



New
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ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

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CURRENT CULTURE WAR IN EUROPE
CHRISTIANITY VERSUS CONTEMPORARY HUMANISM

EU ANTHROPOLOGY VERSUS CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Michał Gierycz

Theoretically speaking, addressing the question of the relationship between Unionist and Christian anthropology presents the researcher with two avenues of analysis and three possible answers.

The first way involves the claim of the implicitly Christian character of Union anthropology. Such a position, at least until a decade ago, was quite often present in the debate on the Union. After the adoption of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and especially after the agreement on the text of the Constitution for Europe and the subsequent adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, in which neither Christianity nor God was mentioned, there were loud voices emphasising that ‘in the Charter’s provisions the Christian heritage is strongly marked, albeit non-verbally’. The conviction that the Charter reflects the model of Europeanness outlined in the speeches of John Paul II was even presented as legitimate. Such statements therefore suggested the possibility of verifying the thesis that the Union, which explicitly rejects Christianity, is implicitly based on a Christian axiology and anthropology.

If - theoretically speaking - the thesis of the Christian character of EU anthropology were nevertheless to be falsified, a second

line of analysis would open up, taking up the question of the relationship between EU anthropology and Christian anthropology, understood in this case, however, as two, different anthropological perspectives. Two answers would still be possible to the question posed in this way: that EU anthropology and Christian anthropology are incompatible or that they are contradictory.

These three hypothetical answers to the question of the relationship between EU and Christian anthropology, which are in fact three different theses on the nature of their relationship, determine the structure of the present text. Before considering them, however, one problematic and one methodological remark must be made. When discussing the cultural or ideological dimension of the European Union, we usually refer to the question of values and not to anthropology. It is therefore appropriate, if only briefly, to highlight the relationship between axiology and anthropology, as well as the significance of the latter for the understanding of politics. Above all, however, it is necessary to define the cultural problem that prompts reflection on EU anthropology in the first place.

Argument about values, anthropology, politics

If one had to draw up a list of issues about which we are arguing particularly intensively throughout Europe, then - without a doubt - ethical issues, linked to fundamental human rights, would take a prominent place on it. From disputes over abortion, in vitro fertilisation, euthanasia, funding of stem cell research, ‘same sex marriage’ or the scope of the right to conscientious objection, to discussions on sex education and the right to express one’s ‘gender identity’, there has been a growing public debate in Europe over recent decades. It tends to be heated and the institutions of the European Union take an active part in it. Particularly after the Lisbon Treaty, which strengthens the axiological dimension of the Union, they have a clear moral policy impact: ‘postulate’, ‘expect’, ‘pay attention’, ‘support’, ‘demand’, as well as finance and sometimes even regulate.

When discussing the specifics of contemporary value disputes, it is not uncommon to argue that their essence stems from a different hierarchy of values. Gilbert Chesterton, already at the beginning of the twentieth century, noting that ‘the modern world is full of old Christian virtues gone mad’, argued that this situation is due to the fact that one value is separated from another, ‘forcing each to wander in its solitude’. There is a pertinent intuition in this, related to the fact that, as

Wojciech Chudy noted, ‘values walk in herds’, and thus form a system and only in this system, which has its own hierarchy, are they understandable. The current situation is understood in a similar way by Marek Safjan, who argues that there is nowadays ‘a consensus as to the catalogue of principles itself and where the conflict is situated, [but] there is no longer a consensus as to the methodology of choosing the preferential principle in specific circumstances’. The problem is that such an answer does not bring an explanation as to why such a serious conflict exists (especially if values are shared!) and on what grounds the parties to it are based. Put differently, we still do not know why the ‘value herd’ has been disorganised and the values forced to ‘wander alone’.

Meanwhile, there is much to suggest that the problem we are interested in does not only concern the hierarchy of values. If, for example, we were to undertake an analysis of the dispute over the legalisation of euthanasia, we would quickly discover that neither side disputes the overriding value of human dignity. It can, at most, accuse the other side of doing so. The identification of the value at the top of the hierarchy is not in dispute. What is in dispute is the understanding of that value and its practical implications.

Father Józef Tischner once aptly observed that at the very centre of the world of values stands man. In interpersonal relations, values constitute a prism through which ‘man formulates his attitudes to life, his deeds, according to which he evaluates the attitudes and deeds of other people’, constituting a particular ‘human score’. Through values, therefore, ‘one can see both the other person and oneself’. The problem of values, being inseparable from the anthropological problem, makes, Tischner stressed, that ethics – the theory of values, is ‘both a theory of the other and a theory of myself’. This means that both the way in which values are conceived and prioritised are ultimately linked to a particular understanding of the human being, and therefore also to an understanding of what is his good and how it relates to other goods.

In the light of the above, it seems reasonable to assume that possible differences in the understanding as well as the prioritisation of values will be linked to different anthropological positions. Ultimately, in order to ascertain what rights man has,

EU anthropology as Christian anthropology?

The question of the meaning of European values and the anthropology behind them was posed to the EU by St. John Paul II in the ongoing 2001-2003 constitutional debate. In the summer of 2003, among other things, he devoted a series of Sunday addresses before the Angelus prayer to this question, pointing out that for citizens living in a community based on a constitution, it is crucial to understand the ultimate source from which their rights come; that it is politically important to see that their rights do not come from the government, but from God. In his address to the new French Ambassador to the Vatican, Pierre Morel, in the context of a discussion about the legitimacy of the reference to Christianity in the proposed Constitution, John Paul II made another important point. He asked France, as it were: ‘How [could] one fail to mention the decisive contribution of the values professed by Christianity and contributing to the strengthening of culture and humanism in Europe [...] and without which its deepest identity cannot be understood?’.

The answer came very quickly. The French Foreign Ministry declared that ‘Europe is not a Christian club’ and ‘all religions have an equal right to be respected’ and therefore ‘one should not be singled out more than all others’. Méndez de Vigo, one of the members of the Convention’s presidium, commented on the Pope’s remarks rather coolly: ‘I expected - he stated - that the Pope would say something like this. However... I think it is important to refer to values in general’. And this is exactly what was done in the Constitutional Treaty, which later (with minor changes) became the Lisbon Treaty: no reference was made to either God or Christianity, but precisely a ‘general’ reference to values. For someone who observed John Paul II’s involvement, it was very moving that, after the drafting of the Constitution, he virtually fell completely silent. This silence

that is, what is rightfully due to man, we must consider certain answers regarding the nature, or at least the condition, of man to be adequate, and others not to be inadequate. Recognising that the concept of man is a presupposition of ‘every theory of state, law, justice’, it is worth tempting to take an anthropological perspective on European value disputes. The catalogue and understanding of values expressed explicitly in key EU law documents is fundamental from an anthropological perspective. Indeed, the values that institutions serve in determining how it shapes its tasks, its actions, as well as how it evaluates the actions of others (states, social groups, individuals, etc.), necessarily express, sometimes implicitly, a theory of the human being. Its unveiling should help to understand more deeply the meaning and potential consequences of the legal norms shaped today, in the European political process, which can be both ‘an instrument of ordering the public sphere at a given moment, and a tool for social change’. Ultimately, it should also help to understand the sources and nature of the ‘first principles’ disputes that beset us.

spoke, at least for ‘those with ears to hear’, much more than words of criticism.

With regard to the subject I have been asked, therefore, it will come to pass that the Union’s anthropology is certainly not Christian. For a Christian anthropology is intrinsically theocentric. As Fr Jerzy Szymik observes, ‘man’s reference to God, a reference mutual and intended by the Creator from beginning to end (from creation to salvation) is the basic axis of communal reality. For man is essentially, as it were, ‘theandric’: he is an entity who, in union with God, realises his essence and achieves his purpose. And thereby arrives at the truth about himself’. The exclusion of God in the course of defining the sources of value, the meaning of human community, necessarily makes a given anthropology different from the Christian one.

This can have - as Pius XII emphasised in his, rather challenging to modern sensibilities, commentary on the draft Universal Declaration of Human Rights - dangerous consequences. In a letter to President Truman, the Pope stated: ‘It is proposed to provide the basis for a lasting peace among nations. It was indeed futile to promise long life to any building erected on shifting sands or a cracked and crumbling foundation. We know that the foundations of such peace can only be secure if they are based on a solid faith in the one true God, the Creator of all men. It is He who, of necessity, has determined man’s purpose in life; it is from Him, with consequent necessity, that man derives personal, irrevocable rights to pursue this purpose and to attain it unhindered ... When the State, to the exclusion of God, becomes the source of the rights of the human person, man is immediately reduced to the status of a slave, a mere civic commodity to be used for the selfish purposes of the group that happens to have the power’.

A pagan but limited anthropology

A careful reading of Pius XII’s remarks reveals that the fact that anthropology is not Christian does not necessarily mean that it is contrary to Christian anthropology. Pius XII notes that this would happen in a situation in which ‘...the State, to the exclusion of God, becomes the source of the rights of the human person’. Is it possible, then, to imagine a situation in which an anthropology that does not refer to God is not an effect of the polis, as well as being an anthropology incompatible with the Christian faith?

Historically speaking, undoubtedly yes. Suffice it to recall in this context the ancient reflection on the nous and the law of nature, which was present in Europe long before Christianity and therefore also before monotheism. Greek pagan philosophers saw human beings as moral and rational natures, capable of discovering objective moral norms. Specifically human in their view was precisely the ability to discover universal norms that did not originate in man; norms that derive from the nature of being. The legitimation of what was human therefore, in their view, required reference to ‘the Higher’: to nature. This entailed a limitation. For it meant that ‘the human is not a product of man and his life with others in the polis’. On the contrary, this life in the polis had to take into account the requirements of orthos logos (recta ratio). Expressed in theological language, the reference to ‘the Supreme’ forced the recognition that man was a creature and not a creator, even if the true Creator was not yet known; that he was an intrinsically limited being and not an omnipotent one. Alain Besançon very aptly called this Greek approach to reality ‘natural orthodoxy’.

Let us emphasise: even if the ancient giants of the intellect did not know the true God, nor did they adhere to the polytheism of their time, when discovering the existence of the moral message of human nature, in practice they acted and thought as if God existed.

It seems to me that securing this ‘natural orthodoxy’ was Jacques Maritain’s aim in the course of drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. In the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, man, notes Ernst Wolfgang Boeckenforde, ‘is a secular man, emancipated from religious bonds’. He is therefore an entity that ‘becomes an end unto himself’, taking the place of God. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights made a significant change to this anthropological paradigm. Article 1 of the Declaration, which was adopted after the Second World War, outlines the concept of man, whose specific characteristics are no longer only

Limited anthropology versus unlimited anthropology

The anthropology I call restricted anthropology, which sees the source of humanism in man’s relationship to ‘the Supreme’: in ancient times to nature, in Christian times to God, and which

freedom, equality and fraternity, but above all inherent dignity, reason and conscience. This is an important change - law henceforth is no longer an expression of the Enlightenment and somewhat vague ‘popular will’, as the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen claimed. Instead, it becomes an instrument for the protection of objective human goods, recognised by reason and conscience, among which human rights protect the most fundamental goods. In doing so, the idea of the inherent dignity of the human being prejudices the fundamental and impassable difference between someone and something, showing that human animality is from the beginning the medium of the realisation of the person. At the same time, it ensures that the normative system is open to complementation and in constant contact with the concrete good of the individual human being. For it is precisely the objective nature of the protected goods, independent of culture or social mores, that makes human rights universal, regardless of political or cultural regime. Needless to say, man is not the creator of values here: he discovers them through his conscience.

Following on from earlier considerations, it will therefore be noted that although the anthropology of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is clearly agnostic - it does not refer to the existence or non-existence of God - it is a friendly agnosticism: the order of human rights is an order veluti si Deus daretur; as if God existed. The conception of conscience and reason adopted in the Declaration implicitly presupposes the existence of a higher authority: nature or God, whose/their existence - according to the best ancient and Christian traditions - makes it possible to ‘legitimate what is human’.

Perhaps - so, at any rate, argued Jacques Maritain - in the international and inter-civilisational project that was the United Nations, the Universal Declaration’s doctrine of objective values, expressing the conviction that some reactions are indeed appropriate and others indeed inappropriate to what we ourselves are, was all that could be achieved. Ultimately, guaranteeing as a reference point for legislated law a ‘natural orthodoxy’, to invoke the term of A. Besançon, is indeed no small thing. Nevertheless, it is also not surprising that from a Christian perspective, as Pius XII’s letter pointed out, this could be seen as a regression. Notwithstanding these controversies, human rights, expressing objective human goods, cognisable through an adequate view of the human person, could become a fundamental safeguard against the omnipotence of power and the basis of a ‘limited’ politics.

acknowledges the irremovable human imperfection that is a consequence of original sin, was particularly significantly undermined in the Enlightenment. It developed a radically

opposed view of human nature, generally founded on materialist premises, assuming the absence of an external (extraterrestrial) authority to which man would have to account for his actions and the absence of internal, in-built constraints on human nature that would act as a barrier to arbitrary human decisions (unlimited anthropology). According to this perspective, human being is (or potentially is) morally and epistemically perfect. He creates the world ‘as if there were no God’, abolishing ‘that which is Higher’ and locating himself in the place of the supreme being who determines the criteria of good and evil. Thus, while in the limited current, reason is conceived as a disposition containing a moral sense that allows recourse to the Absolute or to a universal norm independent of man and related to man’s nature, in the unlimited current, ethical rules are ultimately instrumental (e.g. in utilitarianism, utility is decisive, in Marxism, class interest).

The writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau, in whose works - as Robert Spaemann notes - a modern, non-teleological vision of nature is expressed for the first time, are one of the flagship expositions of such an unlimited anthropology. According to this view, man in the ‘state of nature’, this secularised version of paradise, lives ‘like an animal’, being deprived of moral reason. Then, through social processes, he creates (and modifies) values and his own personal identity. This self-creation, we should add, is by definition never-ending, since, as Condorcet taught, ‘man’s moral value, which is the necessary result of his organisation, can perfect itself indefinitely’. In place of ‘homo sapiens’, the Enlightenment thus presents, so to speak, the concept of ‘homo deus’: a vision of man as self-creator. This modern, unrestricted anthropology, expressed seedily in the Universal Declaration of Human and Civil Rights of 1789, in various ways in the 19th century, especially within Marxism and utilitarianism, and at the end of the 20th century within postmodernism, constructivism and transhumanism, ultimately has at its core the same Enlightenment conviction. Namely, it starts from the assumption that man is the absolute centre of reality and therefore locates him - falsely - in the place of God.

In this perspective, Eric Voegelin’s remark, claiming that ‘the thinkers of the 18th century distorted the idea of man beyond recognition. D’Alambert [...] stripped man of his bios theoreticos and reduced his essence to the utilitarian level of homo faber. Voltaire ruthlessly attacked the life of the soul [...]’

An unbounded anthropology of the European Union?

There are many indications that it is precisely an unrestricted anthropology that we are dealing with today in the European Union. This is evidenced, firstly, by the way in which values are enshrined in the Treaty on European Union; secondly, by the way in which they are conceived; thirdly, by the construction of new, previously unknown, criteria for defining the human being.

The ‘general reference to values’ mentioned by de Vigo is expressed in the TEU by the rejection of a metaphysics of

Diderot spoke of ‘useless contemplatives’. If, as J.S. Mill put it, moral dispositions are not part of our nature, they do not belong to the realm of reason, if by morality we want to understand something more than consequentialism (and thus the reduction of morality to an experiential cause-and-effect rule judged according to the logic of economic benefit). With the rejection of conscience as a tool that allows rationality, through the memory of its ‘irrational presuppositions’, does not degenerate into irrationality, the understanding of human life in a deeper than material-sensual dimension is lost. Consequently, it becomes impossible ‘to understand man himself and his place in the universe’.

