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***On the significance
of Christianity for European integration
and meta-political consequences of Polish accession***

Recently¹, the Nobel Prize Committee appreciated Takaaki Kajita and Arthur B. McDonald's discovery proving that neutrinos have mass [Wyborcza 2015]. The existence of neutrinos was theoretically predicted by Wolfgang Pauli as early as in 1930², but this discovery was truly ground-breaking, as neutrinos, which are particles that react with matter very weakly, were impossible to register at all for a long time. Empirical physics was, therefore, unable to see what theoretical physics had known for over half a century.

There are numerous proofs that the role of religion in political science is similar to the role of neutrinos in 1930's physics. Some people notice that it might be of crucial importance, but still the dominating positivist paradigm of science hinders not only the observation, but also the creation of an appropriate theory. Political science, built upon the spirit of positivist science, tries to research objective facts. However, the influence of religion can rarely be measured with "hard data". Political science researches the here and now, while the main impact of religion is of long-term nature³,

¹ This paper is based on the article "*Chrześcijaństwo – zapomniany warunek pojednania i integracji w Europie. Perspektywa politologiczna*" [Christianity – forgotten condition for reconciliation and integration in Europe. Perspective of the political science] published in Polish in *Oblicza pojednania. Faces of reconciliation*, edited by Joanna Kulska and published by Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole 2016. This paper is a modified and extended version of the article.

² Pauli made a conclusion on the existence of these particles as a result of an analysis concerning the energy distribution of electrons created during beta decay. The existence of neutrinos was confirmed experimentally as late as in 1956.

³ As an example, it can be mentioned that as recently as in the 19th century, all kinds of revolutionaries accepted the moral truths of Christianity as obvious, although they were trying to eradicate it. They stopped to be obvious only for their great-grandchildren. Would a political scientist of today be able to indicate which convictions, out of the ones important for the functioning of our political system, are still supported by the "smell from the empty bottle", as Robert Spaemann calls the undertone of Christianity in the secularized air of today's Europe? Would they be ready to see it as an important research problem?

etc. Not going into details of the dilemmas regarding the political science of religion⁴, it is necessary to signal that the evidential process started here will be, out of necessity, of circumstantial nature. While looking for the impact of Christianity on political integration and reconciliation, we are asking for the significance of something that evades the traditional scientific approach, even if the reflection on political issues is deepened, while at the same time such works as those of Weber, Schmitt or Kantorowicz show the need to take this factor into account. The situation of religious political scientists may be similar to the situation of Wolfgang Pauli, who until his last days couldn't accept that it was impossible to empirically prove what had been for him unambiguously proven in theory.

In this article, the starting point is the phenomenon of European integration from the perspective of its initiator, Robert Schuman. The purpose of the first two paragraphs of the performed analysis is to reveal and understand specific solidarity- and reconciliation-related characteristics of integration. The third paragraph concerns the discussion of certain theses concerning the conditions for its existence. Then, the currently noticeable problems with maintaining specific European integration characteristics in the political practice are presented in the 4th paragraph. These problems indicate that the attempt at understanding the phenomenon of integration, presented at stages 1-3, is insufficient. As a consequence, in accordance with the hermeneutic circle, the subsequent, 5th paragraph goes back to the questions regarding the conditions of the integration project, emphasizing the significance of the religious factor, which is often omitted or marginalized in the political science narration, including axiological bases of integration. Further, potential consequences of unification and integration within the EU, related to the marginalization of the significance of Christianity in the process of European integration (6th paragraph), as well as Poland's potential role in reversing this trend (7th-9th paragraphs), are presented.

1. European integration: reconciliation and solidarity

When Robert Schuman was presenting his *Declaration*, which was to become the cornerstone of the process we are still participating in, he said that it is a brave and creative act for peace. He was convinced that in order to achieve a real peace, there must be first a unified Europe, what requires for the long-standing conflict between Germany and France to be obviated [Schuman 2003: 93-94]. Thus, he outlined something that can be called an

⁴ I elaborate on this topic with Rev. P. Burgoński in *Politologia i religia [Political science and religion]*, which is the introduction to the book under the same title. *Zarys problematyki*, Elipsa, Warszawa 2014.

axiological integration circle. Reconciliation between nations is the basis for integration, which is the guarantee of peace in Europe. This peace, however, is ultimately nothing else than true reconciliation. European politicians have not lost the awareness of the meaning of this mechanism. It is worth mentioning that in 2012, the then President of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy, when receiving the Nobel Peace Award, stated that although "peace might have come to Europe without the Union ... it would never have been of the same quality. A lasting peace, not a frosty cease-fire. To me, what makes it so special, is reconciliation" [Rompuy, Barroso 2012]. It seems that the relationship between reconciliation and the integration process could be presented through the following scheme:



However, the outlined scheme requires elaboration. For Schuman, reconciliation in the European context meant more than just building a new, pan-European organization. In his *Declaration*, he does not emphasize the created organization in the sense of formal cooperation, but rather its material *essence*. For him, it is key to overcome conflict, unify nations, finally to achieve the United Europe. Taking into account that, from the formal point of view, he was announcing the creation of an organization of coal and steel, it could seem to be a form of idealistic metaphor. However, it was not. Despite the presented scheme, Schuman was simply aware that the road from reconciliation to united Europe is not obvious or direct. He said that Europe would not emerge immediately as a coherent structure [Schuman 2003: 94]. The United Europe was, for him, a result of preliminary actions, which can be the fruit of reconciliation. He said that the coherent structure of Europe would be built step by step, creating a true solidarity in the first place [ibidem]. For Schuman, solidarity was an adequate, although not self-evident, consequence and tool of reconciliation, and as such required conscious action. He thought that if reconciliation is to be something more than a momentary ceasefire, it needs to be transformed into caring for

others, taking into consideration their righteous needs when making decisions, putting the advice from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians to "carry each other's burdens" into practice. Solidarity was to become a practical performance of the reconciliation, as long as it was more than politics inspired by sentimental pacifism [Schuman 2003: 27].



Why was the issue of solidarity so important for him? Why was it not enough to pass from reconciliation to the European structure? It can be said that it was because history has verified negatively such attempts at building peace (it is enough to mention the League of Nations here). Schuman was convinced that a change in political thinking was necessary: if the national interest was still the only perspective for making decisions, the results of reconciliation would quickly be forgotten in the name of a higher, "national" cause. That is why Schuman had a skeptical attitude towards the Council of Europe as the institution supposed to integrate the whole Old Continent, although without a doubt, the organization was created as a result of reconciliation. He was convinced that the united Europe could only exist if it was based on a new way of thinking and acting – the readiness to take up the deed of solidarity. Otherwise, antagonisms would sooner or later resurface and the idea of European peace would become only an unfulfilled dream. It is worth mentioning that he considered solidarity not only *ad intra*, but also *ad extra*. In his *Declaration*, he emphasized the need of solidarity with Africa.

2. *Genius of integration: solidarity-based organization*

Robert Schuman, when proposing the new, European organization of coal and steel, referred to the idea of "community". This term, as Jürgen Wahl notes, was not well understood by the then politicians and commentators. It was not and is not a typical category of international politics.

The fullest reference to the notion of Community is the category of solidarity. A community in its essence is a place where the problems of one person become common for everyone; difficulties are overcome together, and the success of one person is closely related to the success of others. It reflects, therefore, the conviction which was fundamental for the initial stages of integration: that European states need to completely rebuild their mutual relationships [Wahl: 46]. The first expression of this reconstruction was the readiness to give up what the winners rightfully deserve (for their victory) and what the losers are entitled to (despite everything), and putting the common good above "own interests", taking into account also the good of foreigners.

It would not be an overstatement to say that this intuition of solidarity contains the *genius* of the after-war take on the European relationships: at the very beginning of the integration, the foreigners were noticed, including yesterday's criminals, and their needs were seen as important [Gierycz 2008: 74-176]. Moreover, self-restraint of the largest states was regarded as appropriate. The states, in the name of community of interests with smaller countries, were supposed to accomplish common goals together. The community was, however, devised as an organization in which states act without differentiating between their position, authority and force [Schuman 2003: 19]. Although states are different from one another, ultimately the good of each of them is related to the interests of others, so Schuman argued that individual strength is not of such importance – common goals need to take into account the interests of all parties. It is worth to emphasize that this conviction was the source of such political institutions as unanimity in decision-making or the idea of "supranational officers", who could not take into account the interests of their state of origin in the decision-making process. Not without a reason, the Communities were to be indissoluble. It was a reflection of the conviction that they were not to be anything additional, incidental. On the contrary, they were to become a constitutive element of political identity. The community, in its essence, is not a purposive pact, but a living relationship.

The use of the term "community" thus reflected the requirement for a new type of international organization, which in time started to be called supranational. Its fundamental principle was supposed to be a rather institutionalized solidarity. The idea of supranationality and that of solidarity were closely related to one another. Theoretically, they wouldn't have to be – imperial or domination-based structure could just as well be of supranational character. For Schuman, however, supranationality was a way to institutionalize solidarity, which was the community's *raison d'être*.

