niejako nie podejmując problemów, które widziano wcześniej: z jednej strony indywidualistycznej logiki tych praw, z drugiej, braku odniesienia do Boga. Choć ma rację prof. Skibiński, pisząc, że „drogą, którą podążył w swej polemice z komunizmem i władzami komunistycznymi nowo wybrany Papież Jan Paweł II, było jednoznaczne i jasne upominanie się o prawa człowieka” [2022: 461], to zauważyć trzeba, że działo się tam coś jeszcze. Świecka forma praw człowieka, w jakiej zostały one sformułowane w 1948 roku, zasadnie wydawała się św. Janowi Pawłowi II racjonalnym ograniczeniem wobec wszechobecnych ideologicznych i praktycznych roszczeń państwa marksistowskiego. Ideę praw człowieka widział jako konkretną broń, oferującą nie tylko obszar wolności jednostki, ale przede wszystkim przestrzeń do obrony

wiary chrześcijan i praw Kościoła. Jednocześnie jednak, wyszedłszy od nowej antropologii praw człowieka przyjętej w 1948 r., Papież dokonywał reinterpretacji tych praw w sposób pomagający zniwelować zastrzeżenia swoich poprzedników.

Warto zauważyć, że szczególna uwaga poświęcana przez Jana Pawła II wolności sumienia, oprócz praktycznych powodów takiego podejścia, miała także swój głęboki sens teoretyczny. Nazywając wolność sumienia najbardziej niezbędną wolnością, a wolność religijną sercem praw człowieka, św. Jan Paweł II zapewnił także właściwe zrozumienie całego systemu praw człowieka, w którym – jak pisał w *Sollicitudo rei socialis* – chodziło o poszanowanie praw „opartych na transcendentnym powołaniu istoty ludzkiej”. Jego ujęcie praw człowieka wiązało je zatem z wizją człowieka jako istoty, która ostatecznie odkrywa swoją własną tożsamość w stosunku do Boga, który tylko jeden jest dobry i przemawia do człowieka w jego sumieniu. Nie było to sprzeczne z Powszechną Deklaracją Praw Człowieka z 1948 roku, ale stanowiło jej wyraźną, doprecyzowującą interpretację, niejako uwzględniającą zarzuty Piusa XII.

Podobnie, nieomal od początku swego pontyfikatu, Papież prowadził konsekwentną korektę indywidualistycznego nachylenia praw człowieka. Już w roku 1983, w kontekście Synodu o Rodzinie, opublikował Kartę Praw Rodziny, aby – jak stoi w preambule – wyrazić, kim jest człowiek i czym są wspólne wartości całego rodzaju ludzkiego. Wprost stwierdza się tam również, że „prawa w niej zawarte wypływają ostatecznie z tego prawa, które zostało wpisane przez Stwórcę w serce każdego człowieka”, spełniając niejako wezwanie z listu do Trumana.

Wydaje się, że warto mieć świadomość interpretacji praw człowieka dokonanej przez św. Jana Pawła II. Często bowiem mówi się o Janie Pawle II jako „Papieżu Praw Człowieka”. To prawda, ale tylko wówczas, gdy rozumiemy, czym się różnią prawa człowieka w ujęciu katolickim od praw człowieka w logice liberalnej. Jeśli ma rację Paweł Skibiński, że Jan Paweł II dokonał ich „ochrzcenia”, to trzeba to rozumieć konsekwentnie analogicznie. Chrzest czyni człowieka nowym stworzeniem w Chrystusie. Podobnie było z prawami człowieka – zostały one zreinterpretowane w sposób zgodny z chrześcijaństwem. Ułatwiła to ich nowa antropologia zaproponowana przez Maritaina, ale nie rozwiązywała ona jeszcze problemu. Tylko ta nowa, „ochrzczona” wersja praw człowieka może być traktowana jako element nauczania Kościoła. Oznacza to również, że jeśli ktoś – często nieostrożnie – traktuje jej liberalną interpretację jako część nauczania Jana Pawła II, to niewłaściwie zrozumie sens jego działania.



## Podsumowanie

Jak – mam nadzieję – w tym krótkim szkicu udało mi się wskazać, lektura najnowszej książki Pawła Skibińskiego nie tylko daje możliwość lepszego zrozumienia przeszłości, wyposażając nas w syntetyczne, ale głębokie spojrzenie na zmaganie Kościoła z totalitaryzmami. Wskazuje również ścieżki mogące pomóc czytelnikowi znaleźć odpowiedzi na pytania o jego dzisiejszą sytuację. Kwestie: czy – i na ile – w kontekście wojny na Ukrainie Kościół powraca do logiki *Ostpolitik*; czy tzw. nowy paradygmat katolicyzmu stanowi właściwy wyraz katolickiej teologii moralnej; czy prawa człowieka stanowią element nauczania doktrynalnego etc. – odsyłają bowiem ostatecznie również do pytania, czy i w jakim znaczeniu zmaganie z totalitaryzmami okazało się dla Kościoła formacyjnie istotne. Mówiąc inaczej: na ile Kościół zrozumiał swoją najnowszą historię. Nie ulega przy tym wątpliwości, że książka prof. Pawła Skibińskiego stanowi istotną pomoc w tym zrozumieniu.