It must be stressed, therefore, that in an unlimited logic, devoid of the horizon of God, reason is the accidental product of unintelligence. The Enlightenment has obscured the fundamental truth of man as a being created by a rational Being and, on that very account, rational. If, however, in the beginning there was only the Great Thunder instead of the Word (Jn 1:1), Nietzsche is right to proclaim that there is no truth and that all of us, ‘modern people, are heirs to the vivisection of conscience and the self-indulgence of animals that has been going on for millennia (...)’. Nietzsche draws another important consequence from this fact: there is no science either, only the cleverness of clever animals who impose their will on others by means of words.

The replacement of limited anthropology with unlimited anthropology is fundamental to the understanding of politics. By undermining the idea of truth and objective moral values, it consequently also undermines the idea of the common good. For relativism in practice means that the force of law is replaced by the law of force. If there is no truth and no absolute values, social relations, including within democratic institutions, begin to be seen as relations based on power; on the imposition of the will of some on others, with no recourse to objective criteria for resolving disputes. Since the unlimited vision rejects the existence of an ontology of the human being, accepting the thesis of the mutability or ‘fluidity’ of human nature (if the term ‘nature’ can be legitimately used here at all), it creates no objective limits to political action. This makes possible the idea of radical emancipation, which legitimises the unfettered transformation of social realities and, with them, of the entire world of values.

values. The preamble of the Treaty reads: ‘Inspired by the cultural, religious and humanist heritage of Europe, from which arise universal values which constitute inviolable and inalienable human rights, as well as freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law’. From the point of view of meta-taxiological resolution, ‘in the recital in question we are dealing with a clear recognition of cultural relativism. According to the accepted formula, values derive from the cultural, religious and humanist heritage of Europe. Since values themselves,

their universality is also a feature recognised because of the development of culture’.

In doing so, Marek Piechowiak points out that ‘in such a perspective, it is consistent to omit dignity, which is conceived as an inherent, in its essence independent of culture, source of rights’. Indeed, the preamble of the TEU does not mention dignity among the fundamental values. It only does so in Article 2 TEU, but in the context of values recognised ‘by the Member States’ and not an inherent source of rights. As it seems reasonable, therefore, to consider that the position adopted in the Treaty is no longer based on the belief that human beings are capable of recognising the objective, and therefore universal, requirements of human dignity (the so-called metaphysics of values). Instead, the catalogue of values is in the TEU based on the prevailing opinion among the Member States (the so-called sociology of values). Here, the legitimisation of what is human does not involve a reference to ‘the Higher’. On the contrary, the human being ultimately becomes a product of the polis.

Although this meta-axiological problem only appears expressis verbis in the Lisbon Treaty, the axiological solutions adopted in the Charter of Fundamental Rights already foreshadowed such a logic. It was most explicitly revealed in the way Article 9 of the CFR was formulated. It states: ‘The right to marry and the right to found a family shall be guaranteed in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of these rights’. Here, the Charter makes the protected good directly dependent on the decision of the national legislator. From the perspective of human rights philosophy, this article poses quite a conundrum. To put it bluntly: it is completely incomprehensible on human rights grounds not to define the protected good, but to make its content dependent on the decision of the legislator. If it is inherent, it cannot depend on the legislator. If it depends on the legislator, it loses its inherent character. In an attempt to transcend this impasse, the lack of a legal definition of marriage in Article 9 has been compensated for by the definition set out in the Explanations to the Charter, which are - according to their authors - the key to its interpretation. Let us quote them in full:

‘This article is based on Article 12 of the ECHR, which reads: ‘Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.’ The wording of the article has been updated to cover cases where national legislation recognises other options for family formation than marriage. The article does not provide for or prohibit the granting of the status of marriage to same-sex unions. This right is therefore similar to that provided by the ECHR, but its scope may be extended if national legislation so provides’.

The notions of ‘updating’ as well as the ‘similarity’ of this article to Article 12 ECHR are somewhat puzzling. If we look from the side of anthropological analysis at what has been updated, we see that we are confronted with a new philosophy of man and the institution of marriage and family.

As stated in the Explanatory Memorandum, Article 9 ‘does not provide for or prohibit the granting of the status of marriage to same-sex unions’. To put it differently, it allows for a homosexual interpretation of marriage, making in fact - obvious not only to lawyers - a redefinition of marriage, hitherto necessarily linked to the logic of gender complementarity. As Andrzej Zoll notes, ‘the constitutive function of marriage and the family, although obviously not exclusive, is procreation and the rearing of a new generation. In the upbringing process, each sex plays an important and irreplaceable role. Every child has the right to the closest contact in the family with his mother and father, with a woman and a man’. This right is not guaranteed by Article 9 of the Charter. Indeed, marriage, which primary law recognises as a value protected by the EU and therefore an element of the common good, is understood differently both from the international legal view of marriage and from the approach characteristic of most European constitutions.

It is worth noting, however, that it is clear from the Explanations that it was not so much a change in the conception of marriage, but a change in the conception of the family that gave rise to the new definition of the right protected by Article 9 of the CFR. It was intended to ‘cover cases in which national legislation recognises other possibilities for creating a family than marriage’. In essence, therefore, the Charter’s conception of the family follows what sociologist Jeffrey Weeks calls the ‘family of choice’. It is noteworthy that the family is defined here ‘no longer by blood ties, marriage ties or adoption ties, but by the diverse relationships and cohabitation of consenting, autonomous, adult individuals and their offspring’.

The above approach, which can be traced back to the logic of compromise, or better, the ‘lowest common denominator’, significantly changes the understanding of the human being. If it is similar to the logic of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is similar to Averroes’ comments on Aristotle’s thought on the soul to those of St Thomas Aquinas. In other words, although the anthropology of the CFR is declaratively and conceptually similar to the existing anthropology expressed in the PDHR, it ultimately turns out to be contradictory to it on a key point: the way of conceiving man. It sees man not so much as a moral and social entity, but as a consequent individual, determining (through the political process) the content of the protected good. Marriage between a man and a woman, which is the basis of the family, ceases here to be the natural (in the moral and essential sense) and fundamental cell of society. On the contrary, it becomes ‘one of the life options’, but no longer a form of life resulting from human nature. To put it another way, it becomes a freedom and not a right, which may explain - let us add as an aside - the inclusion of the right to marry and found a family under the heading ‘Freedom’.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights still ‘modernises’ the concept of man in several important places (such as the protection of human life or the concept of integrity). Nevertheless, I would like to draw particular attention to the complete anthropological novelty introduced in the way the prohibition of discrimination is framed.

Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights states: ‘Any discrimination based, in particular, on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited’. The *differentia specifica* of this regulation against the background of international and constitutional non-discrimination regulations is that ‘the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is the first charter of international human rights to include the concept of ‘sexual orientation’. This, seemingly minor, addition from an anthropological perspective is indeed a substantial modification.

It is worth noting that, in the logic of bounded anthropology, it is not entirely clear what sexual orientation would actually be. If the concept means a natural sexual attraction to a person of the opposite sex (man to woman and woman to man), then this new protected characteristic would be no different from the prohibition of sex discrimination. Its meaning is only revealed

Even a cursory analysis of the axiological credo of the EU makes it possible to see that the presentation of the values or goods protected by the EU, not only verbally but also materially, has little in common not only with Christian anthropology, but in general with the - specific to true humanism - limited anthropology, related to the reference to ‘the Higher’. It is sometimes difficult to perceive this change because, at the level of the concepts used, including the definitions of values, we have the impression of continuity in the Christian narrative. We speak of dignity, freedom, equality, justice and love. However, the meaning given to these words is sometimes not only distant from that given to them by Christianity, but even contradictory to it. The EU’s specific approach to values, which breaks with the metaphysics of values, means that, in the final analysis, the content of the good protected by the Union derives from an act of will of the legislator (EU or national). This means that, in fact, ‘the State, to the exclusion of God, becomes the source of the rights of the human person’.

At the same time, Pius XII’s warning about the danger of reducing the human being ‘to the status of a slave, a mere civic

if we take as our starting point a different anthropology, according to which the sexual attraction of a woman to a man and of a man to a woman has nothing natural about it, not only in a biological sense, but also in an essential sense. By invoking the concept of sexual orientation as a variable independent of the gender category, a new division of the human species is made. Here, being male and female loses its connection with human sexuality. The latter is defined according to other criteria, which make it possible to distinguish between hetero-, homo-, bi-, trans-, omni-, pan-, etc.-sexual persons. Ultimately, this new division of the human species reveals an internal contradiction between the category ‘gender’ and the category ‘sexual orientation’. It also seems to shed light on the reasons for treating marriage in the Charter as simply one of human freedom. According to the spirit of unrestricted anthropology, all relationships are occasional, dependent on the discretion and desire of the individual. In this perspective, the position that also marriage, its permanence, form and content should depend only on the decision of the nupturients becomes understandable.

commodity to be used for the selfish ends of a group which happens to have the power’ is beginning to ring alarmingly in the ears of parents who lose control over the upbringing of their children in the most personal and intimate sphere of human life; doctors or pharmacists who are restricted in their right to exercise their freedom of conscience; representatives of the Churches who are taken to court on charges of discrimination for preaching moral doctrine, etc. Such examples can, unfortunately, be multiplied without too much difficulty.

The anthropology that is emerging in the EU, which is breaking with not only Christian but also ancient convictions about the legitimacy of what is human in relation to ‘that which is higher’, is causing, before our very eyes, ‘the development of a culture that is in absolute contradiction not only with Christianity, but with the religious and moral traditions of mankind’. In this perspective, the powerful disputes over first principles, which *nolens volens* we are witnessing and participating in, are fully understandable. At the same time, not only the fate of the Union but also of European civilisation seems to depend on their resolution.

DEATH OF THE AGE OF REASON

Jan Tarnas

‘The rebellion of new ideologies against the Tao is a rebellion of the branches against the tree: if the rebels could succeed they would find that they had destroyed themselves.’

- C.S. Lewis ‘*Abolition of Man*’

INTRODUCTION

Western civilisation is in a state of cultural war. This is not, of course, the first culture war to attempt to change the face of Europe; one can think back to the Stalinist era and its impact on culture, the German policy of *kulturkampf*, or, above all, the French Revolution, which forever changed the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. All of the above have had a seminal effect on the face of Western culture. However, the current culture war is different from the previous ones - it is far more complex and better prepared.

To understand why wars of ideas are being waged on the ground of culture, it is necessary to realise that culture is not just a space of art, but the domain of human identity, which, along with language, history, territory and religion, is one of the factors of nation-building. Changes to culture in this way, especially those of a revolutionary nature, may not only destroy the established artistic order but, above all, have the power to destabilise and destroy societies and nations.

Primary evil

The founding fathers of the modern culture war are the postmodernists, the agitators of critical theory and the revisionists of the Marxist doctrine. A milestone for the development of modern Marxism was the establishment of the Institute for Social Research (*Institut für Sozialforschung*) at the University of Frankfurt am Main in 1923, which carried out the necessary revision of classical Marxist thought. Marx initially recognised exploitation as a *primary evil*, as an inalienable feature of the capitalist economic system, seeing in the oppressed proletariat the force that would bring about communism by means of armed revolution. The *casus* of the post-revolutionary policy of terror in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the absence of the expected revolution in the West, forced Marxists to reformulate their utopian doctrine. Standing in contrast to the labour culture promoted in the West, endorsed by Catholic social teaching (especially

To put the current ideological and cultural conflict in a historical perspective, many scholars point to the events of the 1960s in the USA as the first phase of the war. Indeed, it was in the American perspective that those attitudes were outlined and developed, which persist in this war to this day. Following sociologist James D. Hunter, we could say that the divisions at the heart of modern culture wars are created by impulses towards orthodoxy (represented by traditionalists, advocates of axiomatic normativity) and impulses towards progressivism (represented by critics of the existing reality and advocates of continuous reform)¹. Indeed, American culture has served the culture wars as a kind of incubation and maturation space for certain content and attitudes. However, if one wants to look for the real causes of the current conflict and the thinkers responsible for its programmatic content, one has to go back several decades earlier.

since Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 15 May 1891), and offering the possibility of social advancement to indigent groups, the revisionists based their efforts on the promise of liberating the individual from the hardships of arduous work and the restrictive social norms imposed by culture that restricted the absolute freedom of individuals. Already then, the primary addressee of the new Marxist interpretation was the naturally rebellious youth, for whom the immediate antagonism was to be the restrictive culture, especially in those manifestations that most shaped their cultural worldview - family, religion and education².

The theories developed at the Institute of Social Research were based on the earlier writings of Wilhelm Reich, an Austrian communist and psychoanalyst, who outlined the theory of the sexual revolution programme (*Freudo-Marxism*), according

¹ Cf. J. Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*, New York: Basic Books, 1991, p. 43

² Cf. J. Tarnas, *Neomarksistowskie korzenie antyszuki współczesnej, w: Filozofia w literaturze i sztuce*, red. S. Dworacki i M. Jaworska-Woloszyn, 'Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii im. Jakuba z Paradyża', Gorzów Wielkopolski, pp. 267-281.

to which the suppression of sexual desire in children leads to the development of a pathological personality susceptible to the influence of fascist ideology³. Reich's theories were refined by his collaborator Erich Fromm⁴, who noted that through the programmatic sexualisation and anarchisation of children and adolescents, thereby dismantling the classical system of education and upbringing, the social revolution so desired by Marxists could be brought about.

Based on the theories being developed at the Institute for Social Research, Max Horkheimer published an essay (*Traditionelle und kritische Theorie*, 1937)⁵ in which he presented an alternative to the then-anachronistic dialectical materialism⁶. The critical theory presented therein defines reality as a representation of social relations based on an irresolvable conflict of social injustice, which leads to the conclusion of its permanent defectiveness; if anything can be better, it is not only the present state that is bad, but every possible state, because it is always the case that it could be even better. Correction leads to a better but still flawed reality, with no chance of achieving optimum harmony, so purposive thinking is utopian. In contrast, it always makes sense to destroy an imperfect reality that prevents progress. Critical theory, therefore, is a justification for destruction to remove the defective and all manifestations of its perpetuation - including the conservative attitude. The first significant implementation of critical theory was the joint work of Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno entitled *Dialectic of the Enlightenment (Dialektik der Aufklärung)*⁷, in which the authors place responsibility for the instrumentalisation of reason and the mythologisation of Enlightenment ideas on culture and the values perpetuated within it (based on Christianity), which led to currents such as fascism and consequently bear responsibility for the barbarities of the 20th century⁸.

The Institute for Social Research's revision of classical Marxist thought to the form of critical theory shifted the notion of the Marxist analogue of primordial evil from the economic to the cultural sphere, pointing to the necessity of combating the permanent defectiveness of Western culture and all manifestations of its preservation: both practical - understood as classical education based on values and religious morality; and symbolic - such as art that

perpetuates values in culture and stimulates reflection and contemplation. The Frankfurt School, in the space of a mere thirty years, created a modern ideology seeking to liberate the individual from any attachment to the manifestations of the values of a classically understood culture, which in practice postulates tolerance only for progressive views to maintain a society permanently incapable of building relationships, which constitutes a *perpetual motion* of social revolution that is the guarantor of the maintenance of power - the only thing Marxists really care about. The final stage in the revision of Marxism was the social implementation of the content presented, according to the principle that the actual social revolution would only take place based on the population then prepared by the sexual revolution. The adaptation of the above objectives was served, among others, by art and culture, which, while influencing the public with certain ideas, did not express their genesis *expressis verbis*.