3. Arguments for solidarity-driven community

The basic problem of the idea of Community is how to convince states to go this way. Why would they resign from revanchism and take into account the interests of other, less important countries? The whole idea seems to be a mockery of *Realpolitik*, bordering on utopian thinking. Why would states make the step of solidarity towards reconciliation?

Undoubtedly, for Schuman, the "framework" of argumentation was his belief in common sense. He wrote that this new policy was based on solidarity and increasing trust. It was an act of faith in the common sense of nations finally convinced that their rescue lied in mutual understanding and cooperation [Schuman 2003: 28]. The faith in common sense required good argumentation. Schuman did not take it lightly. In this context, literature usually focuses on one or several out of the three "common sense" arguments: historical, economic and realistic.

The historical argument boils down to two statements. The first one says that in order for there to be real peace, there must first be a unified Europe [Schuman: 93]. The second one emphasizes that in the past, new attempts at building peace were made, which after all led to war and ensuing destruction [Schuman: 26]. Going this way does not, therefore, make sense – there must be a different manner. Schuman was also aware that in time, the force of his argument would diminish. He noted that something more than recalling the monstrosities and tragedies of war was necessary [Schuman: 27].

It is often emphasized that an important argument for the adopted integration methods was economic prosperity. Undoubtedly, legitimization through success was an important way of legitimizing the whole integration process. As Jacques Santer notes, in the 1950s, it was believed that the ideas and values put forward by the Founding Fathers would not be accepted by the Europeans unless they could live in a world of prosperity and social justice [Santer 2007: 23]. Without a doubt, Schuman agreed with the idea of taking action where psychological maturity and technological development allow to forecast spectacular results [Schuman 2003: 28]. He was also aware that legitimization through success was ambivalent. Of course, it is easy to be in favor of something if it is profitable, but he also wrote that one is not always the master of one's own choices [ibidem].

This statement seems all the more significant that ultimately, a solidarity-based policy often means quickly noticeable losses and, possibly, long-term profits. In the case of solidary cooperation, the right political question is not "how much can we earn" but "how much can we lose". Thus,

Schuman's final common sense argument refers – however paradoxical it sounds – to *Realpolitik* logic. He notes that nowadays nations are far from being self-sufficient, and this mutual dependence causes them to become unable to rejoice in their neighbor's tragedy with Machiavellian malice [Schuman 2003: 26]. Their own means are not sufficient for their needs. Although this is a harsh truth, it is necessary to be aware of it [Schuman: 19]. As a matter of fact, the real interest of anyone lies in recognizing and practically accepting everyone's mutual dependence. Egoism is not profitable any more [Schuman: 29]. This argument seems to be particularly obvious nowadays, in the heyday of globalization.

4. Current situation

Is it really so simple? Currently, the EU is at the stage which, to some extent, Schuman expected: the historical argument seems an anachronism, and the economic argument has to a large extent ceased to work. For the Greeks, Spanish, Portuguese, Hungarians or Cypriots, the EU is not a synonym of economic prosperity any more. Is the mere awareness of co-dependence enough to act in solidarity or to take into account the needs of others? The question seems to be rhetorical when leading European companies, with the silent support of European powers, are planning to cooperate with Russia and build another pipeline on the bottom of the Baltic Sea, which is in obvious conflict with the fundamental geopolitical interests of Central and Eastern European states; when hundreds of thousands of immigrants are treated as a problem of several states and not of Europe as a whole; and finally, when financial threats directed at politically and economically weaker states are heard more and more often and remind that in the EU as well, we are risking the dictatorship-like use of material advantage, which Schuman wanted so badly to prevent.

It is also clearly visible that European institutions are starting to fail in their role of a tool of solidarity. There is little question that the real power lies outside them⁵. Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande even say that the European Union now constitutes a new order of ruling, which is best portrayed using the idea of an empire. Its essence is the acceptance of power asymmetry which shatters the fictional equality of states. Just as the constitutive elements of pre-modern empires were feudal units, modern empires, including the EU, consist of states of different level of sovereignty (fully sovereign, semi-sovereign and non-sovereign) [Czaputowicz 2014: 364]. Jan

⁵ At a conference organized by the University of Wrocław, Vice-President of the European Parliament Ryszard Czarnecki spoke about it *expressis verbis*, Wrocław 18.09.2015 (author's archive).

Zielonka arrived at similar conclusions [Zielonka 2004]. Regardless of the accuracy of these analyses, performed by leading European political scientists, it is clearly visible that institutional mechanisms of solidarity are beginning to prove insufficient and the risk of a complete collapse of Schuman's "Community of Equals" [Weiler 2003: 82], in the form of institutional structures built upon the inspiration of solidarity, is becoming more and more serious.