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## *Czy jesteśmy świadkami narodzin nowego paradygmatu?*

**Sprawozdanie z międzynarodowej konferencji naukowej  
pt. *Religia i polityka w kontekście „epokowej zmiany”*.  
(25-26.11.2021)**

## *Are we witnessing the birth of a new paradigm?*

**Report on the international scientific conference  
Religion and politics in the context of “epochal change”.  
(25-26.11.2021)**

25-26 listopada 2021 r. na Uniwersytecie Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie odbyła się międzynarodowa konferencja naukowa pt. *Religia i polityka w kontekście „epokowej zmiany”*. *Czy jesteśmy świadkami narodzin nowego paradygmatu?* Wydarzenie to stanowiło trzecią odsłonę cyklu konferencji z zakresu politologii religii, których głównym organizatorem od kilku lat jest Instytut Nauk o Polityce i Administracji UKSW oraz Fundacja Europa Christiana im. św. Teresy Benedykty od Krzyża. Od 2017 r. konferencje owe stanowią największe tego typu przedsięwzięcie w Polsce, na którym badacze relacji polityki i religii mogą prezentować wyniki swoich badań oraz dzielić się z innymi uczestnikami własnymi refleksjami nad tym zjawiskiem. W streszczonej konferencji wzięło udział ponad 70 naukowców reprezentujących 32 ośrodki akademickie z Polski, Słowacji, Węgier, Serbii, Bośni i Hercegowiny, Ukrainy

Rumunii, Grecji, Niemiec, Austrii, Włoch, Stanów Zjednoczonych, Tanzanii oraz Indii. W centrum tegorocznych rozważań znalazło się pytanie dotyczące zmiany paradygmatu w relacjach religii i polityki, gdyż przyspieszająca w świecie zachodnim sekularyzacja sprowadziła ze sobą również próby redefinicji najbardziej podstawowych kategorii cywilizacyjnych, na które pierwotnie silnie oddziaływało chrześcijaństwo.

Wystąpienia prorektora UKSW ks. dr. hab. Marka Stokłosa, dziekana Wydziału Społeczno-Ekonomicznego UKSW dr. hab. Michała Gierycza i dyrektora Instytutu Nauk o Polityce i Administracji UKSW prof. Radosława Zenderowskiego otworzyły pierwszy dzień obrad oraz przybliżyły ideę konferencji. Następnie rozpoczęto pierwszy panel plenarny (prowadząca: dr hab. Jolanta Łodzińska, UKSW), którego głównym motywem było zagadnienie godności osoby ludzkiej w nauczaniu Kościoła katolickiego w kontekście trwającej „epokowej zmiany”. Panel rozpoczął się od wygłoszenia w języku angielskim referatu przez kard. Gerharda Müllera, byłego ordynariusza Ratyzbony i prefekta Kongregacji Nauki Wiary w latach 2012-2017. W dyskusji dotyczącej jego wystąpienia wzięli udział prof. Jan Grosfeld (UKSW), ks. prof. Piotr Mazurkiewicz (UKSW) oraz prof. Bogdan Szlachta (UJ). Na początku kard. Müller poruszył kwestię kryzysu autorytetu papieża i biskupów, którzy w czasach sekularyzacji powinni zadbać o jego odbudowanie – w związku z tym muszą pamiętać, że powszechna misja Kościoła katolickiego nie ogranicza się swym zasięgiem tylko do jego członków, ale do wszystkich ludzi, ponieważ oprócz autorytetu religijnego papież posiada autorytet moralny, poprzez który może oddziaływać poza obrębem Kościoła, zwłaszcza w nauczaniu na temat pokoju, godności każdego człowieka, sprawiedliwości i wolności sumienia. Kościół musi jednak wystrzegać się w swoim uniwersalnym przesłaniu zatracenia istoty Magisterium. Były prefekt Kongregacji Nauki Wiary w swoim przemówieniu przywołał słowa niemieckiego duchownego ewangelickiego i działacza antynazistowskiego ks. prof. Dietricha Bonhoeffera, który stwierdził, że „Kościół jest tylko wtedy Kościołem, gdy jest otwarty na innych”, „Kościół musi wyjść ze swojej stagnacji; musi wyjść na zewnątrz, by otworzyć się na prowadzenie dialogu ze współczesnym światem intelektualnym” oraz nie bać się zaryzykować i głosić niekiedy tezy kontrowersyjne, które zapoczątkują powszechną dyskusję nad problemami współczesności. W korespondencji ze słowami ks. Bonhoeffera pozostaje przesłanie konstytucji apostolskiej *Gaudium et spes*, w myśl której Kościół w imieniu wszystkich ludzi powinien stawać się partnerem w dyskusjach nad problemami cywilizacyjnymi, szczególnie w zakresie obrony praw człowieka lub w sprawach ochrony środowiska naturalnego, czego

wyrazem jest chociażby encyklika papieża Franciszka *Laudato si*. W sposób szczególnie Kościół katolicki powinien zaangażować się w ochronę przyrodzonej godności ludzkiej oraz w działalność charytatywną, której rozszerzenie postulował Benedykt XVI w swojej pierwszej papieskiej encyklice *Deus caritas est*. Aby jednak owe działania były skuteczne, konieczne jest, zdaniem kard. Gerharda Müllera, zadbanie o odpowiednie miejsce religii we współczesnym świecie i określenie jej roli w kształtowaniu moralności. W kolejnej części swoich rozważań prelegent skupił się na pojęciu „osoby”. Stwierdził, że „osoba ludzka to pewna rzeczywistość ontologiczna niepodlegająca redukcji” – w związku z tym szacunek do każdej osoby jest podstawą humanitarnego społeczeństwa, gwarantującą jego rozwój. Kościół katolicki, jako instytucja i wspólnota globalna, powinien starać się być orędownikiem praw człowieka w skali ogólnoswiatowej. Kościół ze swojej natury może pretendować do takiej roli, gdyż ma potencjał owe prawa gwarantować. Samo spisanie praw człowieka nie zapewnia ich powszechnego respektowania – potrzebne jest również kształtowanie w ludzkich sumieniach odpowiednich postaw wobec tych praw, a na to może wpływać Kościół. Dlatego Sobór Watykański II w swoim przesłaniu nakazał wiernym dostrzeganie w każdym bliźnim „drugiego samego siebie”, a więc postrzeganie bliźniego w sposób osobowy. Co więcej, nie tylko podtrzymywanie praw człowieka byłoby niemożliwe bez zachowania odpowiedniej koncepcji osoby ludzkiej, ale również praw obywatelskich w demokratycznym państwie. W ostatniej części swojego referatu kard. Müller wskazał dwie drogi, które jego zdaniem czekają świat: drogę postępu oraz drogę regresu. Droga postępu miałaby się w jego założeniu wiązać z uznaniem Boga jako gwaranta oraz źródła wolności osobowych i obywatelskich; droga regresu odrzuciłaby to założenie i sprowadzić może na ludzkość wiele nieszczęść.