The modernised version of critical theory is based on the conviction that Western cultural institutions are permanently flawed, which, in the light of this theory, are racist, sexist, and homophobic and therefore need to be got rid of. Society itself is understood as a conglomerate of minority groups, which firstly excludes the mutual possibility of citizens seeing each other as individuals and consequently prevents the creation of a deeply unified national structure while eliminating concepts such as national interest from public discourse. The vector of dynamics in such a perceived society is neither *fact* nor *right*, which completely excludes the possibility of rational argumentation, and the only thing that really counts is power and who has it. The system of seizing power is embedded in the belief that you either have power, or you do not. If you are deprived of power in this system, you are most likely exploited by someone who has it. This enemy for groups of modern Marxists is the white, heterosexual male - a symbol of oppression and subjugation. If minority groups are seen as permanent victims in this system, then all the rest must be identified as permanent aggressors. Viewed in this way, society is placed in a state of permanent revolution, where some see others not as individuals but as representatives of hostile camps. It must be understood that if a social group, or their collective, desires the total elimination of its opponents, which is the case in the current culture war, this is no liberalism. It is communism.

Barbarians at the gates

The contemporary geopolitics of the culture war is not just a division between Europe and North America but between the *Anglosphere* and the rest of Western culture. The *Anglosphere* is not just understood here as the countries of Anglo-Saxon culture but also as the digital reality of the *Anglosphere*. The culture wars have successfully adapted to modern media, which, with the dominant use of English in social media, translates into the dynamics of the spread of new phases of this conflict. First, the content is implemented in the Anglosphere, and once it has matured and gained a significant number of followers, it is implemented into the reality of other cultural circles.

One of the paradoxes of the contemporary culture war is that the West has been attacked from within - it is a war of West against West, aimed at destroying Judeo-Christian civilisation. The division mentioned above between the actors in the culture wars scene - between progressives and traditionalists - is to some extent accurate, but it is also part of the rhetoric promoted as part of the polarising image of society. To better understand who is fighting against whom, one needs a deeper analysis of the objectives of the actions taken, the typology of areas in which they are carried out and the methodology used by the opponents. The culture wars are, of course, being fought by all available means, but three areas have proved crucial in this game: 1. education; 2. culture and art; and 3. the media.

It is important to note that in the age of technocratic globalisation, due to changes in lifestyles and the time required for income-generating activities, it is education that has to a large extent, begun to take over the educational functions owed to parents. It is no secret that the education systems have been a total failure, as for years they have failed to raise adult men and women, only biologically mature children, largely because the education system teaches to react based on emotion rather than rationality and reason. The drastic changes in the education system can be seen not only in the increasingly understated curriculum but in the degradation of the requirements and expectations of students - students are no longer admonished for bad reasoning but praised for being proactive. At the same time, the academic system has become ideologically corrupted. Higher education no longer serves to build national and intellectual elites, much less does it lead to real economic gains. The *ethos* of university education has been entirely subjected to moral engineering, and the academy has proved itself useful insofar as extra-argumentative

Neo-tribalist shamanism

Why are the adversaries of the culture war particularly committed to annihilating the Christian aspects of civilisation? The answer is straightforward - it is Christianity that is the foundation of Western civilisation and the mainstay

progressivist theses, unverifiable by evidence and rationality, gain support in the university space in the form of increasingly trivial professions and faculties.

Postmodernism has deprived culture of direction and saddled it with anti-quality, as a result of which it has become susceptible to any kind of content - e.g. the contemporary drift towards themes of identity politics. In addition, the boundary between mass culture and high art has been effectively blurred over the past decades, with the result that celebrities have now grown into veritable idol artists who speak in front of audiences of millions of onlookers on subjects they know nothing about, being listened to with the same sacra as the ancient Pythia. In contrast, real art has been marginalised and is falling into oblivion. Few contemporaries realise that art has had a serious social task since antiquity due to its parenetic function - it has served to educate younger generations on axiomatic ideals, it has perpetuated the moral spine between a mud puddle and a cloud. That this is a function that is not only overlooked but actively fought against is best evidenced by the resources of contemporary galleries and the artistic activities promoted, which effectively marginalise in their audiences the conviction that it is possible to admire the achievements and thinking of artists and past centuries.

The real weapon of the cultural revolution has turned out to be the media, mainly contemporary social media, effectively destabilising societies and individuals in favour of minority groups based on an effective *divide et impera* methodology. The media, which in theory were supposed to serve as a public arm of intelligence, a transmission belt between transparent power and private individuals, became an effective propaganda tool - a presenter of coded information about the vague actions of power towards digitally exposed individuals. Paradoxically, with a huge distrust of news programmes and contemporary journalism, the social media space, especially for younger generations, is one of the most powerfully consciousness-shaping spaces of their functioning.

For decades, modern man has been directed against the ability to argue, reason and think rationally in these three areas, deprived of the ability to see facts and evidence. Logical reasoning has been replaced by propaganda, accusations of insult and humiliation and a deep-seated denial of the ability to engage in constructive debate in favour of ostracising all who oppose it.

of something without the overthrow of which the ultimate Marxist revolution - reason - will not take place. All other ideological aspects aside, the modern culture war is also a war of anti-rationality against reason.

3 Cf. R. Bendix, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism by Wilhelm Reich*, 'American Journal of Sociology', Sep. 1947, Vol. 53, No. 2, p. 149-150; Chr. Turner, *Wilhelm Reich: the man who invented free love*, 'The Guardian', Jul 2011.

4 See: E. Fromm, *Sozialpsychologischer Teil*, in: *Studien über Autorität und Familie. Forschungsberichte aus dem Institut für Sozialforschung*, Alcan, Paris 1936, p. 77-135; E. Fromm, *Zweite Abteilung: Erhebungen*, w: *Studien über Autorität und Familie. Forschungsberichte aus dem Institut für Sozialforschung*, Alcan, Paris 1936, pp. 229-469.

5 An extension of this essay is Horkheimer's joint work with H. Marcuse entitled *Traditionelle und kritische Theorie*; Zob. H. Marcuse, *Philosophy and Critical Theory*, w: *Critical Theory and Society*, eds. A. Reader, S. Bronner, D. Kellner, Routledge, New York 1989, pp. 58-74.

6 'Critical Theory was initially developed in Horkheimer's circle to think through political disappointments at the absence of revolution in the West, the development of Stalinism in Soviet Russia, and the victory of fascism in Germany. It was supposed to explain mistaken Marxist prognoses, but without breaking Marxist intentions' – J. Habermas, *The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment: Horkheimer and Adorno*, w: idem, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trans. F. Lawrence, MA: MIT Press, Cambridge 1987, p. 116; See: H. Walentowicz, *Program teorii krytycznej Maxa Horkheimera*, 'Nowa Krytyka' 2001, 12, pp. 5-40.

7 First edition in 1944 under the title *Philosophische Fragmente*. It was the revised version of 1947 that bore the title *Dialektik der Aufklärung*. Along with *The Authoritarian Personality and One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, it is considered one of the key books that have left its mark on the shape of twentieth-century philosophy, sociology, culture and politics; See: D. Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1980.

8 It is significant that in all publications of the Frankfurt School, German National Socialism (Nazism), to which they refer, is consistently referred to as fascism. It seems that this is not a mistake, but the result of a direct similarity between Nazism and communism. Despite the diametric difference between fascism and Nazism, it was the *fascist* who became the stigma of 'reactionary right-wing groups' in the jargon of the extremist left, up to the present day.

The truth is that progressives cannot rationally argue their theses, so they can only win by completely silencing their opponents. For this reason, the mechanism for grubbing up the methodology of rational reasoning is based on the pattern of new religiousness, in which belonging to a particular sphere of opinion is not a matter of evidential support for theses but almost neo-tribalist membership of a religious sect. Violators face ostracism as in the primitive community - a shaman or shamans, who are priests of the new ideology, publicly stigmatise opponents and expel them from the community. This is a direct result of the construction of the progressives' pseudo-argument, which assumes that their actions are aimed at improving the lives of humanity, so anyone who opposes them, or at least enters into an argument with them, does not want humanity to achieve this good, and must therefore be inherently evil and desire this evil for others.

Improving reality by overthrowing the old order by progressivist activists is supposed to lead to an almost neo-sacral vision of the world, which is based on utopian beliefs that: 1. *multiculturalism* will eradicate all social prejudices; 2. *modern lifestyles* will eradicate religiosity and blur the differences between the different lifestyles of individuals; 3. *environmentalism* will, by joint efforts, lead us to save the planet from being fried; and 4. *moral and cultural relativism* will erase all human differences on the way to creating a happy brotherhood of all people. An individual with access to the *continuum of knowledge* of past generations, possessing the basic tools of logical reasoning, can judge without difficulty that this utopia is nothing but *cultural totalitarianism*.

According to the utopian vision of progressivists, the canons of education and art are overturned in the name of statistical ethnic correctness instead of objective educational and artistic quality. Ideology fights knowledge and culture because it is well aware of the critical stabilising function of the unity of a social group as a subject, which is culture and the consciousness of history. Progressives are so afraid of debate because reasoning based on facts and evidence completely strips their utopia of its façade. Unfortunately, the revisionists of this doctrine have long understood that the elimination of reason eliminates not only the guarantee of freedom of expression but also the impetus for dissent. If evidence is not recognised and facts cease to matter, there is no longer any room for rationality and reason. You cannot reason if you do not recognise evidence, and there is no room for rationality where there is no distinction between what is right and what is wrong. We now stand on the brink of the death of the age of reason. Where there is no right and wrong, one can only choose whether one is for or against.

The contemporary situation of Western civilisation is particularly dangerous because the shifts in moral judgements in the aesthetic sphere, matured over decades in artistic and cultural activities, have brought modern citizens to the brink of moral permissiveness. While the patterns of artistic activities can be considered scandalous and shameful, the mechanisms of reasoning and moral judgements implemented in them have shifted individual sensibilities towards the phenomenon of life.

From the perspective of the totalitarian cultural revolution, this situation places us dangerously close to the civilisation of death. At this point, an open question must be raised about the cultural normalisation of abortion and euthanasia, realising that they are part of the progressivist ideology being promoted.

The burdening of education and culture with the pathogen of ideology has led to a paradoxical situation in which people from the less affluent social classes turn out to be much more rational, sensitive and decent than the economically stable class, which once formed the core of the intellectual elite but now lives in a world of fantasy. The elimination of argumentation from education has resulted in the creation of groups of people who cannot conceive of any truth other than their own or that which is imposed on them - e.g. a vote in favour of Brexit, or the strengthening of the guard on Poland's eastern border, which is also a flank of NATO, are racist positions against immigrants that must be suppressed by all available means. This is how the right to self-determination is being lost. Through fear of imposed cultural norms that grow into a pseudo-religious movement. At the most technocratically developed moment in history, we are returning to the most primitive form of social life - tribalism.

The stripping of individualism from individuals in favour of placing them in minority groups, in interest groups represented by sexuality, race and gender, is also a symptom of the contemporary identity crisis of the individual, who, without knowledge and cultural roots, needs identity policies for self-identification. It is paradoxical, although not excluded, that it is intentional to focus people based on what makes them different from other citizens instead of emphasising what unites them. This is an anti-unity and highly anti-national action. A century ago, in my homeland, the thinking was *I am Polish, so I have Polish duties*. Today, you would sooner hear *I am a representative of such and such a minority, living in such and such a geographical area*. Looking at the commitment with which the doctrine of *divide et impera* is being implemented in social engineering, one has to ask: *qui prodit?* Who benefits from a divided America and a divided Europe increasingly losing its ability to unite? Until the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was talk of a race for dominance between the US, China and Russia. To compare what kind of cultural policy is currently being promoted in China and the US, one only needs to juxtapose the algorithms of Tik-Tok, a hugely popular app (actually digital reality) among young people. While the US promotes material that promotes modern ideology and silly videos, China promotes images of successful people striving for self-development. The danger that Russia poses to Europe, both militarily and economically, is probably beyond anyone's comprehension - one only needs to look at Russia's territorial expansion since 2008. At the same time, it is vital to be aware of the fact that, apart from its revolutionary effect in the cultural and ideological sphere, the current culture war is also a smokescreen for significant problems facing Europe, which disappear from public debate under the pressure of the culture war rhetoric. These problems are, first and foremost, the drastic depopulation of European countries caused by

a significant decline in the fertility rate and the continuous influx of immigrants into Europe. The problem of immigrants in Europe is not only an economic problem but, above all, an identity problem resulting from the demographic dynamics of immigrants and the non-European ideological currents claiming their place in European reality.

At this point, the question can be raised as to why Central and Eastern Europe is still resisting this mass indoctrination that is permeating the West? It seems that the clash between the

countries left to their own devices behind the Iron Curtain and the reality of communism was deeply memorable for the people living here. At the same time, the enemy's tangibility was a stimulus for active and intellectual resistance, which paradoxically contributed to maintaining much better standards of humanistic and ethical education than in the West. However, the boundary of historical consciousness between generations and the increasing expansion of cultural trends from the West, with the increasing influence of technology on our lives, will soon bridge this divide.

The last will be the first

Christianity is the fundamental bond of Western culture. The first criterion for belonging to a community regardless of race, birth, or wealth status. In place of criteria beyond human control, Christianity offered the voluntary choice of a specific value system, which became the pillar of Western culture. The Old Testament Bible gave the fundamental right to life - the vision of man created in the image and likeness of God. Christ's gospel gave the commandment of love of neighbour - the principle of universal social equality. Two millennia of the Catholic Church instilled in Western civilisation the practice of human life framed in the relationship of the immortal soul to God and eternity. Therefore, Christianity cannot survive if a total revolution is to take place.

Also unfavourable to the revolutionaries is the Catholic coupling of *fides et ratio*. To eliminate the Christian normative system and life based on axioms, progressives must also eliminate the Christian *ethos* of the family, understood as the cradle of reactionary values. This includes, in particular, the cultural model of strong men, capable of resistance, fathers raising their children to live a life faithful to great ideals while being guarantors of capitalism - the original economic enemy of Marxism.

Snare drums beat

A community of individuals sharing the same goal and culture is gradually being replaced by a community comprised of interest groups that oppose each other. This balance of power progressives want to dissolve by conscripting the undecided and destroying the opponents. The method of accusation promoted today is to place oneself in the victim's position, accusing the aggressors of one of the following social crimes, for which ostracism is applied without the possibility of defence.

The primary form of oppression over minorities that progressives tell their opponents is to spread hatred, such as against black people or sexual revolutionaries. The reality is that, in the space of sixty years, society has moved from Martin Luther King's dream of a world in which people would be judged by the measure of their character and not by the colour of their skin to socially legalised racism - for all blame for all

manifestations of racism lies, in modern ideological newspeak, with white heterosexual men.

The rhetoric of the fight against racism enables progressives to adopt the stance of the *victim* who claims the right to revenge and redress for all manifestations of injustice, including past injustices, blaming mainly their contemporaries and the culture they represent. This is how we arrive at the paradox of self-destruction, which contradicts the historical struggle for social justice. In the past, thinkers who opposed slavery, social or racial inequality never opposed Western culture *per se*. Instead, the slogans they raised called for the communities of the time to strive to grow up to the axioms of Christian Enlightenment culture - universal equality, dignity, and freedom. Such a practice, however, correlates with a revisionist revolutionary agenda.

Those who dare to publicly oppose the rhetoric presented in this way are sowers of *hate speech*. The struggle of newspeak against freedom of expression and the exclusion of reasoned analysis of arguments is not only a censorship of individuals but also a total censorship of the context and intent of statements, against which any attempt to point out facts is burdened with the stigma of hate speech.

Modern activists, the so-called *woke* movement, busily take advantage of the questioning of the knowledge of centuries and past generations, which has deprived the individual of questions about the meaning of existence and the human journey. What to do if the time of life is no longer seen in the perspective of a journey to something greater? The activist ideology of *woke* proposes to replace the meaning of the individual's life with a struggle for social justice, which is characterised by two fundamental claims: firstly, the need for social intervention, and therefore the scale of the problem they address, has never been greater in history; and secondly, it is necessary to fight to change the behaviour and basic methodology of reasoning of other people until views represented by activists constitute the only universal ones. The first claim is, of course, historically deceitful. The second, on the other hand, points to the anti-debate, irrational methodology of the totalitarian destruction of opponents.