5. Forgotten element

Why is it so? Why is EU clearly losing the ability to act in the logic of solidarity, even though it refers to the rhetoric of solidarity more and more often? There can be many answers. Some authors draw the attention to the inability to carry out the idea of a solidarity-based community as a union of 28 states. In line with this theory, it can be said that the extension of the EU dug the grave for its solidarity. Other authors emphasize the significance of the recent economic crisis in the EU. It is, however, worth to take into account a different explanation, which can be treated as a middle-range theory. There is a thesis which can be defended, and it states that the source of our problems concerning not the structures themselves, but rather the content they put into practice, is the consistent secularization of the European politics.

Let us return to the idea of a Community as suggested by Schuman. The typology of argumentation which he used and which was presented above calls for supplementation. Although Schuman believed in the common sense, he was also aware that common sense arguments may turn out to be insufficient and easily noticeable losses related to integration are hard to compensate with long-term profits. In his writings, the statement that the integration process needed a deeper motivation is prevalent; he himself was ready to make a "step towards Europe" thanks to being guided by a deeper motivation. In *For Europe*, he notes "forced by experience, after so much disaster and in the face of the terrible threat ... we have to fall back on the Christian law of a noble but humble brotherhood. Paradoxically (this would certainly surprise us if we were not Christians, maybe we are without knowing it) — we are now holding out our hand to our former enemies, not only to forgive them, but to build tomorrow's Europe together" [Schuman 2003: 27]. Further, he notes that the process of unification is learning the Christian brotherhood anew [ibidem: 28].

This remark by Schuman indicated the key meaning of the mostly lost religious dimension of reconciliation and integration in Europe. In most of important books concerning the European integration, its past, theoretical

grounds and general course, Christianity is not mentioned even once [Weiler 2003: 24]. Of course, literature sometimes mentions that what brought De Gasperi, Schuman and Adenauer closer was their religion [Łukaszewski 2002: 197]. It is true, without a doubt. However, something more important than the question of the private motivations behind the political engagement of three politicians is at stake here. In the light of Schuman's words, it is clear that a brave and creative act for peace, which was his Declaration, and its consequences were possible thanks to the Christian roots of its authors and the whole participating societies. Meta-politics, whose key element was Christianity, made the political project of European integration possible.

Faith, which turned yesterday's enemy into a brother, was, for the then leading politicians, above all an ultimate argument for the united Europe. Its significance against, as Schuman put it, a labyrinth of problems and choices to make, and among violent quarrels [Schuman 2003: 36], does not seem easy to question. Secondly, in particular after the German crimes of the Second World War, religion was an irrefutable social value, guaranteeing at least this smell from an empty bottle which allows keeping, understanding or acknowledging the value of Christian outlook on brotherhood also to those who do not identify with religious faith. Thirdly, Christianity brought about specific instruments and categories of thinking, enabling the ideas of a unified Europe, such as "solidarity" or "community" to become operationalized. Not accidentally, Schuman's reference to the Christian brotherhood reflected the deepest anchoring in the idea of solidarity. As a virtue and a moral value, demanding care for the common good, sharing with the one in need and taking joint responsibility, solidarity was in some way inscribed into the mentality shaped by Christianity [Salij 2000]⁶. It was the foundation on which Schuman based his whole project.

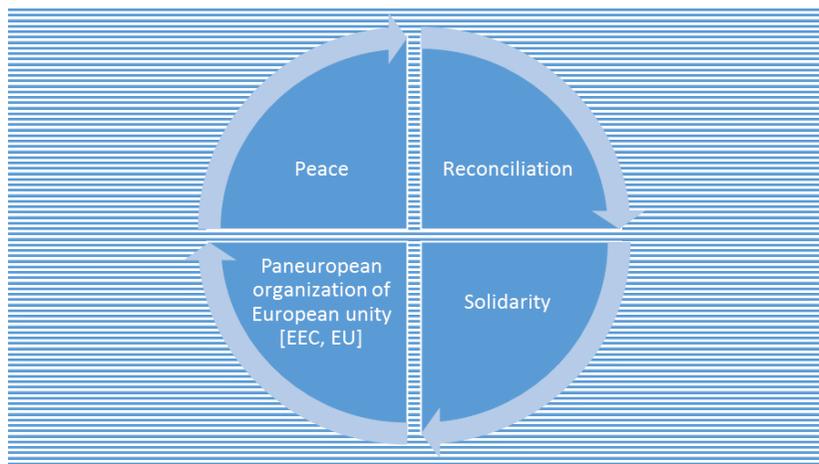
In other words, Schuman's idea of European reconciliation and integration assumed (and had to assume) aware or unaware Christianity. The project of the Community would be simply impossible to imagine in such a form in a pagan world, but also in the world of Islam or Hinduism. In such a sense, the Turks are right to say that the Union is a "Christian club" (even if they understand the expression slightly differently)⁷: the European cooperation was anchored in solidarity, which aimed to exceed itself by taking up specifically Christian dimensions: selflessness, forgiveness and reconciliation [John Paul II 1996: 363]. As Joseph Weiler notes, in 1950, the

