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## MORAL ASSISTANCE OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE IN THE PROCESS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

In the public discourse of the last two decades it was assumed and accepted that the societies of Central and Eastern Europe had been liberated from the totalitarian shackle and managed to happily find themselves amongst the states of the European West (to put it simply)<sup>1</sup>. However, the more profound geopolitical and economic studies, especially the examination of post-communist moral condition of those very societies seem to clearly and undeniably prove the real condition of both Central and Eastern part of the EU member states. They still have a long way to reach both mature civil awareness and their members' responsible moral attitudes, as well as full stability of parliamentary democracy and fully developed state of law (as regards the legal procedure), strong in its structure and functioning. It is also hard to argue that they are still, after more than two decades, in the state of transformation, be it structural, political, economic or other. Surely, in those national and state post-communist communities of Eastern and Central Europe there has been shaped – in various forms, of course – a rather vague kind of a hybrid system created on the bases of old nomenclature and certain part of old “opposition” (won over either ideologically or through dependence)<sup>2</sup><sup>3</sup>. The above, however, would require some more reliable studies and research, which in view

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<sup>1</sup> I thus (in simple terms) recall the undertones of media slogans or political discourse.

<sup>2</sup> I understand the above issue in the following way: surely, the factor that destabilizes consequent shaping of the nation's sense of identity and practical shaping of the nation's identity in efficient state structures turns out to be a blend of different post-totalitarian elements and conditionings, which entangles and stifles Polish public scene. Those are post-communist circles and untransformed after the year 1990 labour circles, which keep forming different alliances with one another and also with a part of post-solidarity circles – non-uniform in their shape, too. The intensity of cooperation between competing post-solidarity circles ready to work with post-communist groups leads to blurring of historical truth and ruining the vision of an independent state. It is noteworthy that the Polish public scene in the XXI century is dominated by power struggle as far as social and political interest is concerned. It at the same time ruins the necessary public debate about the understanding of what is national and social interest (cf. J. KURTYKA, *Przedmowa*, in: S. CENCKIEWICZ, P. GONTARCZYK, *SB a Lech Wałęsa. Przyczynek do biografii*, Gdańsk – Warszawa – Kraków 2008, 14–15).

of communism (People's Republic of Poland's version of real socialism) secessionists' domination does not yet seem feasible.

There is absolutely no doubt that the factor of almost two decades of not fully satisfying transformations after the year 1989, and even more so the former exhaustion of both moral resources and production materials (to put it simply) retarded the Central- and Eastern-European societies in comparison to their Western counterparts. All things considered, as the so-called "faraway" societies (away from the West, that is)<sup>4</sup> or referred to as those from "beyond the iron curtain", they are neither equal, nor even comparable to the societies of the European West – not only regarding their democratic functioning, but also when it comes to the statistical affluence of their citizens. Unfortunately, they stay way behind the stable Western-European state structures, their perfectly shaped diplomatic, public administration or parliamentary decorum, etc. Social hierarchy and the level of civilizational culture seem to only confirm and further deepen the inequality between them.

Undoubtedly, however, we cannot condemn Central and Eastern European countries and subject them to criticism only – as is the usual mental perception shared not only by the intellectual elites and political establishment, but also an average Western-European citizen<sup>5</sup>. They (those countries) have their unquestionable cultural value, which unfortunately stays hidden behind their civilizational retardation and economic poverty, both of which stem from their partaking in the ruinous centralized communist economy. Because what we need to bear in mind is that a considerable part of the GDP of the former Eastern bloc was assumed by the managing centre of Kremlin to support their pursuit of a global empire status and military advantage over the United States in the so-called arms race. It is also understandable that the still existing division into civilizational centre and its peripheries<sup>6</sup> – as it has been the case throughout cen-

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<sup>3</sup> It is a complex problem, which nevertheless I feel obliged to at least briefly touch upon, as the issue of decommunisation remains closely connected to some other reflections raised in this very work. Let me, then, remark that steering away from communism on the part of central European states allowed for making an analogy of controlled decommunisation and abrupt collapse of national socialism and fascism. The post-war Germany underwent a deep denazification, which led to forming of a truly democratic system and strong economy. Italy, on the other hand, did not implement such radical war with fascism, which caused forming of a social system in which the officers of the former regime assimilated with local communities and state apparatus – thus making a hybrid political and economic system.

<sup>4</sup> As described by Pope John Paul II (18.10.1978).

<sup>5</sup> See D. KUBICKI, *Teologia katolicka a mlodsza Europa globalizacyjnej współczesności (part 1)*, „Teologia w Polsce” 4 (2010) 2, 233–245; D. KUBICKI, *Teologia katolicka a mlodsza Europa globalizacyjnej współczesności (part 2)*, „Teologia w Polsce”, 5 (2011) 1, 171–188.

<sup>6</sup> It is noteworthy that the compact territory spreading from Palermo, through Naples and Antwerp to London have constituted since the XIV century through the XX and XXI century a quite densely populated area. Consequently then, we should perceive as half-peripheries areas on

turies of European *Christianitas* and in modern Europe alike – in some way forces economic compliance or dependence, especially conform to the observed phenomenon of emigration of substantial numbers of Central and Eastern European (EU)<sup>7</sup> citizens to Western European EU states.