All the efforts of minority groups discussed above are accompanied in the public perception by an error of misinterpretation - for none of the above groups claiming the right to do so is representative of the general public. However, the image of this revolutionary rhetoric is different, and the progressives' use of the media veil is instrumental in this. However, to see that the one who shouts louder is not right, one has to return to the categories of fact and evidence.

The problem that traditionalists will soon have to face is a phenomenon that C.S. Lewis predicted as early as the 1940s

- soon, the gap between generations will be so significant that access to the knowledge and the way of thinking of past generations, the questions they undertook that are relevant to human life and the answers verified in history, will be unattainable except through the arcana of the humanities. Sciences which, in a compromised education system and in universities producing graduates devoid of qualifications for rational thinking, are themselves moving away from the *continuum of knowledge*, looking more and more like institutional mutual admiration societies, instead of arcana of knowledge between what is good and what is bad.

Analysing the detailed course of the culture wars, their rhetoric, and their system of action, it seems that it is not the traditionalists but the progressives who constitute the social minority. It is also heartening to know how many prominent writers and thinkers are increasingly speaking out boldly about the ongoing indoctrination of Western culture, unequivocally opposing it. This is a good thing because the more aware individuals are of this fact, the more difficult their indoctrination will be, which in its current phase is based on the assumption of guilt manipulation. However, it must be noted that the culture war requires traditionalists to approach the problem on two fronts - in the dimension of the struggle for the individual's identity, which can only develop based on the moral law and the categories that guide its internal ethical imperative; and in the social dimension, where the recovery of the social and national capacity to unite citizens requires traditionalists to educate a new generation of leaders who will not only undertake political service but will find in themselves the ability to explain clearly to the peoples, the cause and effect sequences that will overturn the utopian vision of the world for which many decent people are fighting so passionately today with their eyes closed.

IS THE NATION-STATE AN ALTERNATIVE TO GLOBALIZATION? (IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19)

Mamuka Beriashvili

All events in human history that lead to radical social, political, legal and economic changes are largely realized in one of the nation-states or in some union of states with a similar consciousness. Depending on the impact of these events on the development of human history, whether positive or negative, the extent of their significance is estimated. Therefore, some events do not leave the borders of a nation-state or union of states and can be marked locally, while others have a global historical significance.

Thus, for example, the French Revolution, although prepared and carried out in a single state, played a major role in the complete transformation of almost all of Western Europe, and then gradually over the centuries, one might say, in the formation of the entire cultural world in its modern form. The Second World War, which was prepared and carried out within several European states, directly affected the whole of Europe and, to a lesser extent, other parts of the world, and subsequently changed the whole political landscape.

It is true that one of these events can be described as positive and the other as negative, but they did have a common positive outcome: they both made the same demands on the cultural world, in search of freedom (and not only independence): to create democratic and legal nation-states; transnational or supranational politico-legal associations, which would more or less guarantee the peaceful, well-organized, free and legal development of humanity. All these events will it has a positive or negative connotation as an event and not as a result of it, it is marked by the concept of crisis, and the following period is marked by the post-crisis. It is through the well-planned post-crisis strategy and its good management that the socio-economic (and partly legal-political) development of the affected states or states is possible. In some cases, these new strategies even bring some changes in the design of the state arrangement.

After these historical experiences, the 'West' actually created the legal concept of man as a being of the highest value, according to which human dignity was recognized as inviolable and the main object of legal protection was human rights, which is only the greatest acquisition in the cultural-humanist treasure of humanity.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the universal and 'perpetual' principles of the economic and political order that the West and then the rest of the world should strive to achieve were already being sought: the free market economy and the

rule of law in a number of countries in this area. And in which only equal human opportunities are emphasized, i.e., in a word, liberal-democratic values. But is it enough for the realization of freedom and dignity in the nation-state? And as surprising as it may be, this is exactly the problem posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is true that it is a medico-epidemiological event formally considered as a natural cataclysm, the kind of which has been experienced by mankind many times throughout its history; for example, the plague epidemic in 12th-13th century Europe, or the Spanish flu at the beginning of the 20th century, during which millions of lives were lost. Both events were evaluated by its contemporaries and tried to draw the appropriate conclusions, one was evaluated in the theological context that it was God's punishment for religious-moral depravity, and the other was the result of the insufficient medical-technological development of the society. From the point of view of the consciousness of the times, both assessments can be considered adequate, since the life of medieval European society was entirely based on and determined by ecclesiastical-religious structures, and the beginning of the 20th century was marked by a rapid growth of industrial (scientific) technological development and public enthusiasm for it. With a deep faith in it.

In general, after any crisis - whether caused by a natural disaster or having an economic-political basis - both individual states and the global community (depending on the magnitude of a particular crisis) are mainly engaged in calculations of cost and necessity and focus on paying back the losses as quickly as possible. At this point, depending on the extent of the loss and the level of socio-economic development of the affected country, 'donor' states and international financial and economic organizations are involved, providing assistance to the affected country or states of various sizes and types. After that, life usually goes on as usual, although environmental organizations (governmental and non-governmental) often make noise about what has happened and criticize states for their misguided environmental policies.

As already mentioned, the situation is different today, and this medical-epidemiological crisis has put on the agenda, surprising and inadequate as it may be, the reminder and re-understanding of the original human essence - freedom and dignity. If, in the initial stage of the epidemic, two alternatives of almost equal force were proposed by different states or political unions - to give priority to human health and survival or to maintain

financial and economic stability and strength - in the next stage and especially today, fortunately for the world - the political arrangement has given priority to the former, which confirms the greater or lesser inclination and even 'loyalty' of governments and most of the world's population to humanist ideas as a whole.

It is an old truth that both the historically separate individual and the global community, especially today, are marked by complexity. Not only are inter-state relations marked by interdependence, but also a separate nation state and a global world. And man, because he is a social being in his living environment, in the nation-state and at the same time in the global world, living with other states on earth and people associated with them, i.e. man as social creature cannot be isolated. So man, in this sense, carries two identities: citizen of the nation-state and a citizen of the world; although today, due to certain political-legal paradigms, it seems to have made the difference between the global world and the nation-state even more contrasted. The questions that arise here are: a) Are these two concepts, phenomena and states, really unconditional alternatives to each other as existential-political environments of man, if they are inconceivable without each other and if (today) man can only necessarily exist in these two spaces that permeate each other? B) Has globalization regulated/structured such discourses despite all its possible negative connotations, and has it created such positive phenomena, without which the different spheres of society could not have developed? C) What is its negative content and what are the processes that conceal the development of globalization, due to which it can be defined as an obstacle to the development of the free man and the world? D) Does the idea of a nation-state hide the dangers of nationalism, populism and separatism? What is the obstacle to the development of a free, caring and just society (both local and global)?

Immanuel Kant, in his famous text *Perpetual Peace*, published in 1795, speaks of the 'peoples of the earth' realistically forming a 'community' (Gemeinschaft), and since then it has been a material condition for a formula according to which, *a violation of rights in one part of the world is felt everywhere*. On the one hand, this view is rooted in the European tradition of the cosmopolitan orientation of Stoic philosophy, according to which the connection of the whole world is the starting point for human social, political and legal relations. Despite its cosmological content, this thought has important moral connotations that have had a major impact on the formation of European humanist thought. On the other hand, Kant diagnoses the interdependent world formed on the basis of the multifaceted activities of humans in the future and already in his time. It should be emphasized here that for the German philosopher, this unity (wholeness) of the peoples of the world is based first and foremost on universal moral principles - which is particularly important today - and only then is the multifaceted activity of human beings given an appropriate value.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, despite the rampant nationalist movement that marked this period,

cosmopolitan notions were developed by theorists of society and modernity, who saw this process primarily in terms of the economic and social development of society. This is particularly evident in the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In the Communist Manifesto published in 1848, they wrote about the development of the 'globalization process': *The need for a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, and establish connexions everywhere.*

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.

The thought of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, itself largely based on the German philosophical tradition of modern times, can uniquely be seen as the beginning of the national theory of social processes. This (these) theory(s) first described what followed the European trend towards universal nationalism: the abolition of particular public ties and limited economic cycles, and the result, as the sociologist Peter Wagner called it, 'complete global integration'. And in the mid-1970s, Niklas Luhmann, in the sense of the world community, noted the situation created by the unification of relations in the world.

As can be seen, while the notion of global citizenship and global community has existed for two centuries in Europe, which is precisely the case with globalization and the globalization process, the scientific, economic and sociological term globalization has been used since 1980-1983.

From there, things get more complicated, and this is where the real meaning of globalization comes in. However, this notion allows, on the one hand, to correctly understand the connections and parallels of apparently separate public spheres and to identify the areas of their separation (or connection); on the other hand, the analysis of local phenomena in their difference and diversity, so globalization in this relation is understood as a specific transformation of local relations, which

Sigmund Baumann called premature globalization; This means that the process of globalization implies the interdependence, level and capacities of local phenomena, such as nation-states or national economies, and that globalization as a process and state is impossible without local phenomena.

It can be said that Adam Smith and David Ricardo formulated the guiding classical positions, which have been further developed, defining principles in addition to the theories of the foreign economies of nation states, but have also had a real impact on their development in this way. It can be said today that in the context of the real international interweaving of the economy, it is artificial to talk about the confrontation between national economies and foreign world economies.

Indeed, globalization from an economic perspective, on the one hand, can be seen to some extent as progress in terms of the internationalization of product exchange, capital flows and labor distribution. These processes have contributed and continue to contribute to the growth of their economies and the prosperity of developing economies, but if the process of globalization is to be understood unilaterally, especially from neoliberal and libertarian positions, as a process of transformation and economic transformation and if the public and political interests will not be included here then discussed from the perspective of justice, the aspects at the root of globalization clearly shows many social pathologies.

For example, although the development of shipbuilding at the beginning of the new era, which in turn resulted from industrialisation, facilitated the rapid exchange of foreign trade technologies through globalisation, its first systemic economic practice was slavery and colonisation. This is not just a past historical event, and it may still be alive today. The phenomena that occur in our world, such as injustice, impoverishment, violation of basic rights, humiliation, Jürgen Habermas called them 'the colonisation of the living world'. This is due to the fact that political and social actors approach each other according to a system of law based on the principle of unequal justice, in which the law creates freedom not for coexistence, but from the position of the law of the powerful, in which everyone has as much freedom as he is 'strong' and can exercise it against others. It is the unlimited freedom of the powerful, which restricts the freedom of others and thus affirms inequality. It is the principle of arbitrariness and, consequently, of hegemony, which unfortunately still manifests itself quite strongly today, both at the individual, public and state level, and within states and in international relations.

Since the 1990s, as globalisation has progressed at a very rapid pace, there has been a radical shift in law towards transnationalism. The first crucial factor in the globalisation of law is the introduction, expansion and consequent growth of human rights for the centrality of individuals and the emergence of their legal status in international law. In addition to the founding of the United Nations and the universal definition of human rights, post-war trends have led to the creation of international tribunals independent of national

criminal law and criminal justice. There is a very good tendency today for international courts to rule on genocide, crimes against humanity. The second factor in the globalisation of law is that other countries or the international community are allowed to interfere in the internal affairs of a country. (This was exceptional after the Second World War, such as the Nuremberg or Tokyo trials). This trend led the democratic world to the establishment of the International Criminal Court in 1998, which is able to convict / sentence in statutory cases in the above cases. The European Convention on Human Rights also provides that in the event of a violation of human rights by a member state, the victim may apply directly to the European Commission of Human Rights or the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Another factor in the globalisation of law is the growth of global markets, which means that nation-state law loses its ability to govern when regulations on capital, labour or working conditions to protect the outside world ensure a fair legal principle. At the same time, if the law is too strict in terms of tax or monopoly law in one state, transnationally operated companies tend to look for new places to manufacture products, leaving nation states with a choice, a somewhat transnational mechanism of coercion. Bending to the corporate decision. If nation-states want to enter global/international commodity markets by competing with global players through their legal regulations, they will try to remove all barriers that create bad conditions for them in global economic competition. This coercion often has a negative effect, especially on the socio-political and economic development of small states. At such times, the hegemonic power/hegemony of large economic and financial unions or states is clearly evident. The tendency of states to transfer certain types of cases to international judges and non-national courts creates a fourth factor that leads to the increasing globalisation of law.

In one way or another, the globalisation of law brings at least one positive result: it is the pluralisation of the sources of law, which is one of the important manifestations of the deepening of multicultural relations. In view of the above, it can be said that the globalisation of law is a multidimensional process, in the course of which it is assumed that national law will be subjected to and eventually replaced by common/unified global law; or it will be achieved with strong genius of a political actor, in the course of which it is possible to 'homogenise' the legal system according to global norms, with the hegemony of the mentioned type of actor, or it will be achieved according to the global consensus among nation-states.

The Covid-19 pandemic intensified all aspects of the globalisation process and the state of globalisation (both positive and negative) and made a new analysis and solution of this problem became necessary condition for the world.

Indeed, at the beginning of this crisis, the world community was suddenly (one could say, according to the instinct of self-preservation) faced with a choice: to act together or individually, as a global world or as a nation-state. At first sight, the primary strategy for action seemed to be in favour of nation states, but first the EU Member States and then the majority of

the global community decided to act together, in accordance with the principle of solidarity.

It has to be said that this was not only an external and formal decision, but also one that is entirely consistent with the nature of the rule of law, democracy and the welfare state, as well as with the principle of its relationship with other global political actors, which requires and is based on symmetrical mutual recognition. This is, or should be, the principle of democracies and democracy in general. Democracy and the state are for the political union the expression and the form of existence of the autonomy of this union, the essential autonomy by which the juridical-political subject is its own legislator, which is the foundation of its freedom and of the recognition of the other. In our opinion, the master of these principles is first and foremost the Union of European nation-states, which is recognised by the majority of the world's citizens as the European Union, whose aspiration to join is the main objective of our country. The process of unification of European countries, known as Europeanisation, is a specific phenomenon of transnationalisation and globalisation, which is taking place within the framework of the European Economic Union (EEU) Treaty. It represents the increasing economic integration of member countries through supranational organisations and decision-making power. The citizens' free sphere of the free market, with its ancillary competences, as a separate sector of the common policies of the member states, and as a supranational competence, is endowed with a superiority over the other political spheres of the national administration. In this model of democracy that the European Union implements, as we see it, they are interconnected and conditioned by equal values of the state of globalisation and the nation states. Indeed, democracy and the state do not mean the absence of governance by individual states and their transfer to an amorphous 'world ruler' or transnational economic corporations, but rather a defined form of domination in and around a group of people. This means that no one should have the capacity to exercise power and command, but, as the Greek word democracy itself implies, the people themselves. Democracy itself comes from the assumption that order and the expression of power are necessary conditions for the orderly coexistence of human beings to be an indisputable basis and that no one should be able to do what he or she wants arbitrarily. Therefore, the command and expression of power must not be the prerogative of an individual or a group, nor must it belong to supranational authorities that exercise autocratic command and power, but must be in the hands of the people who form a unity and a political unit. Democracy therefore implies precisely the self-government of the people, who must themselves constitutionally determine their participation and share in the decisions and actions to which everyone will be subject. It is the union of people with a common conscience that creates a nation living in a given state, which is precisely the place where the framework of life is its homeland; in this way, each nation is different from the other, which recognizes diversity and diversity in the face of the other allows them to live

in peace and, therefore, the unity of peace as the creation of a united world community. The unity of peace is the necessary guide and, at the same time, the result, together with the unity of decision and power, which make possible the coexistence of human beings in a single cultural world.

Because democratic unity as distinct peoples, in addition to rational sources, is also constituted by prior rationality, which includes precisely traditions, mores, lifestyles and religious beliefs, this unity requires not hegemonic coercion, but principles of co-existence, but interpersonal principles. It is not these cultural differences that will create a hostile environment between states, but it is the global processes/globalisation that will enable the coexistence of the peoples of the world to truly lead to the realisation of the principle of freedom. This is why the world community needs a new universal 'moral code' that will allow interdependent phenomena such as nation states and the state of globalisation to exist in a unified, peaceful and just context.