Dyskusję nad wystąpieniem kard. Müller rozpoczęła moderatorka panelu, dr hab. Jolanta Łodzińska, która zadała pytanie, jak człowiek ma funkcjonować we świecie ponowoczesnym, który cechuje powszechna obecność lęku oraz niepewności? Próby odpowiedzi podjął się najpierw prof. Jan Grosfeld, który rozpoczął od przypomnienia słów kardynała dotyczących konieczności podtrzymywania filozofii życia głoszącej poszanowanie osoby ludzkiej na każdym etapie jej rozwoju – pomimo upływu czasu i zachodzących zmian Kościół powinien, jego zdaniem, trwać w głoszeniu tej filozofii. Następnie wskazał, iż u fundamentów filozofii życia leży judaizm, który w czasach antycznych doprowadził na Bliskim Wschodzie do zmiany rozumienia ludzkiego życia i uznania Boga za jego źródło, przewyższające zarówno śmierć biologiczną, jak i egzystencjalną, czyli tę dotyczącą ducha. Bóg nie był postrzegany jako tylko ludzka projekcja, ale jako byt osobowy, będący w stałym

kontakcie z narodem wybranym. Dzisiaj można zadać pytanie, czy takowy kontakt podtrzymują współcześni chrześcijanie? Zdaniem prof. Grosfelda ta łączność jest zachwiana, w związku z czym głoszenie przez chrześcijan filozofii życia również należy uznać za niekompletne. Kościół katolicki, w jego opinii, musi w czasach postmodernistycznych nieść nadzieję na życie wieczne i być otwartym na ludzi doświadczonych przez wszechobecną samotność i strach. Jednocześnie podkreślił, że do tych osób nie można przemawiać za pośrednictwem odwołań do moralności i zasad wiary, ponieważ współcześnie ta retoryka nie przynosi pozytywnego skutku. Postuluje, by Kościół kierował do ludzi przekaz dotyczący ich bezpośrednich problemów – w jego ocenie podjęta przez papieża Franciszka droga synodalna może stanowić właściwy kierunek zmian w retoryce Kościoła. Jako kolejny głos zabrał ks. prof. Piotr Mazurkiewicz – powiedział on, iż tak jak judaizm doprowadził do rewolucji w postrzeganiu Boga, tak starożytne chrześcijaństwo spowodowało rewolucję antropologiczną w postrzeganiu człowieka. Głosiło ono, iż każdy człowiek posiada przyrodzoną godność, co zacierało różnice między ludźmi – co więcej, Bóg dokonał ubóstwienia człowieka poprzez wcielenie Jezusa Chrystusa. Następnie, ks. prof. Mazurkiewicz przypomniał, iż według doktryny katolickiej człowiek jest stworzony na podobieństwo Boga, co stanowić powinno solidny fundament dla definiowania praw człowieka. Próby zamachu na to stwierdzenie dokonała rewolucja francuska, która w preambule Powszechnej Deklaracji Praw Człowieka usunęła wzmiankę o boskim pochodzeniu zawartych w niej praw na rzecz odwołania się do bliżej niesprecyzowanego absolutu. Nawiązując do tego faktu, dyskutant wskazał, że współczesne państwa poprzez usuwanie religii z przestrzeni publicznej dążą do monopolizacji w sferze etyki, którą miałyby nakreślać prawo stanowiące w oderwaniu od prawa naturalnego. Niektóre państwa, dostrzegając osłabianie się wspólnot religijnych, próbują zająć ich miejsce i zagospodarować według własnych zasad (takiego działania dopuściła się rewolucyjna Francja) – stwierdzenie to stanowiło przywołanie poglądów Erica Voegelina. Ostatnim dyskutantem był prof. Bogdan Szlachta który wskazał, że współczesna liberalna demokracja nie dąży do poznania obiektywnej prawdy, lecz stanowi pole zmagania poglądowych w wyniku których słabsza strona zawsze musi podporządkować się stronie silniejszej. Dodał również, że w czasach ponowoczesnych doszło do szkodliwej sytuacji w której zredukowano człowieka będącego osobą polityczną do bytu jedynie materialnego, a więc z wyłączeniem jego duchowości. W związku z tym nastąpił rozkład wspólnego ładu normatywnego oraz relatywistyczne pojmowanie praw człowieka.