It is at the same time hard to overlook the fact that emigration of a considerable number of those countries' citizens beyond a shadow of a doubt means they represent a great value. It turns out that not only are they capable of adapting to various social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, but also constitute professional competition to Western natives (to put it simply) – in their own cultural backgrounds and the culture of their mother tongue. It is exactly this fact that, amongst others, seems to overthrow – the too easily squandered by the Western-European political and business establishment – argument of cultural or civilizational backwardness of the Central and Eastern-European communities.

The above issues are not going to be raised or elaborated on here, as there have appeared various more detailed publications on those matters<sup>8</sup>. I shall, however, make use of them as the support to ask necessary questions which undoubtedly determine future success or lack thereof of the current European integration. They are posed from a moral perspective, characteristic of ecclesial faith communities of the Christian Church – which for some time already have remained in an ecumenical dialogue with one another, discussing most often doctrinal issues and ecclesial institutionalization.

Let me hereby add – did the modern state formation<sup>9</sup> not lead to the situation of breaking the church unity of Roman (Western) Church, according to the rule *cuius regio, eius religio*? Would, then, the counter-process not allow for forming of a more permanent settlement than the current ecumenical dialogue? This question shall, of course, be settled in the very last part of this reflection. On the present stage I would like to raise the most important issue – if, that is, the current European integration is to have a chance of succeeding and actually happening. Hence, I daresay that it is relatively easy to popularize slogans concerning European integration. They seem to be produced on every level of public discourse – starting from media releases and ending on certain remarks of

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both sides of this densely populated area, and so southern France, Spain, Portugal, Brandenburg, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.

<sup>7</sup> Which is described as intra-EU migration.

<sup>8</sup> See e.g.: D. KUBICKI, *Prognozowany kryzys społeczno-ekologiczny XXI w. jako konsekwencja procesów globalizacyjnych końca XX w?*, „Studia Gdańskie” vol. XXVII, 285–303; D. KUBICKI, *Teologia katolicka a młodsza Europa globalizacyjnej współczesności (part 2)*; D. KUBICKI, *Inspirations and challenges in practising theology in Poland as a post-communist and EU member country*, „Studia Oecumenica” 10 (2010), 5–19; D. KUBICKI, *Wokół niewiary w zmartwychwstanie w społecznościach europejskiego Zachodu*, „Ateneum Kapłańskie” 155 (2010) 2, 350–361.

<sup>9</sup> The economic issue remains dominant here.

European Parliament representatives (almost always limited to those who come from the states from behind “the iron curtain”). Even though they are not many, they still belong to the theological reflection<sup>10</sup>. That is why it seems necessary to raise the issue of indispensable conditions not to fool or limit oneself to spreading clichés and slogans about the European integration when it becomes deformed on the next stage of integration by newly-shaped generation of young. That would mean supporting the moral quality of European integration, as it does not constitute a process that has been collectively initiated and which does not need to be responsibly watched over as it does not remain jeopardized by external interferences or internal deformation – especially different intra-EU circles.

The only institutional organism capable of such moral action which at the same time have been called to do so for the sake of EU societies remain the Christian Churches. That is why it seems that their collective involvement in the assessment of the moral quality of EU member states’ integration will allow not only to conform to effectively attain integration aims of the European West, but also – in some way parallel – to lay stronger foundations for formed through integrated moral actions *Ecumenical Community*.

### **1. Authenticity of transformational changes and authenticity of political action**

Let us begin with a rather general remark. There has been a habit of judging any diplomatic discourse in terms of general declarations and as comprising too few specific references. In consequence, as taught by our collective experience we should treat diplomatic statements merely as declaratory words, and only the actual actions as an ultimate realization of will expressed through former declaration. Therefore, we ought to perceive any government’s representatives’ relying solely on their political interlocutors’ declarations as downright politically immature.

Having made this indispensable remark I would like to concentrate on not so much the evaluation of the idea of European integration or paeans for the integration process that has been introduced, as on necessary or even essential conditions, so that we do not fool ourselves with dreams, but support the quality of European integration. So, not to delude ourselves with the ideas that remain on paper, as members of the EU integration we should settle two fundamental issues: how authentic are the proposed changes and how much more authentic could they be<sup>11</sup>? It is clear that we understand this authenticity and factuality as

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g.: E. SIENKIEWICZ, *Sacrum a „wspólnota ducha” jednoczącej się Europy*, „Teologia w Polsce” 4 (2010) 2, 247–261.