In this case, globalisation will no longer be a process that to some extent hinders the self-sufficiency of states, but rather this process will create the conditions for self-sufficient sovereign states in which the states symmetrically recognise each other as equals and respect each other's self-sufficiency. They will always have their own peculiarities, which creates their value and is based on the tradition of each of them. Without this, the attempt to unify everything by an external and hegemonic power would create an amorphous unity in which the neglect of the free will of each individual (state) would largely turn into violence, which is contrary to the principle of freedom from the beginning. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the example of a reasonable coexistence in the world can be given by the 'EU Project', and to support this view, I will use a quote from Hegel's philosophy of law: *'Die europäischen Nationen bilden eine Familie nach dem allgemeinen Prinzip ihrer Gesetzgebung, ihrer Sitten, ihrer Bildung, und so modifiziert sich hiernach das völkerrechtliche Betragen ((502)) in einem Zustande, wo sonst das gegenseitige Zufügen von Übeln das Herrschende ist. Das Verhältnis von Staaten zu Staaten ist schwankend: es ist kein Prätor vorhanden, der da schlichtet; der höhere Prätor ist allein der allgemeine an und für sich seiende Geist, der Weltgeist'. And indeed, according to his own definition of the concept of Spirit, it turns out that Spirit is human: 'Der Mensch ist Vernunft, ist Geist, durch die Anlage der Vernunft dass er Geist ist, ist er an sich Wahrhafte'.*

In order to achieve this wisdom and, therefore, spirituality, both self-sufficient peoples and sovereign nation-states, which are composed of individuals and families, must rise to 'a new moral code'. This code, in turn, should not be normatively imposed from any hegemonic power, but should aim at the realisation of its own essence - freedom. In turn, this moral code can be the basis on which Reasonable coexistence will be founded. And in this case, the contradictions between nation-states and the process of globalisation will only be temporary.



**GREEN DEAL - HOW TO PROTECT
ENVIRONMENT RATIONALLY?**
AN OIKOPHILIA OF CONSERVATISM

MAN WITHOUT NATURE – NATURE WITHOUT MAN

The anti-transcendent roots of green ideology and how to oppose them

David Engels

Introduction

For a long time now, 'environmentalism' has ceased to be a simple 'one-subject lobby', but has transformed into a comprehensive ideology, generally perceived to be situated on the left side of the political spectrum and increasingly aggressive in its aims and methods.

One example: For many weeks now, the West has been experiencing a new kind of terror. All over Europe, but especially in Germany, priceless works of art are being damaged in rapid succession, concerts are being interrupted and strategic transport routes are being blocked for hours by ecologist activists – just to draw attention to the presumption that humanity has only a few years left to avert an allegedly imminent 'climate apocalypse'. The danger seems so great that it justifies all, really all means, as is openly announced by the key players of the green movement: from the death of innocent citizens due to blocked roads (Tadzio Müller: 'It's climate fight, not climate cuddling & shit happens.') to the demand for a climate dictatorship (Luisa Neubauer: 'We don't have the choice between time and democracy.').

Of course, there is no lack of voices, especially in the conservative media, who interpret the increasing radicalisation of «climate activism» as the beginning of the end of this movement, since in the long term, these actions tend to create antipathy rather than sympathy with the public and should therefore – in theory – even have a counterproductive effect. This view, however, seems to me to be too naive and to disregard the lessons of history: If it is in implicit agreement with the majority opinion of the ruling elites, «terror» (and that is precisely what this highly dangerous left-green «activism» is all about) only very rarely generates a genuine and relevant social counter-movement. On the contrary, it usually rather accelerates a shift in discourse in favour of the ideology of the terrorist group instead of reversing this tendency.

This may sound paradoxical, but it is only logical. Already Robespierre formulated in 1794: "Terror is nothing but immediate, stern, unbending justice; it is therefore an outflow of virtue; it is not so much a special principle as a consequence of the general principle of democracy applied to the most urgent needs of the fatherland", and history is full of corresponding examples - from the populist thugs of late Republican Rome

to the Parabolani, the club-armed lay brothers of late antique Alexandria, and from the Sansculottes of the French Revolution to the «spontaneous» outbreaks of socialist 'popular anger'. Everywhere, the terrorist groups were not the enemies but merely the radical wing of the ruling elites and therefore only consolidated the legitimacy of the latter as a supposedly «moderate» force representing order and salvation against «chaos»: Those who take three steps forward and one back on a journey are anything but on their way back home....

This also explains the reactions of western society in the face of eco-terror: none. Media, politics, administrations, hospitals, even the museums attacked by 'activists' indulge in gentle grandfatherly admonitions and hurry to stress eagerly that, despite all the criticism of the somewhat exaggerated «idealism» of young people, they are of course extremely concerned about the climate too. And anyone who still doubts that the eco-terrorists are more likely to run through open doors than to collide with solid walls should consider the following: What would happen if a conservative European as clearly linked to the political right as the climate activists are to the left would damage a work of art worth millions or glue himself to a highway (with fatal consequences) to protest against the threatening self-dissolution of Western civilisation?

How could this happen? Despite or precisely because of its violent activism, the environmental protection movement is by no means on the defensive; on the contrary, it increasingly dominates public and political discourse. There are few valid reactions from the conservative side; and the indignant assertions that environmental protection is «actually» a core concern of conservatives that «unfortunately» has been forgotten in recent decades due to the liberal dominance within the conservative movement hardly reads like a real counterproposal, but more like a declaration of surrender. If we, as conservatives, do not want to turn ourselves into mere executive assistants of the green movement, it is urgently necessary to finally develop a credible approach to the question of protecting our environment and our fellow human beings on the basis of our very own ideological convictions.

In the following, we therefore want to first briefly trace the intellectual history of the green movement and thus provide

a general insight into the ideological roots of environmentalism in order to separate its essential components from later superficial ingredients. We then will attempt a fundamental philosophical analysis of the current green movement's image of nature and of man in order to show that the apparent contradiction between the greens' alleged 'conservative'

The genesis of the green movement

On the one hand, the green movement advocates the radical demand for the restitution of the environment to a kind of 'status quo ante', that is before the beginning of human civilisation, but on the other hand, it also represents a radically constructivist and modernist image of human behaviour. How does that go together - if at all?

In order to respond to this question, without answering which one cannot seriously deal with the green movement as a holistic phenomenon, let alone confront it with a corresponding conservative counterproposal, we have to go back a little in history - an all the more urgent business as the environmental movement itself has barely grappled with its own past, and with good reason, as we will see.

A relationship with nature based on respect and admiration is, of course, as old as mankind itself, and it would go beyond the scope of this paper to try to name even the main authors who represent the literary or philosophical steppingstones of these endeavours. And of course, the overexploitation of nature is just as old; even when we exclude the actions of prehistoric people characterised by ignorance of the actual long-term consequences of their deeds such as overhunting, and only take the very obvious cases of deliberate pollution and conscious overexploitation. Thus, we know numerous examples of both tendencies not only in Antiquity, but also in many other civilisations, so that, at least qualitatively, little about the current problems and discourses is actually 'new'.

However, in order to understand the modern Greens, we do not need to go back that far, but *pars pro toto*, at least some starting points should be made explicit, though they are often enough not immediate, linear predecessors of today's green ideology, but past crystallisation points in which certain ideological strains are bundled and projected further until creating the conditions leading to the formation of today's ecologism.

Except for the sometimes highly polluted cities of the Middle Ages and the evidence of dangerous pre-modern deforestation, large-scale pollution in Europe began primarily with the Industrial Revolution, when larger and more numerous manufactures and factories began burning coal and other fuels while creating ever larger mountains of rubbish in their attempt to cater to the needs of an exponentially growing population. It is probably no coincidence that, at precisely the same time, the romantic movement shifted from a purely aesthetic inclination to a philosophical-ideological way of thought, while the

environmental protection and 'progressive' anthropology is in fact a mere illusion: both are intimately linked together. In a next step, we will endeavour to outline a new, conservative ecology on the basis of the previous considerations, allowing us to draft some final conclusions as to how these reflections could be concretely translated into political action.

escapism of the gallant pastoral idylls of the Rococo period gave way to egalitarian and genocidal social utopias.

Pars pro toto, let us first mention Rousseau, who is probably the ultimate point of reference for the modern idealisation of nature. Not least based on the romantic idea of the 'noble savage' from the travelogues of the 17th and 18th centuries, Rousseau popularised the image of an ancestral harmonious 'state of nature', from which man only broke free because of his insatiable desire for 'more'. While according to Hobbes, this path was irreversible and inevitably led to the 'State' as the only guarantor of peaceful coexistence (though, as added by Locke, with the perspective of occasional constitutional reforms), Rousseau clearly shifted the attention back from the present to the primordial 'state of nature', fuelling thus not only nostalgia, but also the quiet hope in the possibility of artificially restoring at least some parts of this original idyll through education and a corresponding 'contrat social' – both typical central starting points of modern 'green' ideology.

Another name that must be mentioned in this context is undoubtedly that of Goethe, whose turning away from Romanticism towards Classicism drove him ever closer to pantheism. It is precisely his scattered, but nevertheless highly influential philosophical notes that would form a constant point of reference for all those schools which, especially in Germany, turned away from the materialism of the Enlightenment of the 18th century or from the Scientism of the 19th century, but nevertheless were unable to take the step forward (or chronologically backward) towards a transcendent world view as represented by Christianity. Of course, pantheism had always been an intellectual temptation everywhere in Europe since the Middle Ages; but due to the enormous importance of Goethe, however, it received a special boost and quickly became a versatile and highly flexible intermediate level between materialism, deism and transcendentalism, which also had the special quality of interpreting human beings as part of nature and thus allowing for the formation of a new canon of values beyond religiously or utilitarian motivated arguments.

It is probably immediately obvious that both positions differ fundamentally from the Christian tradition: on the one hand, because the latter considers a return to the state of nature impossible in view of the original sin and interprets the creation of civilisation and the subjugation of nature to humanity as a mandate coming from God; on the other hand for the obvious

reason that the divine does not exhaust itself in the natural world, but is of a fundamentally transcendent nature, so that the laws of this world do not emanate from the creation, but from the creator. Admittedly, the Christian interpretation of the world and nature was to be increasingly on the decline in the 19th and 20th century and proved incapable, for a long time, of providing a credible and attractive alternative to the new challenges of technology and science.

However, in the 19th century, the era of 'progress' and industry, interest in the seemingly immaculate state of nature and man in prehistorical societies was largely confined to science and literature, while political theory was shaped mostly by the schools of liberalism and socialism, both of which radically focused on the human and on modernity, the latter being based on a collective, the former on an individualistic approach. In addition, both equally felt their theories were strengthened by Darwinism, which, transferred from evolutionary biology to the social sphere, seemed to contradict the nostalgic glorification of past and rather translate the concept of technological 'progress' into the idea of a biological law of nature (though it was mostly overlooked that Darwin originally only expressed the idea of ever new biological adaptations to ever new environmental challenges, not a teleological or linear absolute 'progress').

This may also explain why it was precisely in esoteric and 'völkisch' milieus that the idealisation of the past and the primordial state of nature first found its way into political thought. Indeed, since the late 19th century, it was within the framework of right-wing movements that the glorification of an historical 'original' state of nature and its beauty developed the greatest popularity, often in conjunction with anthroposophical, neopagan, racist, vegetarian, anti-modernist and other haphazard new ideologies. This unholy and often enough rather syncretistic alliance then culminated in National Socialism, which fulfilled many of the demands of the early environmental movement through large-scale animal and landscape protection measures, while at the same time also taking the evolutionary approach to its extreme insofar as man himself was to become the object of breeding, of 'purification' and of genocidal extermination in order not only to restore a supposed ideal ethnic situation, but at the same time to give evolution a helping hand, blurring thus biological and political speculations into a toxic mix.

No wonder, then, that the environmental protection movement lost momentum after the end of the Second World War, at least

Nature without man, man without nature

As we can see, the history of the green movement is extremely complex and multi-layered, which explains why it not only offers numerous points of contact in many different ideological directions, which makes ecologism so attractive for many people, but also contains some seemingly fundamental internal contradictions, which we will presently discuss.

in Germany, and only regained a larger audience in the 1960s as a result of the fears of civil or military nuclear incidents that arose at this time. This reorientation would quickly coalesce with the pacifist movement, associated largely in public discourse with a militantly 'anti-imperialist' ideology, itself de facto anti-American in nature, and broadly supported by the Soviet Union, which was slowly starting to lose the industrial and military race with the West. The ideological melting pot of the 1968 movement and its New Age offshoots offered a good opportunity for this progressive change of course from a more völkisch-utopian to a left-utopian orientation: various right-wing and left-wing extremist countercultures became blurred during this time under the primacy of opposition to capitalism and Americanism and generated innumerable new schools of thought.

Only a few more years, and the first 'green' political parties finally emerged. Often enough they were decried in the press as 'one-topic' parties, but even though this criticism certainly corresponded to the still rather undercomplex party programs of the ecologists during that time, a fierce battle raged within these movements between the most diverse, historically grown affinities and associations. Its issue was: How should man be connected to the 'green' interpretation of nature and its harmony? Should the Greens adopt a traditionalist position and target a large-scale collective return to the past to restore man's pre-modern harmony with nature? Or a liberal one, thus agreeing to exploiting and managing nature as decentralised as possible and only striving for its conservation to the extent that it benefitted individual interests? Or a socialist one, which interprets nature as a mere centrally administered collective commodity?

For a long time, this battle was undecided, but the collapse of the communist states, the subsequent increasing liberalisation of the socialist parties and finally the emergence of the migration problem created a political vacuum that the traditional left-wing parties could no longer easily fill, while the new technological possibilities of post-industrial information societies and artificial intelligence opened new future perspectives. This was the hour of the environmental parties, which, with their inherently pantheistic approach, were able to offer a seemingly fresh solution that not only conveyed the typically human desire to fight for the good (from social and national questions to the 'global' dimension of environmental and climate protection), but at the same time offered a convincing new definition of the place of human beings.

the green movement defends an extremely ‘progressive’ position as far as people themselves are concerned, since not only historically grown structures and traditions, but even fundamental, ‘natural’ distinctions such as those between the two sexes or the different ethnic groups are either fully negated or at least considered as to be overcome. How can this apparent contradiction be understood?

Let us examine the starting point of ecologist thought: It is fundamentally anti-transcendent. Admittedly, this is not a unique feature of the environmental protection movement: Liberalism and socialism ultimately also start from a materialistic postulate. However, while liberalism derives the idea from materialism that everything should be viewed from the point of view of the interests of the individual, while socialism rather considers the collective, in environmental protection, it is nature that comes into focus as a regulatory framework and reference point for political and social action. This also explains the ultimately pantheistic tendency of environmental materialism; a divinisation of nature and its processes, which take the place of any transcendently legitimate order as guiding principle.

However, for the ecologists, nature is not static, but in a process of self-driven ‘development’ generally explained by Darwinism; a development which eventually also leads to the emergence of man. Consequently, the latter is only understood as an ‘animal like all others’, different from the rest of nature not because of any spiritual dimension, but solely in terms of the gradual evolution of his intellectual powers. However, following the environmentalist worldview, this over-development of the human spirit leads to the ‘anomaly’ of an animal capable of destroying its own environment to such an extent that nature’s inherent resilience can only react by the complete annihilation of man.