⁶ Alain Finkelkraut [Finkelkraut 1999: 9] remarks that what distinguished people from other animals was that they did not recognize each other.

⁷ However, problems with accession are not limited to these questions: see [Szymański 2006: 149-165].

idea of the Community of Equals, which was supposed to be the structural basis for long-term peace between yesterday's enemies, was more than an inventive project of experienced politicians. It was not only a call for peace in external relationships, but also a call for internal peace, for forgiveness and overcoming understandable hatred. In this particular historical context, the European notion of peace brings to mind reflections on Christian love, the Grace, and the images and values related to them [Weiler 2003: 82].

Coming back to our initial ethical circle of integration, it would be justified to present it as below, where the pattern in the background represents the Christian context of the whole project.



6. European Union: project without God and values?

It is worth returning to the question concerning the current situation of the EU. It is not a revelation that in the last twenty years, much has been done on the political level to deprive the integration project of Christian context. The Debate on the treaty establishing the Constitution, rejecting *invocatio Dei* and even any mention of Europe's Christian roots, or previous battles over referring to the religious heritage in the Charter of Fundamental Rights are only symptoms of a deeper conviction on the secular nature of the Union and its values. Valery Giscard d'Estaing, questioning the need to place any form of reference to God in the Constitutional Treaty, explained that Europeans live in a secular political system [Ikonowicz 2004]. D'Estaing's point of view departed from the conviction of European political elites⁸ that

⁸ *De facto*, such a take on the role of religion was presented by European elites when passing the Charter of Fundamental Rights. In this act, which is crucial for

religion, as a category pertaining at most to the private sphere, does not have any meaning whatsoever for the political sphere. Secularity seems to be synonymous to certain impermeability of the European politics: it is divided from religion by a tall and deep-seated wall.

An important question seems to be whether the wall of secularity separates the Union only from the rest of the world, which is mostly religious, or whether it supports also the construction of inner walls. An interesting coincidence seems to be the fact that more or less since the end of the debates on the significance of religion in the European politics, the European states have not seemed to be less and less capable of fulfilling the basic requirements of solidarity. The problems mentioned above show that despite our efforts to guarantee more and more solidarity in law (since primary legislation showcases an exponential growth of solidarity initiatives in the recent treaty reforms [see: Gierycz 2008: 407-414]), it is hard to admit that EU states are truly more solidary today than the Community used to be.

At the same time, European unity becomes more and more threatened by what was expected to strengthen it. One of the most important changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty was a significant increase in axiology in the legal aspect of the European Union [see: Barcz 2010]. The Treaty on European Union in its current version states unambiguously that "the Union is founded on values" [Treaty 2008: art. 2], at the same time giving the Charter of Fundamental Rights [CFR] the status of primary law. It was not a coincidence. The reference to values has, at least potentially, an irreplaceable integrating value. It makes it possible to define the deepest motivation to create and develop the Union in a way that is clear to every citizen of the EU. As a community of values, in the long term, the EU was to become an object of attachment that reached deeper than only to the financial level. The deeper values were supposed to help legitimize the Union's existence (especially in relation to procedural deficits of democracy in the EU), making it also a reference point for Europeans' political identity.

Nevertheless, the last years are rather a proof of an ongoing battle over the values in the EU than a signal of strengthening the unity in this respect. The massive disputes over the morality policy, taking place when the Parliament and the Council agreed to finance scientific research on stem cells [European Parliament 2006], European Commission's support for demands and claims of LGBTI groups [European Commission 2015], finally financing abortion in Third World countries [European Dignity Watch 2012] lead

determining the identity of the united Europe, there was no room for referring to Christianity either.

researchers to call into question the axiological foundations of the EU. As Renata Badii notes, despite emerging from common European values (such as respect for human life), the decisions taken within the EU are based on specific interpretation of these values, which makes them rather a temporary agreement than an expression of true consensus regarding common rules [Badii 2008: 119]. From the theoretical perspective, Ernst Wolfgang Böckenförde named this problem a long time ago, drawing attention to the fact that a non-regulated reference to values from within, due to the moral substance of an entity and the unity of a society, can prove to be insufficient and dangerous. It opens an opportunity for subjectivism, as well as positivism of popular judgments, which demand for themselves an objective validity and rather annihilate freedom than guarantee it [Böckenförde 1994: 119-120].