Po pierwszym panelu plenarnym przyszedł czas na pięć paneli równoległych poświęconych określonym tematom. Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje pierwszy

panel równoległy (prowadzący: dr hab. Sławomir Sowiński, UKSW), w trakcie którego uczestnicy konferencji pochyłili się nad problemem relacji dwóch nauk: teologii i politologii. Jako pierwszy swój referat przedstawił dr hab. Aleksander Stępkowski (UW), który omawiał teologiczne podstawy zachodniej kultury intelektualnej ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem ich wpływu na kulturę prawną. Ponadto wskazał, że niektóre współczesne nurty filozofii prawa dążą do zerwania z transcendentnymi korzeniami kultury zachodniej. Po nim swój referat w języku angielskim wygłosił dr Tamás Nyirkos (Narodowy Uniwersytet Spraw Publicznych w Budapeszcie), który podjął się próby odpowiedzi na pytania o to, czym jest religia świecka oraz czy istnieje jedna czy raczej wiele świeckich religii. We wnioskach dr Nyirkos wskazał na mnogość religii świeckich (które są bardzo dynamiczne we współczesnych czasach), jednak dodał, że w tym pluralizmie odnaleźć można wiele wspólnych cech łączących różne nurty *quasi*-religijne. Podkreślił również, że obecnie formę świeckich religii przybierają skrajne ideologie polityczne oraz niektóre wielkie ruchy społeczne. Kolejny referat zaprezentował dr hab. Piotr Grabowiec (UWr), który przybliżył słuchaczom swój krytyczny stosunek do idei transhumanizmu, będącej częścią współczesnej biopolityki. Wskazał, że urzeczywistnianie postulatów transhumanizmu stanowić może kres człowieczeństwa w rozumieniu klasycznym (proces ten został określony przez mówcę mianem „biopolityki kresu”). Czwarte wystąpienie, autorstwa dr. hab. Cezarego Kościelniaka (UAM), ukazało nowe perspektywy dla teologii politycznej, badającej zmienność relacji religii i polityki. Za punkt wyjścia dla swojej refleksji Cezary Kościelniak obrał trzy nurty teologii politycznej, które powstały w XX stuleciu, czyli projekt Carla Schmitta, teologię wyzwolenia oraz nową teologię polityczną, której twórcą był Johann Baptista Metz (zaakcentowano szczególnie znaczenie tej ostatniej). Autor wystąpienia wskazał na konflikt zachodzący między religią i polityką, której konsekwencją jest marginalizowanie religii w dyskursie publicznym – w związku z tym teologia polityczna musi ewoluować, aby dostosować się do aktualnych okoliczności i potrzeb. Dr hab. Kościelniak zaproponował nowy aksjomat, który opisał hasłem „Chrystus poza systemem politycznym” – teologia polityczna powinna postarać się wykreować swoją własną, nową świadomość oddziaływania. Musi być również gotowa, by znaleźć swoją odpowiedź w trwającym sporze o nową polityczność. Jako ostatni głos zabrał ks. dr hab. Karol Jasiński (UWM), który powrócił do tematu współczesnych religii świeckich, a konkretnie do analizy jednego z jej nurtów, tj. The Church of Google. „Googlizm” jest internetowym fenomenem *quasi*-religijnym, którego początki sięgają 2019 r. – jego główną ideą jest przekonanie, iż przeglądarka internetowa Google stanowi tak ważną część współczesnej kultury, że można jej przypisywać

cechy boskie. Pomimo tego, twórcy Kościoła Google traktują swoją inicjatywę jako formę parodii religii mającą na celu ośmieszenie tradycyjnych form sprawowania kultu, religijności oraz przeżywania wiary. Pozostałe panele równolegle poświęcone były aksjologii współczesnej cywilizacji zachodniej, teoretycznym problemom relacji polityki z religią, miejscu religii w czasach pandemii COVID-19 oraz jej roli w procesach tworzenia tożsamości poszczególnych narodów i grup społecznych.

Popołudniowy panel plenarny poświęcony był zagadnieniu relacji polityki i religii w Europie Środkowej (prowadząca: dr hab. Joanna Kulska, UO). W gronie panelistów znajdowali się kard. Gerhard Müller, dr Monika Gabriela Bartoszewicz (Uniwersytet Masaryka w Brnie), dr Tamás Nyirkos i prof. Radosław Zenderowski (UKSW). Panel miał formę dyskusji (pytania od moderatorki i następujące po nich krótkie odpowiedzi dyskutantów). Pierwsze pytanie dotyczyło ogólnej charakterystyki regionu Europy Środkowej oraz tego, jakie podobieństwa i różnice istnieją między narodami tej części kontynentu w warstwie aksjologicznej. Dr Bartoszewicz stwierdziła, że narody Europy Środkowej po upadku bloku wschodniego „powróciły do Europy”. Ich cechą wspólną okazała się kruchość postaw religijnych jej młodych mieszkańców, u których proces odchodzenia od religii jest bardzo szybki, pomimo odgrywania przez stulecia istotnej roli religii w życiu publicznym państw Europy Środkowej. Prof. Zenderowski zauważył, że pojęcia takie jak „Wschód” i „Zachód” mogą być silnie wartościujące. Przywołał również dwa sposoby rozumienia pojęcia „Europy Środkowej”, których autorami są Milan Kundera (Europa Środkowa jako kraje bloku wschodniego najbardziej wysunięte na zachód, dotknięte swoistą tragedią geopolityczną) i Jan Paweł II (Europa Środkowa jako miejsce spotkania chrześcijaństwa zachodniego i wschodniego). Dodał również, że traumatyczne doświadczenie utraty własnej państwowości jest charakterystyczne dla większości narodów Europy Środkowej oraz to, że instytucją podtrzymującą ducha narodowego był wszędzie Kościół (w zależności od narodu był to Kościół katolicki, prawosławny lub ewangelicki). Tamás Nyirkos zwrócił uwagę, że w średniowieczu idea środkowoeuropejskości na Węgrzech była nieobecna – w epoce nowożytnej wykreował się tam pogląd głoszący, że Królestwo Węgier jest bytem osamotnionym, który znajduje się pomiędzy światami zachodnim a wschodnim. Odrębność wzmacniały różnice językowe istniejące między językami słowiańskimi i węgierskim. Niewątpliwie tożsamość środkowoeuropejską na Węgrzech wzmocniło doświadczenie komunizmu w XX wieku – wówczas Węgrzy poczuli silniejszą więź z narodami słowiańskimi, które były również częścią bloku wschodniego. Zdaniem kard. Müllera antropologiczne wizje człowieka w ujęciu Unii Europejskiej i narodów Europy Środkowej zaczynają