This has several consequences for the green movement. On the one hand, man-made environmental destruction must be stopped by all means, and nature must be restored to the ‘status quo ante’. On the other hand, there is a need for a completely new social order considering the basic assumptions of the ecologist negative anthropology in order to make it impossible to man to repeat his work of destruction. As to the precise nature of this new social order, there are, of course, certain divergences within the movement. However, it is common to all of them that precisely that mechanism which (supposedly) destroyed nature – human ‘progress’ – is not called into question in itself, but should only be reversed in its direction. The resulting social utopia is of a fundamentally genocidal nature: In all ecologist theories, the first step is always to strongly reduce the number of people on earth through massive interventions in the birth rate and the process of ‘natural selection’ (some fringe groups even advocate a total self-suicide out of humanity), then to subject the remaining human beings to a wholly new social and political order. However, this new order is not technologically retrograde (e.g. by demanding a conscious return to the living conditions of the time before the industrial revolution), but always includes a futuristic, high-tech component, as totally

reversing history would run against the evolutionary and ultimately progressivist and positivist worldview of ecologism.

For some, these consist in different degrees of archeofuturism (i.e. the combination of highly advanced technology with much more primitive tools) in order to conciliate the slogan ‘back to nature’ with the maintenance of central elements of postmodern life ecologists do not want to miss at any cost despite their idealism (computer and communication technology, international mobility, entertainment industry, medical technology, transcontinental supply chains etc.). For others, the solution lies rather in a total isolation of man from nature through the construction of self-sufficient and more or less hermetically sealed structures with the purpose of ‘protecting’ nature from man without having to give up a modern lifestyle. Many of the proponents of both models are also adherents of radical forms of transhumanism, widely popularised by Attali and Harari and embracing the gradual merging of human beings with modern computing technology and ultimately the partial or total transfer of the human mind into virtual reality as a positive fulfilment of its natural ‘mission’: not as staggering contrast to the idealisation of nature, but rather as the ultimate teleological consequence of the theory of evolution...

If one disregards those specific peculiarities, which are ultimately based on the fact that the green movement gives priority to nature over humans, there are only few differences between the intended way of life of the future (remaining) humanity as seen by ecologism and by the numerous other, materialistic ideologies of the present, which all have found their common denominator in Klaus Schwab’s ideology of the ‘Great Reset’. Thus, the social utopia dreamed of by the green movement strives for multiculturalism and not a grown ethnopluralism; it is based on the theory of the mere social ‘construction’ of sexual identity and not its biological reality; it strives for an egalitarian distribution of material resources while at the same time criticising the principle of performance and inheritance (an obvious difference to liberalism); and it is characterised by the rejection of historically evolved political structures and the attempt to replace them with a combination of grassroots democracy and world-state technocracy, firmly constructed on the basis of a predetermined ideological consensus and placed within the framework of institutional constellations determined by natural and rational preconditions rather than by political or cultural geography.

Hence, the environmental protection movement is not only characterised by radical social constructivism, but also (at least on its fringes) by the necessity of man’s annihilation, either through a massive reduction of the population or through the migration of human consciousness into virtual ‘reality’. Is it a coincidence that the alleged concern for nature and the environment ultimately leads green ideology to the dichotomy of demanding nature without humans and humans without nature? No, because it is based on a materialistic philosophical basis which can only grasp the principle of development and dynamics in terms of evolutionary theory, while it reduces the specific peculiarity of the human being (a being anchored in nature, endowed with an

immortal soul and capable of rational self-reflection) to its mere quantitative and mechanic dimension: man as a mere animal whose extraordinary intelligence leads on the one hand to its own (alleged) liberation from biological constraints, on the other hand to the destruction of the environment. The green ideology

Conservative Environmentalism

Genuine conservatism must start from precisely those aberrations of environmentalism to become better aware of its own unique access to nature. But this also means finally abandoning the erroneous notion that the green movement and the conservative movement only differ in their social assumptions, but not in their ecological ones. The basic error in the green worldview is its ultimately materialistic (or pantheistic) approach to understanding the world, even if it does neither, as in liberalism, result in a subjugation of nature to the individual, nor, as in socialism, to the collective, but rather in the opposite, i.e. the absolute subordination of man to nature.

This is where we have to start if we want to build a ‘conservative’ environmental protection: It can only make sense if it is based on a decidedly transcendent image of nature and thus also of man. But what does a transcendent image of nature mean? It means that matter, whether animate or inanimate, is not absolute, neither as an object of exploitation for individual or collective self-development, nor as a self-contained absolute regulatory framework. Rather, it must be understood that matter is only the creation of a higher authority, the emanation of a transcendent and absolute being. This being, however, has neither fulfilled its task through a one-off ‘deistic’ process of creation, nor is it pantheistically absorbed in the things of the world, but it guarantees the inner support of all beings at all times while situated also over and beyond its creation.

This implies two things. On the one hand, the divine manifests itself in all things without being identical with them: We do right to honour, protect and care for everything that exists, but not for its own sake, but for the sake of the divine that resides in it. The order of nature and being does not lie in the mechanical natural process, but beyond; and all that is beautiful, good, and true refers only to this transcendent entity in which it comes fully into being. On the other hand, we must realise that despite the omnipresence of the divine principle, there are gradations of its intensity in the world and in nature: a stone is indeed a thing, but it does not have an organic life, which undoubtedly belongs to a higher level of being; and similar gradations can be made with reference to the transition from vegetable to animal life and from instinctive to intellectual existence. Everywhere, that supreme principle manifests itself in an increasingly self-reflective manner; a self-reflection that is characterised by the fact that the corresponding beings are also increasingly able to place themselves outside of nature, i.e., not only to ‘endure’ nature, but to actively shape it.

only wants to tackle the latter issue and refuses to question the former while even pushing the rationalist des-incarnation of man to its bitter ultimate genocidal conclusion. This leads over to some thoughts on the necessary conservative counter-positions to ‘green’ environmental protectionism.

Therefore, man is by no means an enemy, but rather the ‘crown’ of creation; his responsibility towards nature is not based on a pantheistic deification of nature or mere mechanistic self-interest, but on the metaphysical obligation to recognise and honour the divine principle that animates him also when he sees it in action outside. However, this principle should by no means be understood pantheistically, i.e. immanently, because pantheism results at best in a kind of enthusiastic aestheticism, at worst in a kind of naturalist glorification of the principle of evolution, i.e. the law of the strongest, with all the resulting consequences... The fundamental principle of being, i.e. love, comes from without and subdues nature rather than springing from it, for this love is the possibility of transcending the principle of pure self-interest and the purpose of one’s existence in the service of another, ‘higher’ person or principle whose interests seem more important than one’s own.

On the surface, there may be numerous forms of love, some deeper or more meaningful than others, but it is always a matter of pointing beyond oneself and recognising (with more or less justification) that the meaning of one’s own existence is not limited to the welfare of one’s own person, but also (and perhaps above all) takes place on other levels. This urge, however, can undoubtedly not be reduced to a pure evolutionary strategy (in the sense of sacrificing individual interests for the survival of one’s own genetic material in the body of one’s offspring), since the history not only of humanity but also of the animal kingdom is full of examples of apparently ‘irrational’ acts of love. In man, these acts extend not only to the subject’s immediate offspring, but also to collective and purely ideal principles, and culminate in the service of the deity as the greatest and most worthy object of our love, since here, self-sacrifice and self-discovery fall entirely into one. Starting from this basis, ‘environmental protection’ is not an external ingredient of a conservative worldview or even a conscious economic ‘self-restraint’, but rather a logical inner consequence of an all-embracing love that recognises God above all in the other and thus cannot help but deal with the natural and social environment responsibly and lovingly.

But this also shows what a transcendental conception of man means, namely one that places the priority not on the outer but on the inner man. Age, class, people, intelligence, health – they are all ultimately only externalities which, although they reflect important basic categories of being, only provide the framework for the enormous metaphysical spectacle of the individual’s inner struggle for God; superficial roles which in no way affect the actual dignity of the individual as a soul

image of God. But it also follows from this that the priority of action must not lie in material self-realisation and the constant quibbling with the ‘circumstances’ that are seen as the sole guarantors of happiness in the here and now. For anyone who has insight into the priority of the spiritual over the physical struggle and of the struggle for one’s own soul over that for money and health, knows that one’s own life can only be built up with regard to that goal which is beyond, and never as a pure end in itself. Of course, such inwardness does not imply a mere passive acceptance of one’s own suffering or that of others, for quite the opposite, living in truth also means standing up for what is right - always and everywhere.

At the same time, however, conservative ecologism also implies accepting the existence that has been assigned to us

Outlook

One of the greatest abuses of modern Western society is to have cut itself off so completely from nature. Most of us live our daily lives in an almost aseptic environment composed exclusively of concrete, tar, steel, glass, plastic and exhaust fumes, consume synthetic foods that are largely characterised by artificial colourings, preservatives and flavourings, and interact with our fellow human beings in an increasingly virtual way. In view of this complete alienation from the reality of nature, who is surprised at the explosion of allergies, hereditary diseases or cancer, and who is proud of the increase in the average age of life when the considers that this can only be achieved at the price of a permanent medicalisation of our daily lives?

It is all too easy to talk about global warming or air pollution and to come up with utopian (and usually equally destructive) projects, when all that is involved is replacing one engineered view of nature with another, equally engineered one or even, as seems to be increasingly the case, especially in Germany, to turn honest concern for the future of the planet into the practical reason for calling for a quasi eco-socialist dictatorship.

But what does this mean in concrete terms, and how can these considerations be translated into political demands? First of all, it is important to understand that a demand does not become good or bad just because the political opponent also raises it - what matters is only the spirit behind it and what gives it its respective direction. This means that a conservative needs not refuse, on principle, to support the appeal for environmental protection just because that appeal is commonly associated with the green movement - for the reasons that animate the conservative are fundamentally different from those that motivate his opponents.

For - to get straight into medias res - the ecologist is concerned with the protection of nature for its own sake, but the conservative is concerned with the protection of that greater being which is reflected in it, even if only brokenly and incompletely. The same applies to the human being: To the greens, he is not much more

and understanding our physical body as a mission, but not as an enemy. As in the case of dealing with nature, conservative environmentalism also means dealing constructively with one’s own heritage, whether it is physical or spiritual. From this follows a fundamentally affirmative attitude towards one’s own body, one’s own gender, one’s own family, one’s own region, one’s own religion, one’s own nation or one’s own civilisation - not out of a sense of political, social, technological or spiritual superiority (or inferiority) to other possibilities of being, but out of the affirmation of the task set before us; a task that is understood not as an external constraint but as an inner mandate, since our own soul corresponds exactly to that divine eternity whose plan has placed us in our present place, so that we must understand our destiny just as well as the mandate from above as, at least implicitly, a result of our own free choice.

than an animal whose sole value lies in the fact that he succeeds in creating a balance with his environment, and whose evolved identity he is suspicious of and at best regards as atavistic steppingstones on the evolutionary path to enlightenment and modernity. For the conservative, however, man’s vocation lies in his self-knowledge, not as a rational being, but as a being gifted with a soul, a being which of all others is most likely to point beyond itself from nature to the divine.

Thus, first of all, we need to formulate a clear ‘no’ to the primacy of nature over man, because even if the latter has to treat his environment with care, it is not as an end in itself, but on the basis of the realisation that even in the inanimate, the vegetable and the animal existences, there is a refraction of that force which animates himself and is therefore in need of his love and protection.

From this follows another, very clear ‘no’ to transhumanism: all attempts to change human nature as fundamentally as transhumanism has in mind - genetic manipulations, cybernetic ‘improvements’, transfer of consciousness into virtual ‘realities’, elimination of death, etc. - go far beyond the scope of the usual mere makeshift ‘improvement’ of human living conditions, as they want to make something fundamentally different out of man than what he is; ultimately transform him into a chimera of man, monster and machine - a blasphemous enterprise in every respect, since this ‘new man’ dreamed of by all materialists from ecologists over socialists to liberals is keen to suppress, even to negate the mere existence of his immortal soul and rather focus all his powers on the usurpation of the external, material attributes of the deity - an endeavour which can only fail spectacularly.

Our ‘no’ to pushing back historically grown communities must be similarly clear: Respect for creation must not be limited to nature in its incredible evolutionary and regional diversity, but must also extend to the historical and geographical diversity of human communities. Just as the most diverse factors of

biodiversity must be nurtured and conserved, the various forms of historically grown entities such as families, neighbourhoods, villages, regions, nations, religions or civilisations should also be viewed positively and constructively and protected in their distinctiveness, instead of marginalising them in the name of mere polarity between the individual and humanity.

This implies a further loud ‘no’ to the demand for a climate dictatorship and the restriction of individual freedoms in the name of ‘nature’: nothing justifies the further expansion of a general surveillance state, and certainly not an ideological system that wants to establish a highly questionable technocratic, elitist and transhumanist political system under the pretext of environmentalism.

But of course, a conservative environmental policy must not be limited to a mere ‘no’, it must also and above all include various forms of ‘yes’, and this out of full inner resolve - no matter whether it is about protecting nature and the environment or designing alternative forms of social organisation to stop and push back the further destruction of our environment. But it must not be a matter of reconstructing a chimerical ‘status quo ante’, but rather of creating a balance in which

the interests of human beings must be at the centre - and not only their material interests, but also the creation of a space in which they can develop as spiritual and mental beings. The same applies to the social order, which can certainly include elements of archaeo-futurism, but must not place these under the primacy of universalism, but rather seek a renewed connection to regional, national and civilisational identities. For yes, a partial dismantling of the technological and industrial excesses of modernity may well be justified, but only if it does not damage Europe’s chances of survival in the international multipolar context.

The real problem of redefining the relationship between man and nature therefore lies not in the degree of technocratic adaptation of human societies to their respective environments, but rather in the necessity for man to perceive nature as his material home and to internalise once again that, as a spiritual being, he does indeed belong to the transcendent world, but as a natural being he is a concrete part of a physical environment and can only realise his true human mission with regard to nature, though neither through the materialistic self-identification with the physical realm, nor in the rationalistic and individualistic exploitation of creation.

CONSERVATIVE AND CHRISTIAN SOURCES OF MODERN ECOLOGICAL THOUGHT

Grzegorz Górny

When St Justin the Philosopher debated with pagan sages in the second century after Christ, he heard from them: show me your writings and we will tell you who you are. We could address the same request to contemporary environmentalists and conservationists: show us your writings and we will tell you where your thought comes from.

In the popular consciousness, environmental issues are now regarded as a kind of ideological protectorate of the left. However, if we were to ask today's Green Party activists or Greenpeace supporters to identify texts advocating environmental protection that date back to before the 1960s and were written by left-wing authors, they would have a huge problem with this.

Praise for creation

Modern environmental consciousness was born at the end of the 19th century in conservative circles critical of the Manchester model of capitalism. It was a reaction to rapid industrialisation with no regard for environmental degradation. For the Left at the time, this posed no problem at all - quite the contrary: for rampant industrialisation meant the growth of the proletariat and therefore brought the victory of the bright system of the future closer. There was nothing closer to the heart of a socialist than a landscape full of smoking chimneys. This was most evident in the Soviet Union, where the authorities there, developing heavy industry, wreaked havoc on nature on an enormous scale (it is symptomatic, by the way, that the biggest polluters of the environment in the history of mankind were the communist countries, once the USSR and, after its collapse, the People's Republic of China). As late as the mid-1950s, French intellectual Simone de Beauvoir wrote that the right and the left differed in that the former believed in a return to nature and the latter in production and industry.

The first modern environmentalists referred to Christianity. They recalled the attitude that such prominent figures in the history of the Church had towards nature, such as St Francis of Assisi - the author of songs praising creation, St

Martin de Porres - the founder of the world's first shelter for homeless animals, or St Hildegard of Bingen, who constantly emphasised the respect we should have for nature as a gift from God. The Bolandist records mention the names of around 30 saints who were particularly sensitive to the plight of our 'lesser brothers'. They also pointed to a medieval Benedictine monastery as an example of environmentally sustainable development. At the end of the twentieth century, one could read in the pages of the Polish environmentalists' magazine *Zielone Brygady* that 'the problems with the state of the environment started exactly when the Church lost its soul government and corporatism was replaced by the free market, i.e. about 200 years ago'.