7. Poland in the EU – expectations and questions

In the context of Poland's integration with the European Union, in particular in Catholic circles, it has often been emphasized that the Polish Christian culture as well as its religious and national ethos are a valuable reservoir of energy which Europe needs today [John Paul II 1998] or that Polish culture in the united Europe can become an impulse to combine the modern with the traditional [Sowiński 2003]. In the light of the analyses conducted above, these statements, often accepted even in the Polish public sphere with a certain dose of reluctance, seem to accurately describe Poland's most significant potential contribution to the integration project. In the context of reflection upon the current deficit of solidarity in the EU, it can also be noticed that Poland bears a special solidarity heritage, rooted in Christianity. The key role on the way to the political breakthrough of 1989, eventually leading to the collapse of communism in Central Europe, was played by the Independent Trade Union "Solidarność", which was directly inspired by the Catholic social science developed by Pope John Paul II. The word "solidarity" in the Polish context is not, therefore, a remote idea, but has its own specific meaning, verified by the recent history.

Of course, after 10 years, it is impossible to give a scientifically proven answer to the question whether Poland has contributed culturally to the Union. Cultural processes are long-term, as Fernand Braudel noted [see: Braudel 2006], and a decade is not a period of significance for them. Nevertheless, it can be evaluated whether the aforementioned expectations towards Poland have a solid foundation and any confirmation in the social and political sphere. Taking into account that the process of democratization, which has been taking place in Poland since 1989, was for the most part led

by elites who understood democracy as democracy of the periphery, or imitating the mainstream (Western) regime and culture, which nevertheless remains an unequalled example [Krasnodębski 2003: 19], the first question concerns whether the contemporary Polish society, when it comes to understanding the fundamental values, as well as the place of religion in individual and social life, is exceptional compared to other European countries. In other words, is there still a social substrate which enables Poland to exert its cultural influence. The second question which is worth asking concerns European politics: whether Poland's activities are noticeably reversing those tendencies in the EU politics which are secularist or undermine fundamental values. It goes without saying that in relation to the restrictions of this article, the answers to both of these questions will only be a starting point for further discussion⁹.

8. "Axiological condition" of Poland compared with Europe

Studies on religiousness in Poland, conducted since the 1980s, prove that it is a constitutive characteristic of the personal identity of the majority of Poles [Roguska, Wciórka 2005: 319]. As sociologists remark, almost all respondents (95%) claim they are religious, and one in nine considers

Figure 1. I believe in a personal God

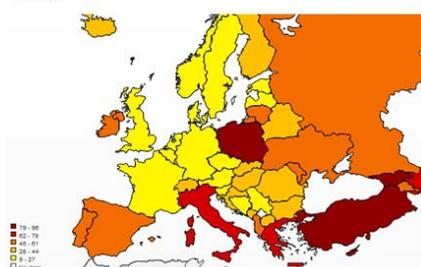
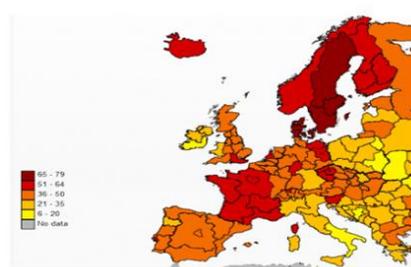


Figure 2. Abortion is justified



themselves deeply religious [Roguska, Wciórka 2005: 320]. The declarations signal also that over half of adults (57%) take part in religious practices at least once a week, which proves that despite fundamental changes in numerous areas of life, secularization, which was expected after 1989, has not taken place [Roguska, Wciórka 2005: 321].

⁹ More on what concerns the first question: see e.g. [CBOS 2005]; on what concerns the second question: see e.g. [Gierycz 2010].

Even a quick look at the map provided by the Atlas of European Values¹⁰ is enough to see that Poland is clearly different from the rest of Europe. For the question concerning the faith in personal God, only in Poland in the whole Europe the positive answers amount to over 80%, which is over twice the European average and three times as much as the average of the "northern states", including Germany and France. Only Turkey, a Muslim state, achieved a similar result of declarations.