się coraz bardziej różnić – owy spór o człowieka stać się może istotnym elementem zbliżania się do siebie państw tej części Europy. Drugie pytanie dotyczyło bilansu zysków i strat przenikania się religii i polityki w Europie Środkowej. W ujęciu Moniki Gabrieli Bartoszewicz dzięki integracji europejskiej w krajach Europy Środkowej powoli zanika kompleks niższości wobec Zachodu – Unia Europejska stara się być wspólnotą wartości, jednak proces kreowania tej wspólnoty jest dość trudny ze względu na różnice kulturowe między Europą Zachodnią a Europą Środkową i Wschodnią, wynikające również z odmiennego stosunku do religii. Dr Nyirkos wskazał, że niektóre tradycyjne formy religijności są powiązane z tradycją narodową. Prof. Zenderowski przywołał wyniki badań w którym zapytano Europejczyków o to, czy Europa jest kontynentem kulturowym? – pozytywnie na to pytanie odpowiedziało ponad 80% mieszkańców Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej i jedynie co czwarty mieszkaniec zachodniej części kontynentu europejskiego, co determinowane jest m.in. rolą religii w poszczególnych społeczeństwach. Dyrektor Instytutu Nauk o Polityce i Administracji UKSW podkreślił również istotne znaczenie religii w życiu środkowoeuropejskich mniejszości narodowych, takich jak siedmiogrodzcy Węgrzy i Sasi. W podsumowaniu debaty kard. Müller przywołał koncepcję narodu Jana Pawła II w którym kluczowe miejsce zajmowały pojęcie tożsamości oraz wspólnoty.

Po tym panelu nastąpiły kolejne panele równoległe, które poświęcone były studiom przypadków w relacjach polityki i religii, roli religii we współczesnych stosunkach międzynarodowych oraz sprawie polskiej w dobie zachodzących przełomowych dla świata zmian.

Drugi dzień konferencji zapoczątkował panel promocyjny III tomu „Opera Omnia” Josepha Ratzingera (papieża Benedykta XVI) pt. *Bóg wiary a Bóg filozofów*. Swojego komentarza dotyczącego zbioru rozważań papieża emeryta udzielili prof. Krzysztof Gózdź (KUL) i kard. Gerhard Müller. Moderatorem panelu był przedstawiciel UKSW prof. Zbigniew Stawrowski. Prof. Gózdź zwrócił uwagę na szczególne wyróżnienie w tym tomie przez Ratzingera nauczania św. Augustyna dotyczącego dwóch państw (Państwa Bożego – *civitas dei*; i państwa ziemskiego – *civitas terrena*). Taki podział jest widoczny np. w relacji Bóg (wiara) – Europa. Mogłoby to obrazować tytułowe rozważania na temat sporu między Bogiem wiary a Bogiem filozofów. Ratzinger, jak zauważa prof. Gózdź, dostrzega ten spór, ale tylko w wymiarze dwóch natur w jednej osobie, jednocześnie przyjmując prymat wiary. Ponadto podkreśla europejskie dziedzictwo, oparte na dwóch fundamentach, a więc wierze chrześcijańskiej i greckiej filozofii. Także i tutaj te dwie sfery się

przenikają i oddziałują na siebie. Przywołane zostały słowa francuskiego uczonego Blaise'a Pascala, który stwierdził że: „Bóg wiary różni się od Boga filozofów i uczonych, gdyż mamy tu do czynienia z doświadczeniem Boga żywego w wierze chrześcijańskiej oraz Boga teoretycznego w myśli filozoficznej”, podczas gdy np. u Immanuela Kanta Bóg wiary i Bóg filozofów zostali sobie przeciwstawieni. Takie podejście, jak zauważa Ratzinger, stałoby jednak w sprzeczności z podstawową prawdą wiary – monoteizmem.

Drugi z gości, kard. Gerhard Müller, podkreślił, że rozum pochodzi od Boga i bierze udział w jego dziele (logos). Uwypuklony został także całociowy dorobek Benedykta XVI, w tym między innymi wspólna książka-polemika z niemieckim filozofem szkoły frankfurckiej Jürgenem Habermasem, co pozycjonuje Ratzingera w gronie najważniejszych myślicieli XX i początku XXI wieku. Refleksje Ratzingera można uznać za przeciwwagę dla lewicowych i areligijnych poglądów filozoficznych charakterystycznych dla późnej nowoczesności. Kard. Müller uznał też polskie przekłady dzieł Benedykta XVI za oddające najwierniej treść oryginałów i istotę współczesnej niemieckiej filozofii. Na zakończenie panelu odbyło się przekazanie egzemplarzy promowanego III tomu „Opera Omnia” na ręce dziekana Wydziału Społeczno-Ekonomicznego UKSW dr. hab. Michała Gierycza oraz wręczenie kard. Gerhardowi Müllerowi nagrody Stowarzyszenia Wydawców Katolickich „Feniks 2021” w kategorii „Publicystyka religijna” za pracę *Wiara w Boga we współczesnym świecie*.