Olaf Swolkien, one of the pioneers of alter-globalism in Poland, blamed the environmental crisis mainly on liberal ideology, which in its praise of the pursuit of unlimited profit had no regard for the environment. As an alternative, he presented conservatism, the ingredients of which are - according to him - 'not succumbing to doctrines, not sanctifying fragments of reality out of context, seeing the world and man as a whole, the balance between reason and feeling, and the priority of the natural over the contrived.'

'Conservare' means to preserve

It is no coincidence that the founder of the world's first national park, was a conservative politician. In 1872, U.S. President Ulysses Grant, who came from the Republican Party, established a park in Yellowstone. In justifying his decision, he appealed to the sensibilities, terminology, and consciousness of conservatives.

After all, caring for nature is intrinsically conservative, because the word 'conservare' means 'to preserve' in Latin, and the meaning of pro-environmental activity is precisely the preservation of the natural environment. The term 'ecology'

itself, in turn, comes from the Greek expression '*oikos logos*', literally 'science of the home', although it could be better translated as care for the common home. Such an attitude falls entirely within the conservative worldview.

It is symptomatic of the fact that the largest number of national parks and nature reserves in America were created by another Republican president, Theodore Roosevelt, who was in office from 1901 to 1909. He often pushed through his plans against the wishes of Congress. A great many of his speeches have survived in which he said that it was the duty of the citizens

of the United States to conserve, that is, to protect nature for future generations of Americans. He regarded the destruction of natural resources as robbing the next generations who would come after us. He said: ‘A good farmer is one who leaves the land to his children in better condition than he took it over. I believe the same applies to us as a nation’.

As an interesting aside, the most pro-environmentalist US president of the 20th century was Republican Richard Nixon, who created the Environmental Protection Agency and introduced

Listening to the voice of nature

A similar situation to that in the USA also prevailed in other countries, including Poland. When the Republic of Poland regained its independence in 1918, the founders of the first Polish national parks and the founders and leaders of the League for Nature Conservation were mainly right-wing activists, most often coming from national democracy or conservative circles. Jan Gwalbert Pawlikowski played a special role among them. He was the author of the first Polish manifesto for nature conservation entitled ‘Culture and Nature’ and published as early as 1913, i.e. at a time when Poles had not yet regained their freedom. A year earlier, the first Polish environmental organisation, the Section for Nature Protection operating within the Tatra Society, had been founded on the initiative of the aforementioned Jan Gwalbert Pawlikowski. His work was also a kind of ‘decatalogue of eco-ethics’, which was the basis of ecological ethics, proclaiming the ‘apostolate of the idea of nature protection’, as well as the first Polish law on nature protection of 1934.

In the inter-war period in Poland, ecology was the domain of national circles, and one of the most important figures in this movement was Stanisław Piasecki - editor-in-chief of the then most influential right-wing literary weekly ‘Prosto z Mostu’. Already in those days, he postulated the need to move towards solar energy and organic farming. Historian

Christianity in the dock

Although the roots of modern conservation thought are decidedly conservative, the second half of the 20th century, and especially after 1968, saw the takeover of this issue (and, in time, its monopolisation) by formations with a leftist worldview. This process was accompanied by an increasing blaming of Christianity for the current environmental devastation. Of all the flood of critical texts on the subject, it is worth noting Lynn White jr.’s essay ‘The Historical Roots of the Environmental Crisis’. ‘The Historical Roots of the Environmental Crisis’. Published in 1967, it became a kind of manifesto for environmentalists critical of Christianity, such as Kade, Lidke, Megivern, Wolf and Altner, among others. It is worth addressing briefly the accusations made there.

the largest package of environmental laws in US history. An analogous role in the UK was played by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who pushed through comprehensive environmental legislation, including, among other things, anti-smog laws. When we analyse her famous Brighton speech of 1988 years later, we realise that it was also a great environmental manifesto. At the time, the British Prime Minister was saying that the Conservatives were not only friends of the Earth, but guardians of it. We do not own the Earth. We did not get to own it. We lease it, and we must pass it on to the next generation.

Jarosław Tomaszewicz, describing this phenomenon of ‘eco-endeavour’, noted that ‘the pro-ecological stance was a logical complement to the right-wing worldview’. In this context, he mentioned such works by national politicians as Roman Dmowski’s ‘Zagadnienia rządu’ (Issues of Government), Adam Doboszynski’s ‘The National Economy’ or Stanisław Piasecki’s ‘The Right to Creativity’, already mentioned.

Similar ideas in the first half of the 20th century were promoted in literature by writers who were close to the programme of the Right. Much more often than writers sympathetic to the Left, they listened to the voice of nature. The 1924 Nobel Prize winner Władysław St. Reymont - a supporter of the National Democrats and a friend of Roman Dmowski - can be counted among this group. To see this, it is enough to compare his description of a city in ‘The Promised Land’ and a village in ‘Chłopy’. Another eminent writer, Józef Mackiewicz, a declared conservative and implacable anti-communist, also described himself as a ‘patriot of the landscape’. Analogous tendencies prevailed in the whole of European literature, to mention just such figures as Grazia Deledda (Italian Nobel Prize winner in 1926) or Gilbert Keith Chesterton (creator of the so-called ‘rurism’, i.e. a movement advocating leaving the metropolitan lifestyle and returning to the countryside).

According to White, the origins of the modern destruction of nature should be sought in the victory of the Christian religion over pagan beliefs. At that time, man ceased to be treated as a part of Nature and began to see himself as an entity separate from it, not to mention as someone created to rule over it. Nature was thus objectified, and then - treated with hostility - became the victim of merciless exploitation. All this, according to White, was in line with the injunction addressed by God in Eden to our first parents: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, that you may populate the earth and make it subject to yourselves; that you may have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over all the animals that creep upon the earth’ (Genesis 1:28-30). Some critics of the Church see this commandment

as the source not only of an ecological disaster, but also of a demographic one (conceiving, reproducing and populating the earth).

This commandment was repeated and even extended after the Flood. Before that, God had allowed people to eat only plant foods, but then he lifted the food taboo and allowed the eating of meat foods. He told Noah and his sons: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, so that you may populate the earth. And let all the beasts of the earth and all the fowls of the air fear and dread you. Everything that moves on the earth and all the fish of the sea have been given over to you. Everything that moves and lives is given to you for food, just like the green plants, I give you everything’ (Genesis 9:1-3). According to the aforementioned

The gardener’s mission

The aforementioned argumentation, however, is based on a very superficial knowledge of Christianity (and also of Judaism, since Genesis is common to both these religions). Their adherents represent a point of view that was aptly put by the former deputy minister of environmental protection in Poland, Sławomir Mazurek: ‘Since the Bible is a timeless word, this means that this use of the earth, of which the Book of Genesis speaks, must continue over time, and thus involve many generations. This implies a concern for the preservation of nature and not an encouragement to destroy it. It is no coincidence that the vision of the garden as the ideal place for humans to live appears at the very beginning of Scripture. Adam and Eve are given the task of ruling over the garden, that is, they must take on the duties of a gardener, that is, someone who cares for the area of nature entrusted to him in order to keep it in the best possible condition.’

The eminent Catholic philosopher Fr Mieczysław Krąpiec noted that the command in Genesis ‘is not so much about the mastery of the earth by man as about the transcendence of what is ‘earthly’ by man. God’s command: ‘make the earth subject to yourselves’ means so much that one should not submit to the ‘earth’ but transcend it, transcend it, make all that is ‘earth’ subject to the human spirit. In this sense, St Paul exhorted us not to serve earthly things, but to ‘seek what is above’. This is in line with the Christian understanding of man’s vocation, which is to be transformed and conformed to God from a fallen, animal-like being. The Genesis injunction is therefore moral, not socio-technical.

Man’s bond with creation

Note that Genesis gives us two accounts of the creation of the world: in the first (Yahwistic-Elohistic), God called man into existence after all creation; in the second (Priestly), in the middle of all creation. In the former, man is the crowning glory of creation; in the latter, he is its centre. Both accounts, however,

critics, as long as the above directive was respected only by a small nation in the Middle East, it had little consequence for the environment; it was only when it became the basis of a globally dominant civilisation that it proved to be a deadly threat to nature on a global scale.

In order to prevent an environmental catastrophe, it is therefore necessary - according to White - to fight not against its effects, but against its causes. These, in turn, are already recorded in the first chapter of the Bible. As Jean-Paul Deleage writes in his ‘History of Ecology’: ‘In White’s view, our ecological crisis will end only on the day when we renounce the postulate of monotheistic religions according to which nature’s only *raison d’être* is to serve man’.

Also, the word ‘reign’, which appears in the Bible, is to be understood in the sense in which it is used, which is religious. The Lord of all that exists is God, and man was created in His image and likeness. Therefore, man’s rule must be an imitation of the rule of the Creator. In Christianity, God is not a tyrant devoid of reason, a plunderer, an exploiter, a destroyer and a pest; on the contrary, he bestows his protection, all his graces and the meaning of existence on his creatures. Therefore - as the theologian Fr. Jacek Salij, the theologian, writes: ‘Man is supposed to deepen, as it were, the reasonableness and goodness of God’s work; he is supposed to become, as it were, an elder brother to creatures inferior to himself. If, therefore, it seems to him that dominion consists in wreaking havoc and pain around him, he is a follower of the devil the destroyer, and not of God the Giver and Protector. For God has called man to rule over creation, not to tyranny’.

The Bible speaks of this as follows: ‘The Lord God therefore took man and placed him in the garden of Eden to cultivate and tend it’ (Genesis 2:15). Man thus becomes the keeper of the garden, to act as a homeostat, to be a stabiliser in the cosmic system. Siddhaswarupananda Paramahansa interprets this passage as follows: ‘We must remember here that everything is given to us. If we consider that we are here only for a short period of time, so wouldn’t it be more correct to say that everything has been lent to us. God has not given us ownership of it all. It is still God’s property, but He has given it to us just as someone gives something to someone to be responsible for it: -I give it to you and you be responsible for it, take care of it’.

show the inseparable bond between man and created reality. This inseparability is evidenced, for example, by the fact that the fall of man, i.e. original sin, resulted in the contamination of the whole world. God said to Adam: ‘cursed be the earth because of you’ (Genesis 3:17).

Despite the sinfulness of human beings, God does not abandon his creation. When He sends the Flood, He orders Noah to take one pair from each animal species into the ark. This rescue is an emphatic emphasis on the integrity of all creation. Admittedly, after the Flood, God breaks the food taboo and allows man to eat meat, but in the same Noahic covenant he utters words that - due to the circumstances of time and place - no Jewish author could have invented: 'I, I make a covenant with you and with your offspring who will be after you; with every living creature that is with you: with the fowl, with the domestic and field animals that are with you, with all that came out of the ark, with every animal on the earth' (Genesis 9:9-10). It is worth adding that God never backed out of this covenant. When He renounced the destruction of Nineveh, He told Jonah that He had done so not only for the sake of the 'one hundred and twenty thousand people', but also for the sake of the 'multitude of animals' (Jon 4:11).

Since man's sin caused the contamination of all nature, the overcoming of sin should result in the renewal of that nature. Therefore, the promise of transfiguration applies to the whole of created reality. Even St Paul the Apostle, suspected by some

of a grudge against flesh and matter, writes explicitly about this: 'For I judge that the sufferings of the present cannot be placed on a par with the glory that is to be revealed in us. For the creation awaits with longing the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature has been subjected to futility - not of its own accord, but for the sake of Him who subjected it - in the hope that it too will be freed from the bondage of corruption to share in the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know, after all, that the whole creation groans and sighs in the pains of childbirth until now. But it is not only it, but we ourselves also, who already possess the first gifts of the Spirit, and we also with our whole being groan, awaiting (adoption as sons) - the redemption of our body' (Romans 8:18-23).

Thus, the Apostle writes about the participation of the whole creation in the freedom and glory of God's children. That Christ is the saviour not only of man but of the whole world, St Paul also mentions explicitly in another letter: 'For he (God) willed that in him should dwell all fullness, and that through him all things should be reconciled to himself again: through him both that on earth and that in the heavens' (Colossians 1:19-20).

Redeemer of creation

Theological reflection on Christ as the redeemer of the whole cosmos was already deepened by ancient Christians, to mention only the martyr and bishop of Lyons, St Irenaeus, who died in 202. However, this thought has particularly developed in the Orthodox Church, where the Eucharistic liturgy of the Transfiguration treats it as a celebration of the transfiguration of the entire physical universe. During the elevation, the priest says that the sacrifice of Jesus was accomplished 'kata panta kai dia panta', which can be translated from Greek as: 'according to everything, for everything and because of everything'.

As Orthodox theologian Nikolai Arseniev writes: 'It is not only man himself who experiences the effects of redemption and the joy of victory. With the joy of our resurrection is also connected the joy of the redemption of the whole world, of the coming to an end of the reign of corruption, of the redemption of all creation and of the dawn of the kingdom of life (...) The resurrection is thus an event of cosmic significance. The world on a par with man is here penetrated by the rays of heavenly glory, albeit for the time being in a hidden form, and has attained a new and higher value. For it has already received into itself the seed of immortality'.

A similar thought is not alien to Catholics either. In 1870, the Fathers gathered at the First Vatican Council stated that, in view of the continuance of love and its work, the whole creation that God had made would continue. Developing this theme, Fr John Grzesica writes: 'Since, therefore, earthly realities, and among them the natural environment of man, are granted some form of eternal duration if they do not face inevitable annihilation, then their 'finality' indicates their great value and at the same time sheds some light on the direction of their further development, and they are the beginning of the kind of

state that awaits them in their final destiny.' The recognition of this value of the environment in the light of its destiny requires cooperation between man and the environment'.

In his 1987 encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, John Paul II wrote in turn that 'dominion, commanded by the Creator to man, does not mean absolute power, there can be no freedom to 'use' or dispose of things freely. The limitation imposed on man from the beginning by the Creator Himself and expressed symbolically in the prohibition to 'eat the fruit of the tree' makes it clear that, with regard to visible nature, we are subject not only to biological but also to moral limitations which cannot be transgressed with impunity.'

For this reason, John Paul II believed that the devastation of the natural environment involves a violation of the Decalogue. This is what he said in 1991 during his homily in Bialystok: 'Nature suffers because of man. We should use the gift of dominion over nature with a sense of responsibility, an awareness that it is the common good of mankind. This is also about the seventh commandment: 'Do not steal'. Water, air, earth, forest, animals, plants were created by God and deserve respect from man.'

There are many more similar examples of Christian reflection on our relationship to the environment, both spiritually, morally and socially. They show that holding the religion of Christ responsible for the modern devastation of nature is not supported by the facts. Quite the opposite can be observed: the crisis of Christianity within Western civilisation has coincided with an ecological catastrophe - and this is no coincidence. Perhaps, then, a return to evangelical ideals will be conducive to preserving nature for our descendants in a better state than we inherited it from our ancestors.

COSTLY LACK OF READINESS FOR FIT FOR 55

Sławomir Mazurek

Recently, we have been witnessing a number of phenomena affecting the global economy and the living standards of citizens, not only in Europe but all over the world. We live in a time of uncertainty, first the pandemic-related downturn, the disruption of supply chains, and then the consequences of warfare implemented by Russia, as a consequence of rising inflation and galloping energy prices. The risks referred to by countries such as Poland concerning the security of our region, primarily energy security, have materialised. It is worth recalling here the words of the late Professor Lech Kaczyński, President of the Republic of Poland, which should now be read as an almost visionary message or even a warning and caution. For here is what the President of the Republic of Poland said in September 2008 during an address to the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly:

‘It is our position that the pursuit of dialogue, as well as solidarity and consistency in the implementation of energy policy, should become a priority for all European countries, particularly the countries of the European Union. Only in this context can Europe’s energy security be ensured. Given the total unpredictability of the actions of the current main energy suppliers - I am talking about Europe in this case - Poland is concerned about the use by certain countries, in particular one very powerful country, of energy supplies as a tool for achieving political objectives in relations with its neighbours, and also with all countries that benefit from that country’s energy supplies. It is therefore essential to achieve a diversification of sources of supply, to introduce transparent rules for the trade in energy raw materials - within Europe but also globally - and to develop transport infrastructure, in particular to establish alternative routes to Europe, including the European Union, mainly from the regions of the Caspian Sea States, Central Asia, but also the Middle East’. Despite these obvious facts, some countries have pursued a policy of cooperation with Russia undermining the security of the entire region.