Figure 3. Euthanasia is justified

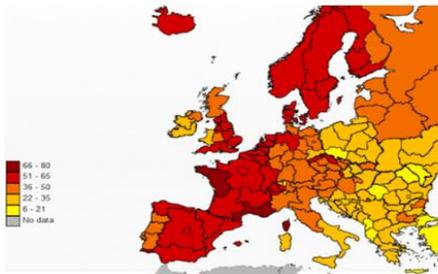
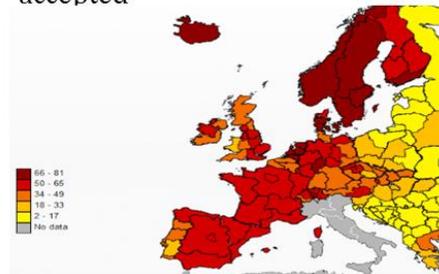


Figure 4. Homosexuality can be accepted



The difference in the attitude to God correlates with typical Polish attitude to fundamental values, which are an object of dispute or dissent in many European countries. In relation to the question of approving abortion [Atlas of European Values (a)] and euthanasia [Atlas of European Values (b)] as justified practices, the Polish society stands in complete opposition to the attitude characteristic of a large part of Western European societies. Disapproval of abortion and euthanasia is expressed by 70% of the society in Poland, while in Sweden, France, Spain or Great Britain it is the percentage of people approving of it. Analogically, differences can be noticed in relation to the approval of homosexual practices (and recognizing them as justified) [Atlas of European Values (c)].

9. Political significance of cultural identity – first trails of an answer

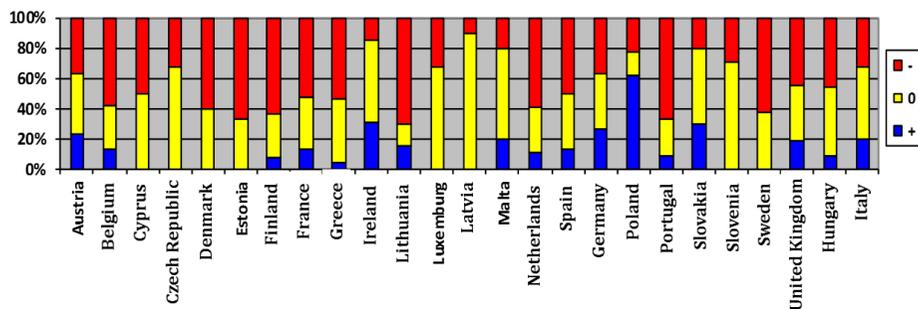
Are cultural differences reflected at all in the European politics? All the data here is only preliminary, and sometimes difficult to assess

¹⁰ This research project, conducted by a number of universities in Europe (Institute of Education London, University of Potsdam, Bogazici University of Istanbul, University of Banská Bystrica, University of Tilburg, Fontys University of Applied Sciences Tilburg) is directed at studying Europeans' attitude to religion, politics, work, society and family <http://www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu/new/home.php?lang=en> [22.09.2016]

unequivocally. It can be noted, however, that even during the negotiations over the Treaty establishing the Constitution for Europe and the Lisbon Treaty, the Polish delegation was consistently striving to introduce some form of reference to God or Christianity in these documents. In today's EU politics, most information is obtained from observing the European Parliament. As I devoted my previous articles to the significance of Members of Parliament in the axiological discussion [see: Gierycz 2011, Gierycz 2010], here I would only like to mention a general tendency, noticeable in the EP.

The Euro-fam portal, during the 2004-2009 term, conducted observations of activity of the Parliament (including the course of voting) [Euro-fam], among others. As part of presenting MEP's activity on the website, the results of over 100 roll-call votes were shown, concerning ethically sensitive topics from the last three terms, with particular attention devoted to the 2004-2009 term (ca. 60 votes), marking the votes of MEPs as "+" (for), "-" (against) or "0" (withheld), depending on the presented attitude to the values which are characteristic for the universal understanding of human rights that is deeply rooted in the legal and natural tradition. In the overview of the votes, individual MEPs were divided into three groups: those supporting the "traditional" values (mostly "+" votes), those indifferent to them (no consistency in voting or withholding) and those who negated them (mostly "-" votes).

Table 1. Results of votes on "ethically sensitive" topics according to Euro-fam



Source: Euro-fam.