Po tym panelu konferencja ponownie została podzielona na cztery panele równoległe. Pierwszy z nich dotyczył kwestii islamu w „epokowej zmianie”. Gościli na nim, oprócz naukowców z UKSW, UMCS i Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, także przedstawiciele zagranicznych ośrodków uniwersyteckich z Bośni i Hercegowiny, Austrii oraz Niemiec. Temat drugiego panelu równoległego brzmiał: *Religion and Politics – Case Studies*. Trzeci panel był zatytułowany: *Między Janem Pawłem II a Franciszkiem*. Ostatni z paneli równoległych dotyczył chrześcijaństwa na wschodzie i południu Europy.

Ostatni z zaplanowanych na tej konferencji paneli zajmował się teorią „wielkiego resetu” i jego związku z organizacjami międzynarodowymi. W tej części wykład wprowadzający przeprowadziła prof. Jane Adolphe z Ave Maria Law School ze Stanów Zjednoczonych. Temat wykładu brzmiał: *Narody Zjednoczone, globalny reset i religia*. Prof. Adolphe podzieliła swoją wypowiedź na cztery części. W pierwszej omówiła system Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych. Profesorka zwróciła

uwagę na coraz częściej pojawiający się lewicowy charakter wielu działań tej organizacji. ONZ skupia coraz więcej energii i środków na działania takie jak promowanie idei neomaltuzjańskich, budzących wątpliwości, a czasem nawet sprzeciw wielu bardziej przywiązanych do wartości religijnych krajów (oprócz Stolicy Apostolskiej i krajów, gdzie religia chrześcijańska odgrywa ważną rolę, podobne zdanie na temat tych zagadnień mają kraje muzułmańskie, na co zwróciła uwagę prof. Adolphe). W drugiej części przybliżona została kwestia „globalnego resetu” w kontekście pandemii koronawirusa. Temat ten pojawił się w związku z wydaną w 2021 r. książką założyciela Światowego Forum Ekonomicznego, Klausa Schwaba, zatytułowaną, *COVID-19. Wielki Reset*. Dotyczy ona tego jak mógłby wyglądać zredefiniowany świat postpandemiczny. Prof. Adolphe zwróciła uwagę, że w takich okolicznościach mogłyby być zagrożone takie prawa i swobody obywatelskie jak wolność do postępowania w zgodzie z własną religią czy decydowanie o sobie samym. Trzecia część stanowiła rozważania na temat roli religii. W kontekście Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych prof. Adolphe zwróciła uwagę, że bardzo ważna jest aktywność papieża jako głowy Stolicy Apostolskiej, która jest stałym obserwatorem przy ONZ. W ostatniej części wykładu prof. Adolphe podsumowała swoje wystąpienie.

Panelistami komentującymi wykład prof. Adolphe byli przedstawiciele UW: prof. Tomasz Grosse, dr hab. Michał Łuczewski oraz dr hab. Aleksander Stępkowski. Pierwszy głos zabrał prof. Grosse, który zwrócił uwagę na analogię działań pomiędzy ONZ, a inną organizacją międzynarodową, którą jest Unia Europejska, w której zdaniem profesora mamy do czynienia z rosnącą lewicową ideologizacją instytucji europejskich. Problemem w realiach zideologizowanego sporu jest brak miejsca na dialog i konstruktywną dyskusję nad spornymi kwestiami, co w skrajnych przypadkach prowadzi do prób stworzenia utopii. Takie działania mogą nie tylko nie odnieść pożądanego skutku, ale też doprowadzić do, niebranych pod uwagę wcześniej, negatywnych konsekwencji, bardzo często dotyczących najsłabszych. Drugi z panelistów, dr hab. Michał Łuczewski, przywołał, w odniesieniu do kontrowersyjnych działań stosowanych przez ONZ, termin „cywilizacji śmierci”, którego używał papież Jan Paweł II. Przywołał również koncepcję kozła ofiarnego, twierdzącą, że po kryzysie, by wrócić do stanu równowagi, należy znaleźć obiekt służący do wyładowania zbiorowej agresji. Ostatni z komentujących, dr hab. Aleksander Stępkowski, przeanalizował przesłanki antropologiczne pojawiające się w wykładzie prof. Adolphe i podkreślił często zbyt indywidualistyczne podejście do koncepcji człowieka, które niekiedy płynnie także ze strony Kościoła. Jeden z obecnych na

auli słuchaczy poruszył zagadnienie, o którym mówiła prof. Adolphe, a mianowicie rosnącej roli Chin w międzynarodowej polityce, w tym także na forum ONZ, co byłoby skutkiem słabnącej roli USA i zmiany świata z pozycji jednobiegunowej na wielobiegunowy.

Na zakończenie konferencji krótkiego jej podsumowania dokonał Przewodniczący Komitetu Organizacyjnego dr hab. Michał Gierycz. Podziękował osobom, które w znaczący sposób pomogły w organizacji konferencji: Michałowi Kmieciowi – sekretarzowi konferencji, a także Patrycji Laszuk – odpowiedzialnej za kontakt z zewnętrznymi instytucjami zaangażowanymi w konferencję. Podziękował też panelistom oraz słuchaczom za uczestnictwo w obradach. Podziękowania zostały także skierowane do fundacji, które wsparły konferencję, tj. Fundacji KGHM i Fundacji Europa Christiana.

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**Sprawozdanie z konferencji***Świętego Jana Pawła II dziedzictwo  
prawa naturalnego i międzynarodowych  
praw człowieka. Ku stuleciu perswazji***Report on the international scientific conference***St. John Paul II's Natural Law Legacy  
& International Human Rights:  
Toward A Century Of Persuasion***(18-19.05.2022)**

18-19 maja 2022 r. na Uniwersytecie Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie odbyła się we współpracy z amerykańskim uniwersytetem Ave Maria School of Law (Floryda) międzynarodowa konferencja naukowa zatytułowana *Świętego Jana Pawła II dziedzictwo prawa naturalnego i międzynarodowych praw człowieka. Ku stuleciu perswazji*. Jej przewodnim motywem było ukazanie myśli i spuścizny Ojca Świętego związanych z tematem prawa naturalnego i praw człowieka oraz ich relacji z nauką Kościoła. Konferencja rozpoczęła się w 102. rocznicę urodzin papieża.