<sup>11</sup> In practical consequence, they would definitely be more effective.

not being satisfied with the mere intellectual concepts or the proverbial wishful thinking of political establishment and human communities. It would be about the intellectual recognition of necessary moral actions, that is what needs to be done for the continental Europe, in a geographical and cultural sense and as a unity in plurality, could really integrate and deepen its cultural and civilizational integration. As regards the above I would like to refer to scientific research known to a wider audience, which is already published and claims explicitly that when it comes to the current stage of the European integration it is not an intellectual concept or just a product of some wishful thinking of the EU “founding fathers”<sup>12</sup>, but rather a tangible regularity of ethnic communities’ and nations’ development and the integration of the developed states into bigger unities on a higher level of organization<sup>13</sup>.

A fundamental issue is definitely the decision how authentic the emancipation/liberation of the Central and Eastern Europe and their communities from under the totalitarian “yoke” really was and how deluded we might still be remaining by the conducted (alleged) political transformation. A similar issue seems to be the question of how possible it would be to move from a communist formation of society (to put it simply), from an inner determinism and a developed efficient ideological and physical coercion apparatus (called security apparatus), to a civil society and a parliamentary democratic state? After all, after more than two decades it is impossible not to notice the adaptation of the (formerly) communist nomenclature of the *Eastern Block* societies to new economic conditions. And that is not to talk about the consequences of the societies’ condition for almost a half of a century on almost every level of social and political life, and especially the military one from the decision-making centre situated in Kremlin, but to underline the parallel to the political, system and economic transformation fact of nomenclature enfranchisement, and especially the atmosphere of consent to a corruption-generating arrangement strengthened by a system of half-state half-private ownership and the development of political capitalism in the shadow of a post-communist government (to put it simply). Only after two decades have passed when the fact of corruption growth during the transformation period is empirically proven can certain morally responsible circles notice the danger and raise the possibility of annihilating free market by corruption when the latter goes beyond certain limits<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> I.e. Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967), Alcide de Gasperi (1881–1954) and Robert Schumann (1886–1963).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. G. LABUDA, *Mieszko I*, Wrocław 2002; *Idea „wiecznego pokoju” i jednoczenia państw narodowych w dziejach Europy*, in: G. LABUDA, *Rozważania nad teorią i historią kultury i cywilizacji*, Poznań 2008, 468–477.

<sup>14</sup> Its principle constitutes inadequate allocation of goods and capital. As its consequence, market mechanisms become out of adjustment, reliable information stop circulating between different

We should also analyze the decline of the Soviet Union from the 1980s and the decision of the then management to end communism in 1991 with respect to the historical realities of those times. Was it really possible for a Soviet empire to transform into a state well-functioning politically and operating on the free market? Undoubtedly, we now seem to understand better the then dilemma which appeared on the communist way of the Soviet empire and its satellite countries development, to on the one hand block all the changes, information technology revolution included, which would cause losing any chances to compete with the rest of the world in the field of economy and politics, or on the other to allow for the transformation and subsequently lead to the collapse of industrial proletariat, which would, in turn, constitute a certain devaluation of the communist ideology based on the interpretation of the fate of the working masses and the never-ending shaping of their happy future.

The issue of authenticity of the collapse of communism both as an ideology and a social project reflected in the life of human masses thus seems a fundamental matter. For the predilection for Marxism is noticeable in the political, financial and economic establishment of the European West<sup>15</sup>, even in spite of how little understood from a scientific perspective or the experience (of the communist influence) of the Central European societies it may actually be. Equally noticeable, although hidden under the label of “globalism”, seems to be the communist doctrine of Rosa Luxemburg (1870–1919), which claims that capitalism stands the differences between nations because it unifies them all through an economic market<sup>16</sup>, which in turn becomes common to everyone<sup>17</sup>. Western-European ideologists seem to overlook the hidden destructive ideas under the surface of their mutated forms as developed social and economic phe-

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institutions and potential investors, which inevitably makes economy plunges further into crisis.

<sup>15</sup> It is necessary to raise here that even though Marx clearly perceived impersonal nature of capital (its ruthlessness reflecting the ruthlessness of the market, lying at the roots of competition) which in its struggle to profit is blinded as far as anything else is concerned, he also misunderstood human nature as in its essence sinless, yet deformed only by private ownership, i.e. capital. In reality Marx's error was his belief that human nature is “the entirety of social relations”. In fact, it is not exactly so. It is rather human's social role (as e.g. a capitalist) that decides about it, as we only assume those roles which our nature allows us for. As a consequence, the right understanding of Marx's idea should be restored – retaining his view about the nature of capital and disposing of his approach to the nature of human, otherwise perverted by the modern thought, starting from Cartesian concept of *cogito* (‘I as knower’).

<sup>16</sup> Consequently then, Rosa Luxemburg considered the strive to restore Polish statehood to be an illusion, as Polish lands were economically integrated with bigger state organisms – some with the czarist Russia, others with Germany (cf. T. SOMMER, *Wolniewicz. Zdanie własne*, Warszawa 2010, 41).

<sup>17</sup> With reference to this phenomenon it is impossible not to mention that certain Polish communists (e.g. W. Gomułka) defended Polish national autonomy – which definitely contributed to Poland's different status as a country and as a society in the Eastern bloc.

nomena. Still, it seems that the role of the Central- and Eastern-European societies is to raise various issues as they themselves have experienced certain destructive consequences of such erroneous political doctrines.