An analysis of the results of votes in national groups presented on the Euro-fam portal as a graph relating the proportion of votes to mandates clearly show that even though Polish MEPs were not equivocal in their axiological positions, as a group, they constituted – from the perspective of national groups – leaders in standing against modifications in the

understanding of human rights in relation to ethically sensitive topics. Over 60% of Polish MEPs consistently voted for traditionally understood values. The next states in order: Slovakia, Germany and Italy, had fewer than 30% of MEPs who consistently supported the interpretation of human rights grounded in legal and natural tradition (respectively: 29%, 26%, 20%). It is characteristic that Poland had the lowest, apart from Lithuania, percentage of indifferent MEPs – only 15%. Taking into account the size of the Polish national group, it means that they were a significant part of the axiological discussion in the EP. It is worth adding that these results correspond to the self-assessment of Polish MEPs shown during in-depth interviews, as well as to the assessment of external observers [see: Gierycz 2011].

It seems that the issue concerns not only the European Parliament, although the access to internal data from other institutions is much more difficult. It can be noted, however, that in the Council of the EU, Poland was one of several countries who opposed financing tests on human embryos as part of the EU Programme for Research (7th Framework Programme) [Poland's Declaration 2006: 3-4] and was eventually outvoted. Currently, Poland is one of the states blocking the so-called horizontal anti-discrimination directive [Prawy.pl]. This directive, adopted by the Parliament in 2008, was formulated in accordance with the expectations of LGBT groups. Its adoption would mean that using social privileges for married couples and families would be impossible, as well as applying a different value to married and same-sex couples in education or refusing to provide services for LGBT organizations with opposing views (e.g. renting a room in one's own house to such a couple [European Commission 2008: 10]). As was noted by Manfred Weber, the leader of EPP delegation, a result of the directive is the harmonization of family law through the back door. Despite strong support of the Commission and the Parliament, the project has been under discussion in the Council of the EU for eight years.

Some evidence for the significance of Polish accession for the solutions in the area of morality politics can also be noticed in the judiciary. It is enough to note that the Judge-Rapporteur in the Bruestle case, which was a breakthrough in the history of the Court of Justice, was a Polish judge – Marek Safjan, who specializes in the problems of bio-medicine. In this decision, art. 6.2.c of the Directive 98/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 1998 on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions was construed, and it was stated that a human embryo is any human egg cell from the moment of fertilization, every non-fertilized human egg cell into which a nucleus from a mature human cell was implanted, and every non-fertilized human egg cell which was stimulated to division and

further development through parthenogenesis [Court of Justice 2011]. Therefore, for the first time in the history of EU law, fertilization was held to be the beginning of human life. It is a notable change in jurisprudence in comparison to earlier decisions, in which e.g. abortion was considered to be a mere medical service (see: Grogan case). The Tribunal once did not see a threat in the instrumentalization of the human body in the provisions of the bio-technological directive of 1998, which stated that "an element isolated from the human body or otherwise produced by means of a technical process, including the sequence or partial sequence of a gene, may constitute a patentable invention, even if the structure of that element is identical to that of a natural element." [see: Bosek 2011; Court of Justice 2001].

It is, finally, notable the Poles took advantage of the possibility to exert influence on EU moral politics by means of the European Citizens' Initiative. Over 15% of signatures under the petition "One of us", aiming to prohibit EU's financing of any activities threatening human life at the embryo stage (such as scientific research or abortions) and over 33% of signatures under the petition "Mum, dad and kids" originated from Poland [Glosdlazycia.pl]. This examples show that the Polish view, similarly to Polish MEPs' influence in the Parliament, is a significant support for the ideological and political forces which are often reduced to defensive positions in other states and which sometimes make it possible to change the direction of EU's actions in ethical issues which was before deemed to be the obvious one.

Ode to Joy, EU's informal anthem, says: "*Brüder—überm Sternenzelt Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen*" (*Brothers, above the starry canopy there must dwell a loving Father*). Rocco Buttiglione comments on it in the following way: "Why should a German be willing to make sacrifices for the Greeks or why should an Englishman or an Italian be ready to die for Gdansk? Schiller gives a very simple and straightforward answer: because we are brothers. But: do we want to be brothers? And can we be brothers if we have no common roots, if we do not have a father who loves us and makes us brothers? The question of the Christian roots is not so abstract and far from the concrete problems of the political everyday life as some imagine." He concludes: „But we will not have a city in common if we will not have a sanctuary ... We have built no sanctuary and as a consequence our unity was fragile and our solidarity too weak to resist the hardships of the crisis.” [Buttiglione 2014/2015: 15]. Looking in a more general way – in a longer perspective, without a sanctuary, our values start to diffuse, and without values, the special political concept of European integration in the form

suggested by Schuman is not sustainable. The initial arrangements presented above do not allow to deny, while not giving a guarantee, that Poland, which does not give in to processes of hastened secularization, can contribute significantly to the long-term integration process by strengthening EU's meta-political foundations and, in the end, securing the *genius* of European integration.

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