Konferencję modlitwą rozpoczął Jego Eminencja kard. Kazimierz Nycz, który następnie skierował do uczestników konferencji przemówienie. Zwrócił w nim uwagę m.in. na to, jak istotne jest podkreślanie godności jako fundamentu praw człowieka, zwłaszcza w czasie agresji Rosji na Ukrainę oraz w kontekście sporów dotyczących początku i końca życia człowieka (spór o aborcję m.in. w Polsce

i Stanach Zjednoczonych oraz o eutanazję). Kardynał przedstawił nauczanie papieża dotyczące tych kwestii, a wyrażonych *explicite* w pierwszej jego encyklice *Redemptor hominis*. Przypomniał też wystąpienie Jana Pawła II na Zgromadzeniu Ogólnym ONZ w 1995 r., kiedy to papież w czasie trwającej wojny na Bałkanach zaznaczył, jak ważne jest respektowanie wcześniej wspomnianych praw. Na koniec Jego Eminencja podziękował za zorganizowanie i uczestnictwo w konferencji oraz za poruszenia tak ważnych i bieżących tematów, a także za pogłębioną analizę dziedzictwa Jana Pawła II. Następnie głos zabrali dziekan Wydziału Społeczno-Ekonomicznego prof. Michał Gierycz i dziekan Ave Maria School of Law prof. John Czarnetzky, którzy podziękowali za uczestnictwo i krótko zarysowali kwestie poruszane na konferencji. John Czarnetzky w swoim wystąpieniu wspomniął także na dziedzictwo francuskiego filozofa Jacques'a Maritaina, jednego z przedstawicieli chrześcijańskiego personalizmu. Michał Gierycz z kolei wskazał na zagrożenie, jakim jest pojmowanie prawa naturalnego jedynie jako elementu wiary katolickiej, a nie szeroko rozumianej etyki opartej na racjonalnym namyśle. Powszechne rozumienie i argumentowanie praw człowieka zmieniało się na przestrzeni lat. Wymienione zostały chociażby Deklaracja Praw Człowieka i Obywatela z 1789 r. i Powszechna Deklaracja Praw Człowieka z 1948 r. – do obydwu dokumentów odwoływał się w swoim nauczaniu Jan Paweł II. Prof. Gierycz wskazał też na ważny antropologiczny charakter rozumienia człowieczeństwa w kontekście praw człowieka.

Konferencja została podzielona na sześć sesji tematycznych. Część uczestników brała udział w konferencji w trybie zdalnym. Po każdej części zaplanowany został czas na dyskusję i pytania do referenta.

Wystąpienie dotyczące konstytucjonalizmu wygłosił prof. Adrian Vermeule z Harvard Law School. Przedstawił w nim problem dwojakiego podejścia do stanowienia i interpretowania prawa: liberalne, luźno odnoszące się do treści, a skupiające się na szerokim interpretowaniu przepisów, które określił mianem *legal liberalism*; oraz konserwatywne rozumienie prawa. Jest to problem bardzo wyraźny w sądownictwie amerykańskim, uwidaczniający się zwłaszcza w podziale sędziów amerykańskiego Sądu Najwyższego. Innym aspektem prawnym poruszo- nym w jego wystąpieniu był podział prawa na dwa rodzaje: *lex* i *ius*.

Następnie rozpoczął się pierwszy panel konferencji. Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje tutaj wystąpienie prof. Wojciecha Roszkowskiego, który poddał porównaniu dwa zbrodnicze systemy totalitarne XX wieku – komunizm i nazizm. Przedstawione zostały szczególne podejście Jana Pawła II do ustrojów totalitarnych, co wiązało

się z wojennymi doświadczeniami życia młodego Karola Wojtyły w systemie wrogim zarówno nauczaniu Kościoła, jak i przestrzeganiu praw człowieka. Swoje doświadczenia z zagrożeniem, jakie niosą totalitaryzmy, papież zawarł w encyklice *Centesimus annus*. W konkluzji prof. Roszkowski stwierdził, że nie da się hierarchizować ustrojów z gruntu złych, a raczej powinno się je stawiać obok siebie jako zagrożenie we współczesnym świecie. Oprócz prof. Roszkowskiego w panelu swoje wystąpienia przedstawił także m.in. Ron Rychlak z University of Mississippi School of Law, który przeanalizował wystąpienia Jana Pawła II w ONZ (z 1979 i 1995 roku).

UKSW reprezentowali, występując z referatami, prof. Zbigniew Stawrowski i ks. prof. Piotr Mazurkiewicz. Pierwszy z nich przybliżył koncepcje prawa naturalnego na dwóch różnych od siebie płaszczyznach uzasadnienia: racjonalistycznej oraz opartej na wierze i Piśmie Świętym. Przykładem klasycznego podejścia do prawa naturalnego przedstawionym w tym wystąpieniu była myśl św. Tomasza z Akwinu z jego uzasadnieniem wynikania dobrego prawa „ludzkiego” z prawa „wiecznego”. Przeciwwstawiony został mu Immanuel Kant, ze swoją koncepcją wolności rozumianej w kategoriach autonomii od innych ludzi i wszystkich innych możliwych czynników wpływających na człowieka. Prof. Stawrowski wskazał znaczenie obydwu jako mogących docierać do wszystkich ludzi, także osób niewierzących. Tak też odnosił się do problemu Jan Paweł II, czerpiąc z obu koncepcji. Natomiast ks. prof. Mazurkiewicz omówił różnice między liberalnym a chrześcijańskim rozumieniem praw człowieka. Wyszedł jednak z podstawowego założenia, że liberalizm zmieniał się na przestrzeni dziesięcioleci: początkowo podkreślał wolność w wielu aspektach (w tym też tę religijną), był ujmowany głównie w kontekście ekonomicznym, jednak potem zaczął postrzegać wolność także w jej aspekcie negatywnym. Jako wady liberalizmu prelegent wymienił m.in. brak odniesień do wiary i Boga, co może mieć fundamentalne konsekwencje w kontekście prawa naturalnego i praw człowieka; wynoszenie indywidualizmu ponad jakiegokolwiek wspólnoty; brak określenia podstawowych obowiązków ciążących na człowieku wobec innych oraz możliwość nadużywania tej idei w różnych jej interpretacjach.