Therefore, how authentic can the current system, political and economic transformations be as far as the Central- and Eastern-European countries are concerned, if the character of their political and economic bodies is clearly mutated and post-communist? And how could they have effectively discarded the yoke of communist ideology, if, first of all – a considerable part of the current political establishment consists of the educated businesspeople comprising former communist nomenclature and its former opposition, and, secondly – the members of the former communist regime or the former opposition (namely the secessionists of the “real socialism” as observed in the People’s Republic of Poland in 1944–89) were holding the neuralgic to the operating of the state offices to effectively obstruct its active functioning or hinder constructive decision-making processes which could conform to creative and effective transformation of economy and creation of a society that would be ready to challenges brought by the information era through their personal lack of qualifications and individual moral ambiguity?

It would seem that the above was beneficial for the Western-European economies, where a certain burnout of society caused by consumer civilization could deprive their members of the liveliness that the post-communist societies seem to have in abundance. It appears, however, that we could only analyse it this way in a relatively short term. In a longer perspective, the European West would have to gain culturally, socially and demographically bigger stability, and most of all human resources, so that it could generate favourable conditions for capital growth – through economy, science, innovation, etc. it then seems rational to pose the following question: would it not bring about a realization of some sort of a (Marxist) vision – contradictory to natural process of integration of communities into bigger social and cultural or civilizational unities?

This Marxist (or leftist) vision, of course, appears to constitute one of possible interpretations, and sometimes just an explanation of phenomena which take place in the Polish society and which seem to be happening in it. Is it necessary to recall those facts or unclear actions, conflicting with the interest of the Polish nation? One such example could be privatization<sup>18</sup>. I shall restrict myself here to reminding the reader that the key sectors of the economy were taken over by foreign capital or are still made dependent on old (occupant) aggressors. It is understandable that those facts still somewhat puzzle some of us. There remain, however, other decisions that are equally incomprehensible. Namely, what is

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<sup>18</sup> Incomprehensibly (along incoherent concepts or contradictory to public interest), there appear various initiatives to privatize almost anything – education, health care, social service, etc.

baffling is the deepening of the external energy dependence – on foreign resources or technologies, especially taking into consideration that our country proves rich in geothermal energy and it actually seems to be the richest one in slate gas resources in entire Europe. Just as puzzling seems the decision to sign long-term contracts for oil supplies at the highest in Europe prices from an external supplier and the agreement to build nuclear power plants when their location in a transit country could become – for obvious reasons – a potential cause of military or terrorist blackmail. Clearly, though, these are questions connected to political and economic choices, but it is legitimate to ask whether Polish decisions have to be incomprehensibly illogical and seemingly deprived of any common sense, when it is obvious that they should be subordinate to the common good of the nation and its best interest?

Out of methodological necessity I have sketched just a few examples of some important issues directly concerning the functioning of Polish economy (to put it simply), which in consequence have an influence over the social and cultural life of Polish society. In view of the irreversibility of certain changes concerning the issue of ownership in favour to expansive capitalism it seems crucial to evaluate them at least from a moral angle. And by that I do not mean expressing ideas compatible with the political discourse (current parliamentary and governmental legislature and executive authority) that reverberates in the media. Nor am I encouraging anyone to play the role of political opposition or take over its functions, when even this body remains politically weak<sup>19</sup>. What I feel is necessary is an independent moral evaluation of the public sphere decisions – those concerning interior state politics and foreign international affairs. And as they both relate to the functioning of the nation and society – what we would need are firstly a moral recognition of what really constitutes the good of the nation and spiritual vitality of the society, and secondly – a moral evaluation of actions undertaken in the name of the nation. We would then need to recognize whether the current political and economic decisions are really compatible with the common national interest and whether they do not threaten its right to shape its social and cultural identity in the commonwealth.

Of course, this independent moral evaluation is indispensable during the transformation period. And as we have seen two decades pass since the decline of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the Eastern Block, it is hard to still be talking about an ongoing transformation – we should then speak rather of a moral evaluation of what has been done since then and of what constitutes the current point of reference for the Polish nation. Here, again, we could assume

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<sup>19</sup> It should undoubtedly responsibly fulfill its duties, one of which could be that of an independent organism expressing a moral evaluation of actions. Let me remark, however, that this function is spread over many smaller units – such as ombudsman, consumer protection, etc.

different criteria regarding our moral evaluation. The moot point, especially as far as the intellectual argument is concerned, remains capturing the quality of introduced transformations. One of such references can be emigration. In human history it seemed to always be a natural phenomenon, but it can be a useful criterion as regards the moral evaluation of the quality of the introduced transformations, which were supposed to not so much integrate the post-communist Central European societies, as bringing them closer to the civilizational level of the European West. So, does the estimated to be higher than 20 % of the nation emigration – and emigration of the most creative, active, well-educated, etc. members of Polish society not constitute a useful criterion in the evaluation of the transformations<sup>20</sup>? We should also ask ourselves: what size of emigration poses a danger to the national existence of a particular society? Have certain limits not been crossed when it comes to the Central European societies, limits beyond which particular societies seem to be endangered in their national existence and self-determination?

I have raised above the necessity to morally assess the transformations which were introduced in the Central European countries. Before, however, we can move on to point the perspective according to which we shall be able to define the criteria that could allow us for a qualitative moral evaluation of what have to embrace all those societies which before the year 1989 undoubtedly shared a more optimistic hopes and expectations concerning their present condition and economic situation, I would like to reflect upon the cause of the impossibility of choosing the right assessment criteria regarding the national good by the political establishment in the post-communist (post-colonial) states.

I would like then to highlight the issue of not taking into account either the structure, nor the nature of the nation by our own ideological political and economic establishments – Polish yet greatly influenced by the West (to put it simply). For it seems almost sure that ignoring a nation's nature and the functioning of its society not only reveals its backwardness, or even retardation in its development in relation to others, economically dominating free market, but can also cause a disintegration of a nation as a unity.

It is necessary to make a general remark concerning K. Marx's (1818–1883) social question and his concept of capital<sup>21</sup>. Without a doubt, it still remains valid, as we can employ the 19<sup>th</sup> century radical Marxist terminology to describe the current social relations in the wake of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when “reserve mass of workforce” straight from the streets of big Western-European industrial cities

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<sup>20</sup> Data collected by Central Statistical Office in 2009 estimate the size of emigration since Poland's accession to the EU to be c. 2 million people. Cf. D. KUBICKI, *Polonia i emigracja Trzeciej Rzeczypospolitej jako nowy wymiar patriotyzmu* [in print].

<sup>21</sup> See footnote 15.

assumes the shape of poor local communities inhabiting those very places all over the world where factories are moved in order to lower the costs of labour through *outsourcing*<sup>22</sup>.

It is nothing extraordinary to notice that the globalized world of human communities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century seems to enter a similar cycle of social and mentality transformations as that of the workers in the Western Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is hardly revealing to say that the economics of the West is surely still based on Marx's thesis of capital<sup>23</sup>, and the Western societies functioning according to it have reached the state of welfare creating the so-called consumer society and moving towards their more and more mutated versions<sup>24</sup>. Therefore, to the West which in the economic sense dominates its civilizational peripheries<sup>25</sup>, it is unimportant that Marx's thesis on capital handled so freely by the capitalist who finds it all the time more and more economically beneficial, completely ignores the issue of human nature or nation as a living social tissue<sup>26</sup>. And we can only assume that it functions only because it is economically advantageous. The fact, on the other hand, that though not having any regard for the issue of human nature or the actual recognition of the nature of human and national communities, it can allow itself for lively capitalist expansion, which could only be stopped by – on the one hand, reference to the rights of human nature and the laws of societies as groups of human individuals connected with one another through the web of complex relations, and on the other – putting them into practice. That is why most probably the half right and half wrong thesis proposed by Marx still does indicate economic rules and relations and functions in the civilizational centre of the European West. We can, therefore, only guess that the civilizational advantage (measured economically) does not allow them to either resign from such perspective, or to reformulate their economic basis, previously created and defined according to Marx's ideas, so that they understand human being in terms suggested by French enlightenment, as one who is “free” in nature and a “good savage”. Let me add – since the French Revolution the idea of the necessity to free the man from oppressive social conditions, as his good nature can handle everything else has proved especially vital.

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. D. KUBICKI, *Prognozowany kryzys społeczno-ekologiczny XXI w. jako konsekwencja procesów globalizacyjnych końca XX w.?*, 289n.

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 18.

<sup>24</sup> The above issues may not be economically acceptable, they may also seem to be erroneous. Still, different views on the matter only prove the necessity to look at and evaluate economic reality from a perspective that is other than just economic.

<sup>25</sup> Like a capitalist towards proletariat (to put it simply).

<sup>26</sup> The term ‘capitalist’ does not refer to a unity only. It can serve as a description of a particular environment, state, or a global concern.

Is it, then, necessary to underline that the (civilizational) situation of the European West remains substantially different from that experienced by its peripheries, i.e. those countries from behind the iron curtain, submitted to a different economic system than the free market, in which the still dominating role is played by various communism secessionists – and so everyone who has had good relationships with the previous nomenclature of Kremlin's ideological regime? Therefore, is it going to be equally beneficial for them as half-peripheries of the European West to emulate those civilizational indicators which create the wealth of the Western states? Do their political elites fully realize how serious it all is, if they themselves constitute a hybrid form of the previous rule, determined by the Marxist – Leninist ideology?<sup>27</sup>

Let me once again ask the following question – has it not been necessary to express the moral evaluation of the quality of the accomplished transformations? And even though belated, is it not supposed to be done by the ecumenical communities of the Christian churches? Another important question is the issue of whether all ecumenical church communities are ready to conduct such moral assessment and are able to express it, as they could be harmed by the repressive communist regime in their ecclesiastical hierarchy? In some way it could explain the reason why such moral assessment has not yet been articulated by different ecclesiastical communities of the Church of Christ.