Drugi dzień obrad otworzył kard. Willem Eijk z wystąpieniem *Prawa człowieka w zsekularyzowanym społeczeństwie*. Przypomniał on dziedzictwo szkoły z Salamanki oraz wpływ pokoju westfalskiego na prawo międzynarodowe (suwerenność westfalska). Ponowna refleksja dotycząca poszanowania praw człowieka wiązała się z załamaniem porządku światowego w pierwszej połowie



XX wieku. Ważną konsekwencją tego procesu stanowiła Powszechna Deklaracja Praw Człowieka z 1948 r. Również Kościół pozostawał aktywnym uczestnikiem tych wydarzeń. Jako przykłady wspomniano encyklikę papieża Jana XXIII, *Pacem in terris* z 1963 r. i postanowienia Soboru Watykańskiego II. Jednak rewolucyjną zmianę w kontekście człowieka i jego wolności oraz rozumienia jego praw przyniósł przełom lat 60. i 70. XX wieku – to wtedy na Zachodzie rozprzestrzeniły się idee rewolucji seksualnej. To także wtedy uwidocznił się proces sekularyzacji tamtejszych społeczeństw oraz postępujący relatywizm moralny. Kardynał Eijk przedstawił także stanowisko Jana Pawła II wobec zachodzących zmian w zachodnich społeczeństwach.

Następnie wystąpienie pt. *O granicach prawa naturalnego i cnotach prawa objawionego*, wygłosił prof. Joseph Weiler. Przedstawił on kwestie istnienia praw i norm obowiązujących wśród osób wierzących, natomiast nieodzwierciedlających się w prawie stanowionym ani niebędących dla niego inspiracją. Często są to normy wstrzymujące określone działania, czyli będące swego rodzaju samoograniczeniem, niewynikające z zagrożenia karą ze strony państwa.

W pierwszym panelu drugiego dnia konferencji swój referat wygłosił m.in. rektor Collegium Intermarium Bartosz Lewandowski. Przedstawił on w nim rolę, jaką odgrywa w polskiej konstytucji pojęcie godności człowieka. Co znamienne, już w preambule Konstytucji Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z 1997 r. znajduje się podkreślenie roli uniwersalnych wartości i przyrodzonej godności człowieka, która nie może być ograniczana nawet w stanach wyjątkowych. Podkreślają to zawarte w art. 30. Konstytucji RP przymioty, jakimi godność została określona, a więc: „przyrodzona”, „niezbywalna” i „nienaruszalna”. Idea poszanowania godności człowieka w polskim systemie prawnym III Rzeczypospolitej była widoczna już przed uchwaleniem Konstytucji RP w wyrokach i uzasadnieniach wyroków Trybunału Konstytucyjnego. Konkludując, można stwierdzić, że polska konstytucja jest pod względem rozumienia godności człowieka w dużym stopniu zbieżna z nauką Jana Pawła II.

Referaty wygłosili także m.in. sędzia Sądu Najwyższego prof. Aleksander Stępkowski, były sędzią Trybunału Praw Człowieka w Strasburgu Javier Borrego czy były Specjalny Wysłannik Komisji Europejskiej ds. propagowania wolności religii lub przekonań poza UE Jan Figel.

W kolejnym panelu o działaniach Kościoła katolickiego na Łotwie na rzecz poszanowania praw i godności wynikających z nauki Kościoła mówił abp Zbigniew

Stankiewicz. Łotewski episkopat – pomimo że katolicy w tym kraju stanowią mniejszość w stosunku do ateistów i protestantów – bardzo aktywnie uczestniczył w debacie publicznej dotyczącej aborcji i kontrowersji wokół fragmentów Konwencji Stambulskiej. Efektem dialogu z innymi środowiskami było nieratyfikowanie tej konwencji przez Łotwę. Działania związków wyznaniowych (między innymi katolików i prawosławnych) pozwoliły także odnotować wyraźny spadek aborcji dokonywanych na Łotwie na przestrzeni ostatnich 20 lat.

Konferencję zamknęli dr hab. Michał Gierycz, prof. UKSW, i prof. John Czarnetzky. Podczas swoich wystąpień podsumowujących podziękowali oni zarówno osobom odpowiedzialnym za organizację konferencji, jak i wszystkim jej uczestnikom. Dziekan Ave Maria School of Law przytoczył zdanie wypowiedziane w 1995 r. przez Jana Pawła II podczas jego podróży apostołskiej do USA: że to „Jezus Chrystus jest odpowiedzią na pytanie, jakie stawia życie każdego człowieka”. Natomiast dziekan Wydziału Społeczno-Ekonomicznego UKSW podkreślił, jak wiele środowisk z całego świata połączył temat konferencji. Pomimo barier kulturowych, a nawet religijnych, udało się stworzyć wspólnotę myśli zarówno pod kątem intelektualnym, jak i w aspekcie duchowym.