It is not possible to elaborate on the above issues. I have, hence, limited myself to merely underlining the essence of the problem of the reasons why there has been such a lively expansion of neoliberal capitalism with its tries to (allegedly) “liberate” and reform the societies of the European West – within the developed consumer civilization, so that the remarks about the role of churches and Christian communities are not deprived of factuality in the current global reality.

Let me, then, summarize the above. Even though in the global world of developing capital and economic markets the Marxist idea about dispassionate capital and its functioning in the lives of human societies still remains valid, it does not have to be equally effective in reference to those state and social organisms which are deprived of capital, and such are the post-colonial Central European states – the peripheries of the civilizational West. Western economic model does not have to bring immediate economic benefits to those societies in exactly the same way as it does to the capital holder who enjoys a dominant position on the economic market. After all, they have not yet undergone a true de-communisation process, and the ostensibility of privatization reforms as well as the ever-present corruption (which prevailed long after the communist econom-

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<sup>27</sup> Of course, it was determined by the fact that there had not been an actual process of de-communisation, but that there had appeared different hybrid forms of blends of old nomenclature and parts of former (“controllable”) opposition.

ic system) seem to be burying free market, which was once supposed to determine the functioning of their economies – attuned with the European West.

Is it not, then, a moral obligation of ecumenical communities to raise that it is somewhat futile to try and transform Central European societies in exactly the same way their Western counterparts once were? Let me stress it yet again – reconstructing moral references and assessments according to Western models (to put it simply) may only bring further destruction to Central European societies, as the effect of capital gain with reference to rich countries includes, at least temporarily, the effect of social degradation, for those very ideas are conflicting with human nature. It is also a fact that Central European societies statistically are financially poor and morally exhausted after their struggle against communist ideology.

Meanwhile, as members of faith communities of the Church of Christ – following Jesus' path, where mutual love, between brothers and neighbours, constitutes a joyous answer to God's generosity and kindness – we seem to remain silent when mutated by the Western societies Marxist ideology hand in hand with consumer civilization inevitably impose their ways on economic and political lives of Central- and Eastern-European societies. Why do we fail to see that our own post-modern consumer civilization is erected upon the contradictory to Christian doctrine recognition of human sinlessness, when in fact it is exactly the opposite – we are marked with the original sin, but redeemed in Christ? Why do we then seem to allow for spreading of this destructive ideology in the post-colonial societies of the Soviet communist regime? Why do we seem to overlook the educational role of family and mind shaping role of school – on its various educational levels? Why is it that in the applied educational concepts we allow for the attempts to move the role of educator from the family onto some ideologically controllable institutions?

There is a host of similar questions. I have limited them to merely signal the fact that most probably there has been an attempt made by post-communist societies to shape a new generation on the basis of principles congruent with the mindset of consumer civilization of the European West. However, as I have mentioned above, it is highly doubtful if at all possible to achieve an even comparable civilizational level to that of the Western empires, dominating in the social, political and economic life of the integrating Europe.

## **2. The authenticity of political attitude of Western establishments**

By posing questions about the authenticity of political and economic transformations in Central and Eastern European societies, namely: how reliable are they, how authentic are they and to what extent is their aim the good of post-

colonial societies of Soviet communist regime, I have raised the economic issue which constitutes the fundamental axis of the Western civilization, starting from modern thinkers whose mental traditions are fostered as valuable and irreplaceable. To simplify the above, it is necessary to remark that the transformations which were experienced by the Central and Eastern European countries were not in fact the sole consequence of stepping away from communist ideology by the states of the former Eastern Bloc.

To even start analysing that it would be, of course, necessary to raise the more profound reflection upon the possibility of transformation of such an imperial state as was the Soviet Union with its republics and satellite states of the *Eastern Bloc*. Is there any possibility for such empire to turn to parliamentary democracy and market economy<sup>28</sup>? Is it going to be divided into separate stages and to what extent is there a danger of failure on particular stages of transformation?

Surely the post-soviet empire for the very sake of its economic functioning enforces different operations from those implemented by smaller state organisms. It continues to remain too sizeable still to undergo similar transformations (of parliamentary democracy) to the Central and Eastern European countries of the so-called civilizational youngness. It needs to retain its position of a superpower. The alternative is definitely economic degradation, which could be a blow for Russian society and its culture. Therefore, to what extent does the integration and to what extent does the disintegration of the Soviet totalitarian system, based on bureaucratized empire of Russian czarism, not allow for authentic political functioning, but enforces determinism of domineering behaviours and activities on the international scene<sup>29</sup>? We should then determine the symptoms of the disease and the condition of the patient – moral condition of the society and the possibility to transform a totalitarian empire. It is thus necessary to ask and (at least) sociologically examine the issue – to what extent does the old ideology of communist regime allow for that? But still, the most important issue is – whatever happened to atheist ideology – that quasi religion of contempt for human individualism, human being in the name of future good – the happiness of the Soviet Union? Has it not undergone transformational mutation and assumed a different shape in the present Russian empire?

These are the questions that cannot be overlooked in the context of the very challenge standing before ecumenical communities whose faithful members as European citizens take part in the progressing EU integration processes. Should they not therefore be more actively and creatively interested in not only the authenticity but also the moral quality of that integration? Should they not be more

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<sup>28</sup> It is beyond our current abilities to analyse this very process.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. T. BUKSIŃSKI, *Między jednością polityczną a wielością etniczną w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej*, „Sprawy Wschodnie” (2006) 1–2, 135–156.

firm as regards the issue of moral evaluation of the quality and authenticity of politics – both on the European and beyond-European level? For was the Church community of the disciples of the Resurrected Lord not summoned – beginning with the very first Christian faith communities – to spread mercy<sup>30</sup> and to sing Gospel to all the nations?

What, in that case, has happened to realizing this most basic of evangelical callings in the current attitudes of churches and ecclesiastical communities? Has its presence in the public sphere not been by any chance reduced to the necessary minimum, basically to the dimension of private sphere – as a consequence of a progressing expansion of enlightenment vision amongst European societies? Should we then not make a common moral effort to overcome this schizophrenic situation, which characterizes societies of the European West? Could the societies of the so-called civilizational youngerness – the post-colonial and post-communist ones – not support the common creative struggle to restore in Christianity the role of moral shaping of the integrating European societies? However, it is necessary to remember about the specific resistance of political establishment<sup>31</sup>, since, as I have raised above, the error regarding religiousness and morality, as well as the humanity of every European citizen, is inscribed in the very economic mechanism of the civilizational West in its modern source of intellectual thought.

I have started my reflection by articulating fundamental questions concerning European integration. How authentic they are, and how authentic they can be considering that the post-colonial Soviet societies embrace the conditions of functioning in the economic system offered by the West and which forces them to assume particular behaviours and economic actions? The above is important so much so that it conditions the authenticity of partaking in the European integration and its realizing. Therefore, to what extent is it about authentic membership in European integrating of both: the civilizational centre of the West and its peripheries, which have also been pushed into disintegration by the Marxist and Leninist ideological system and determined by its model of economy?

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<sup>30</sup> And so, moral sensitivity to human poverty – also in its social dimension.

<sup>31</sup> We can suppose that actual criticism of basic assumptions does not pose to the political establishment any personal tragedy, as almost all of the renowned political figures seem to be taking somewhat perverse pleasure in playing their roles, designed for them by different PR specialists. The above seems to be practiced also by political parties in post-communist countries, where they adjust their political programs to dominating political, financial and economic establishments of the European West. What stands out in both references is this intellectual ambiguity and vagueness of the “public” leader of such party. The higher this intellectual indeterminacy of a candidate, the higher their chances of assuming a high post in European or even global institutions. At the same time I need to remark that consumer civilization perverts a politician’s function as it becomes more of a means of personal gain than public service and its civilizational, cultural and religious good.

After all, it would be about recovering a new form lost in the history of the ideas of *Res Publica Christiana* – blighted by religious wars, which in reality turned out to be violent and ruthless power struggle. However, is the idea of European acting as one community<sup>32</sup> still possible, as amongst the political establishments of the European West dominates a type of ideological mentality set mostly on the error of recognizing human being and their fulfilling, and thus on *the other*, erroneous side of the economic idea of Marx's, which I have raised above?

Or is it rather about a political game on the modern political, public, etc. scene? Or maybe the current political operations are forced by consequences of previously accepted ideological assumptions and global economic policies? Or is it only about markets, which Central- and Eastern-European countries could constitute for their Western-European counterparts? Thus, is it about deliberate management of destructive expansion policy or ruthless realizing a previously sketched plan? Is it not an accepted upon concept of a so to speak buffer made of central-European areas and its societies – a buffer between the united Germany and Russia, as the existence of compact and strong, morally creative 40-million-people Polish society in the heart of Europe could turn out to be the proverbial “thorn in the flesh” of old aggressors from September 1939? For how else could we understand slowly wasting away all the assets of Polish nation and advantages of the country's geographical location, as well as its natural resources, chemically unspoilt grounds, by a particular political party which is not independent enough in its political decisions and proposed legislature? Does it remain moral to take advantage of incompetence of some state governments – with respect to weak social awareness of their citizens, made weaker still by media propaganda – by other countries' political establishment, countries which are strong, stable parliamentary democracies, when the common interest of European integration is at stake with its idea of unifying all European communities and national societies? Is this inertia of the current political establishments of former Western allies<sup>33</sup> which now constitute the civilizational centre at all moral, especially in view of incompetence and impossibility of authentic system and economy transformation of former communist regimes? Is it moral from the part of economically stable states to follow an economic model which might prove pernicious for weaker countries, even though they themselves found it so advantageous and led them to financial and civilizational affluence? Is it not a moral obligation of strong political establishments – especially when a cause such lofty as success of the European integration is at stake – to even force

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<sup>32</sup> Present also in the Russian thought of the so-called „golden age”.

<sup>33</sup> To pose this theoretical question I feel entitled looking at the historically recent events of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam conferences, where the Western Allies agreed to „return” central-European states to the Soviet Union.

weaker Central-European democracies to realize mutually beneficial political, cultural, civilizational and economic actions?

We can, of course, assume that the above issues and rhetorical questions remain incomprehensible in a political or economic perspective. But such a reaction would only mean a necessity for ecumenical communities to re-enter the public sphere with responsible towards political actions discourse expressing moral evaluation of widely understood political activity. Such a reaction would also highlight the church's and Christian communities' inertia regarding the necessary expression of responsible moral evaluation of the unraveling political, cultural, etc. presence, which after all concerns also human communities.

### **3. The role of Christian churches and ecumenical communities towards the happening European integration**

Having posed all the above questions I shall move on to those about the role of Christian churches and ecumenical communities of the Church of Christ. What should, then, be the role of Christian churches and ecumenical communities towards the European integration? Well, their role could be to express a moral evaluation of those political and economic activities. Of course, firstly they have to purify the intellectual concept through which they perceive present reality<sup>34</sup>. In this area there opens before them quite a wide perspective of their creative ecumenical engagement. It is, then, impossible not to mention that they cannot fail to enquire about intellectual concepts – for instance intelligibility paradigm – which they use in scientific theology and which form a part of their ecclesial hierarchy to be able to impartially reflect upon today's reality and evaluate it with reference to the revealing itself *Word* in creation together with its concentration in history of mankind and in the *Event* Jesus Christ.

They are, of course, different for those post-modern Western societies. That is why ecumenical communities should – or even categorically have to – more carefully formulate their theological takes and more responsibly articulate their moral evaluations. For they are not identical with the progress of intellectual concepts based on French enlightenment ideas, additionally strengthened by Marx's theses, especially the economic factor. Should ecumenical communities' and Christian churches' officials together recognize that the criteria of modernity are not identical – from the point of view of political establishment's ideological discourse and church communities, which intellectually cannot fail to set their (theological) reflection on Christian doctrine (in the concept of theology as faith *in statu scientiae* – to put it simply)? In any different case the understand-

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. D. KUBICKI, *Kres masowej wiary w społecznościach [europejskiego] Zachodu jako bawdawcze wyzwanie współczesności wobec filozofii religii i socjologii religii* [in print].

ing of evangelical message is threatened by relativism or recognition of the Word revealing itself in history. Still, the clergymen and pastors produce statements in which they settle the Church's pastoral engagement in post-modern terms – of conservatism (backwardness) or progressiveness. In view of what I have articulated with reference to predilection of political establishments of the European West towards the Marx's theses, does such an intellectual attitude not remain a proof of lack of basing theological reflection on Christian doctrine together with ignoring scientific theory of theology as faith *in statu scientiae*? Does such very statement not tell us anything about its self-backwardness in relation to theological thought and its intelligible form – scientific theology?

Ecumenical communities should, then, more seriously consider whether the present European integration does not constitute a reason for deepening their ecumenical dialogue. Is it not possible for working together – from evangelical message's perspective – on the process of moral evaluation of the current EU member states integration to constitute quite a solid base and a strong impulse in realizing further stages of ecumenical dialogue and church unity? Will working out a common understanding of the present reality in terms of the revealing itself *Word* not contribute to salvation and be beneficial for the civilizational future of European societies overpowering of liberal ideology, which seems to be pervading the European West, apparently helpless towards post-modern culture<sup>35</sup>? Undoubtedly then, ecumenical dialogue in causing moral quality of EU member states integration can by all means constitute an assisting factor further deepening ecumenical unity.

Translated by Zofia Lebiecka

### **Pomocniczość dialogu ekumenicznego w sprawianiu moralnej jakości europejskiej integracji państw członkowskich Unii Europejskiej**

#### *Streszczenie*

W kontekście dokonującego się procesu integracyjnego państwa członkowskich Unii Europejskiej autor podejmuje próbę zbadania, czy wspomaganie bądź wspomóżenie jakości moralnej europejskiej integracji ze strony ekumenicznych wspólnot chrześcijańskich i Kościołów nie stanowiłoby pogłębienia ich dążeń ekumenicznych. Bowiem, z jednej strony, pozostają one jedynym or-

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. A.J. TOYNBEE, *A Study of History* (Abridgement of volumes I–VI by D. C. Somervell, New York and London), Oxford University Press 1958, 39.

ganizmem instytucjonalnym, zdolnym do takiego moralnego działania, a jednocześnie w pewnym sensie wezwanym dla dobra społeczności unijnych; zaś z drugiej strony ich wspólne zaangażowanie w perspektywie oceny moralnej jakości integracji państw członkowskich UE pozwoliłoby nie tylko przyczynić się do skutecznego osiągnięcia celów integracyjnych społeczności i społeczeństw europejskiego Zachodu, ale także – niejako równolegle – położyć trwalsze podwaliny wykształconej zintegrowanym moralnym działaniem *Wspólnoty ekumenicznej*.