Since its accession to the UN’s three great Rio Conventions, i.e. the Climate Convention, the Convention on the Protection of Biodiversity, and the Convention to Combat Desertification, Poland has consistently pursued a climate policy based on the principle of sustainable development and its indicators. Above all, the focus is on people. There are four inextricably linked systems: society, natural resources, cultural resources and ethics⁹. Poland is consistently fulfilling its commitments

related to climate and energy transition, an example of which is the reduction of CO₂ emissions by 30% under the Kyoto Protocol, although the provisions referred to 6%. EU countries often held up as models of development in the last two decades, such as Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Finland, have significantly increased their own CO₂ emissions. It would appear, therefore, that this phenomenon was linked precisely to catching up with the more developed countries. By setting a common goal for the countries of the ‘old’ Union, the Kyoto Protocol itself created the possibility that in the richer countries the reductions would be greater, while in the catching-up countries emissions could be increased¹⁰. It is worth noting that from 1988 to 2020, GHG emissions in Poland, in the electricity and heat generation sector alone, were reduced by 47%, and in the last ten years by 20%¹¹.

An important reference point in implementing long-term climate policy is the Paris Agreement of 2015. The Prime Minister at that time, Beata Szydło, pointed out that at the Paris Climate Convention she put forward three issues important for Poland. The first was that all countries in the world should sign a new agreement to combat climate change. The second, key demand for Poland was that the new agreement should include a provision on the need to take into account the specifics of the economies of individual countries. ‘Such as, for example, in the case of Poland, where the discussion on coal and economic development has been going on for many months’, the Prime Minister pointed out. The third Polish demand concerned forests and afforestation, with the aim - to a greater extent than at present - of naturally capturing CO₂. ‘This is the proposal that Poland points to as a solution that will, on the one hand, improve the climate and, on the other hand, address the issue of carbon dioxide reduction,’ the Prime Minister stressed. The provision in the Paris document on balancing emissions includes, among other things, an increase in afforestation. The government’s press service emphasised in a press release that it was introduced into the agreement thanks to the firm determination of the Polish delegation¹². The Paris Agreement set the framework for international cooperation in climate protection after 2020, for it to be effective; the ‘Katowice rulebook’ was developed during COP24 in Katowice. This involvement at the global level also helps activities at the EU level, where Poland is actively involved in the debate at the EU level, indicating a rational approach to the climate-energy transition taking into account the specificities of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

9 P. Salek, koncepcja polityki klimatycznej według Profesora Jana Szyszko, Kochając Przyrodę, Toruń 2022

10 S.Tokarski, J. Janikowski, Polska Energia nr 4/1010

11 <https://pkee.pl/en/aktualnosci/polska-sciezka-transformacji-energetycznej-najnowszy-raport-ey-i-pkee/>

12 <https://biznesalert.pl/szydlo-polska-odniosla-sukces-w-paryżu/>

A characteristic feature of the policy pursued by the European Commission in areas where its treaties allow it (although this is not always an obstacle) is to push a policy of increasing ambition and, when this does not work, to increase ambition even more. In July 2021, the EC published a package of 14 ‘Fit for 55’ legislative documents on EU energy and climate policy in the broadest sense, including proposals to amend the ETS Directive and ESR (Effort Sharing Regulation), to extend the trading scheme to the shipping, construction and transport sectors, to introduce a border tax (CBAM), to increase targets for renewables and energy efficiency or to amend the Land Use and Forestry Regulation (LULUCF). These changes are geared towards meeting the EU’s 55% emissions reduction target by 2030 and achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

‘War changes everything’; almost everything; it certainly does not change the European bureaucratic machinery and the long-term goals that have been undertaken. Frans Timmermans pointed out in March, just after the war broke out, that if countries stayed longer on coal and then immediately switched

‘Fit for 55’ draft

The package’s proposals are intended to be a coherent and balanced framework for achieving the EU’s climate goals, so let’s take a look at how Fit for 55 presents itself on the Commission’s website¹³:

The EU ETS

The Commission has proposed a comprehensive revision of the current EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). The aim is to reduce emissions in the sectors concerned by 61% by 2030 compared to 2005.

- To include maritime transport emissions in the ETS
- To phase out the free allocation of allowances to aviation and sectors to be covered by the carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM)
- To introduce, through the ETS, a CO₂ offsetting and reduction mechanism for international aviation (CORSIA)
- To increase the financial resources made available from the Modernisation Fund and the Innovation Fund
- To make changes to the market stability reserve to enable the ETS to continue to operate in a stable and appropriate manner.
- The Commission has also proposed to create a new, separate ETS for construction and road

transport. They could still maybe fit within the parameters we have set for our climate policy; in an interview with the BBC he stressed at the same time that ‘we have to contain the other mortal danger we face, which is the climate crisis’. Anna Moskwa, the Polish Minister for Climate and Environment, repeatedly pointed out that the situation with the invasion in Ukraine could lead to an even more acute crisis related to energy prices. In this situation, she encouraged to go further in action than the proposals contained in the toolbox presented by the European Commission. At an EU Energy Council meeting, she said: ‘We call for the suspension of the ETS until energy prices normalise and the crisis is over’. She made a common-sense point that in a situation where energy security is crucial, not only for the citizens of Poland but also for the inhabitants of the whole of Europe, the project should be updated.

I will try to briefly point out the most important provisions of the ‘Fit for 55’ package, mainly concerning the EU ETS. I will then present the conclusions of the most interesting available analysis of the costs of the EU’s climate ambitions.

transport. The draft assumes that by 2030 emissions in these sectors will be reduced by 43% (compared to 2005).

Border carbon tax (CBAM)

The proposal, in which the Commission introduces a carbon border tax (CBAM - carbon border adjustment mechanism), aims to prevent the EU’s reduction efforts from being undermined by increased emissions outside its borders as a result of the relocation of production outside the EU (where climate change policies are less ambitious than EU policies) or by increased imports of carbon-intensive products. The mechanism is intended to be fully compatible with international trade rules. CBAM is designed to operate in parallel with the EU ETS and is intended to mirror and complement its operation for imported goods. It will gradually replace the existing EU mechanisms to deal with the risk of carbon leakage, particularly the allocation of free allowances under the EU ETS.

Reduction targets of Member States

In sectors not covered by the EU Emissions Trading Scheme or the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) Regulation, binding annual emission limits are currently set by the Member States under the Effort Sharing Regulation. The main change proposed by the Commission concerns the targets to be achieved in these sectors by 2030 at the latest. The draft regulation increases the EU reduction target from the current 29% to 40% (compared to 2005) and updates

national targets in line with this new target. The calculation of national targets will continue to take into account GDP per capita with limited, targeted adjustments to rationalise costs.

Greenhouse gas emissions and their removal from the land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector

The Commission has proposed to increase the contribution of the land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector to more ambitious EU climate targets. It is necessary to reverse the current downward trend in carbon sequestration and increase natural removals across the EU. The revision of the current legislation mainly implies the following:

- Setting an EU target of net uptake of greenhouse gases of at least 310 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030 (this figure is spread across Member States, and the targets are binding)
- Simplification of accounting and compliance rules and improved monitoring.

CO₂ emission standards for cars and vans

In the ‘Fit for 55’ package, the Commission proposed to revise the rules on CO₂ emissions from cars and vans. The EU-wide reduction targets for 2030 are to be increased, and the new target for 2035 is to reach 100%. In practice, this means that cars and vans with internal combustion engines will no longer be allowed on the EU market from 2035. The proposed stricter CO₂ emission standards for cars and vans are intended to help Member States meet the increased national targets under the Effort Sharing Regulation while stimulating technological innovation in the sector.

Sustainable aviation fuels

‘Fit for 55’: increasing the share of sustainable fuels in the aviation and maritime sectors. Sustainable aviation fuels (advanced biofuels and e-fuels) have the potential to reduce emissions from air traffic significantly. However, this potential is largely untapped: such fuels represent only 0.05% of the total fuels consumed in the aviation sector. The ReFuelEU Aviation project aims to help reduce the aviation sector’s environmental footprint and engage the industry in meeting the EU’s climate targets.

Cleaner fuels for shipping

The project on using renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport (FuelEU Maritime) aims to reduce (by up to 75% by 2050) greenhouse gas emissions from energy consumption on ships. To this end, it seeks to promote the increased use of cleaner fuels by ships. Despite progress in recent years, the maritime sector still relies almost entirely on fossil fuels and is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful pollutants.

More sustainable transport

The Commission has proposed to amend existing legislation to speed up the development of infrastructure for charging or refuelling vehicles using alternative fuels. It is also intended to provide alternative energy for ships at berth in ports or aircraft when stationary. The proposal applies to all modes of transport and sets out objectives for infrastructure development. It also refers to interoperability and ease of use of infrastructure.

Social Climate Fund

The proposal for a Social Climate Fund addresses the social and distributional impacts of the newly proposed emissions trading scheme for construction and road transport. Based on social-climate plans to be developed by Member States, the fund will support measures and investments that benefit the vulnerable

- households
- micro-enterprises
- transport users.

The fund may also cover temporary direct income support.

Renewable energy

The ‘Fit for 55’ package proposes an amendment to the Renewable Energy Directive. It proposes to raise the current EU target for the share of renewables in the overall energy mix from 32% to at least 40% by 2030.

It also proposes to introduce or improve sectoral sub-targets and measures in all sectors, with a particular focus on those where the integration of renewables has been slower, notably in transport, construction, and industry.

Energy efficiency

The Commission has proposed an amendment to the current Energy Efficiency Directive to raise the EU-wide target from 32.5% to 36% for final energy consumption and 39% for primary energy consumption. In addition, the amendment contains provisions to encourage Member States to step up their energy efficiency efforts. It allows for tightening the annual energy savings obligation and introduces new provisions to reduce energy consumption in public sector buildings and targeted measures to protect vulnerable consumers.

Energy performance of buildings

Buildings account for 40% of the energy consumed in the EU and 36% of energy-related direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, the new legislation stipulates that:

- All new buildings will be zero-emission by 2030,
- Existing buildings will be converted to zero-emission by 2050.

13 <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/policies/green-deal/fit-for-55-the-eu-plan-for-a-green-transition/>

Taxation of energy

The proposal to amend the Council Directive on the taxation of energy products and electricity provides for the following:

- To align taxation with EU energy, environment and climate policies,
- To protect and improve the EU internal market by updating the scope of energy products and the rate structure and making more rational use of tax exemptions and reductions by Member States,
- Maintaining the Member States' capacity to generate fiscal revenue.

In addition, the Council is working on:

- Reducing methane emissions in the energy sector,
- Revising the third energy package for gas.

Are we ready for the costs of 'Fit for 55'?

'Fit for 55' comprises more than 4,000 pages of documents and 14 major proposals for change. The work on this hefty collection of documents is still ongoing, which makes it difficult to estimate the costs. When we go through the individual expert reports published last year, we see that they do not cover all costs in their entirety. Particularly as the consequences of the dynamic geo-strategic and economic situation are accelerating investment costs. One thing that escapes analysis is the availability of the key raw materials of the green transition. By moving away from fossil fuels, we risk dependence on rare earth elements, the environmental costs of which are incredibly high¹⁴. Estimating the costs of the whole package is also very

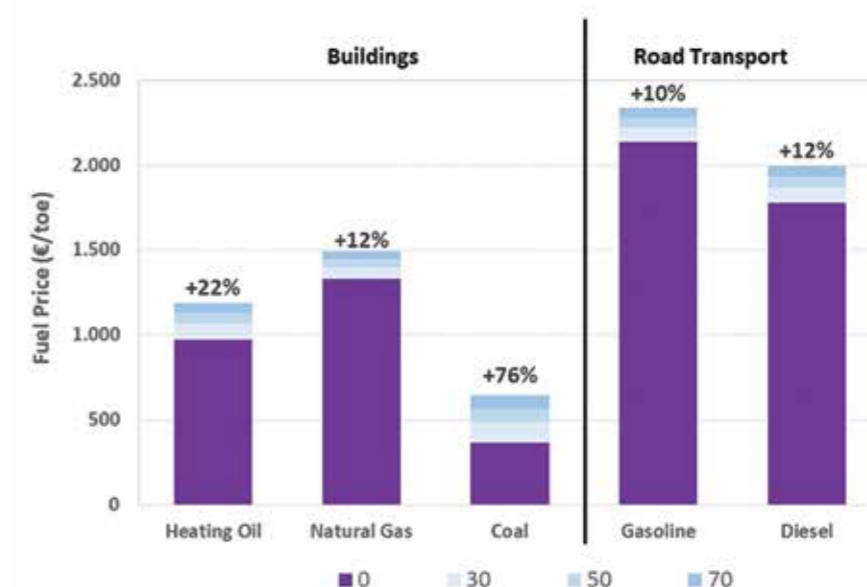
difficult, as we do not know the outcome of the negotiations. I will try to trace and present the reports' conclusions that have appeared since the package was announced, which estimate the costs of the changes more or less comprehensively. Taking into account the experience and analytical background, the most reliable source of data is the CAKE KOBIZE report (National Centre for Balancing and Managing Emissions - Poland net-zero 2050: A roadmap for reaching the EU climate policy targets for Poland by 2050, which is the best point of reference for further deliberations and updates as the negotiations progress.

The European Commission's Impact Assessment

However, I will first look at the European Commission's Impact Assessment for the Fit for 55 package. Contrary to expectations, we will not find detailed outlays, and they will not be broken down by individual Member States. The level of the projected CO₂ prices is also questionable; while today these prices reach up to EUR 90/tCO₂, the analysis shows a level of EUR 42-52/tCO₂. The analysis is also not kept up to date, and the outcome of negotiations on individual points impacts the final outlay. For the sake of an example, I have chosen one of the intervention

areas. The figure below, labelled No.18 in the document, shows a sensitivity analysis of the impact of different carbon prices on fuel prices for both road transport and buildings in 2030. The authors claim that the cost-effectiveness of the ETS in achieving additional emission reductions may be limited by the current heterogeneity of the national fuel tax system. Reduction of emissions is to be fully financed by income from carbon levies, which should be used to finance green technologies and low-carbon mobility infrastructure.

Graph 1.¹⁵



The KOBIZE-CAKE study

'Poland's net-zero 2050: A Roadmap for Achieving Poland's Climate Policy Goals by 2050' talks about the costs for the whole economy, although it should be taken into account that it is a document before the publication of the 'Fit for 55'. The study analyses the possibilities of moving to a climate-neutral economy as declared in the European Green Deal. The energy, transport and agriculture sectors were assessed. The authors indicate that the electricity and heat generation sector and the energy-intensive industries in the ETS will play an essential role in the transition process. The report also provides information on GHC reductions for transport and agriculture. Based on the modelling, three scenarios are indicated. A baseline scenario showing a 60% reduction in 2050 compared to 1990 excluding LULUCF, a reference scenario aiming at a reduction target of 80% GHC excluding LULUCF, and a neutrality scenario with a 90% reduction in 2050 and zero net emissions, i.e. including technology removals, including LULUCF. The report goes on to say that marginal abatement costs, which in 2030 for EUETS are 100 EUR/tCO₂ and in the non-ETS about 120 EUR/tCO₂ (ecw). Looking ahead to 2050, electricity generation costs will increase by around 60% in all scenarios considered. However, their dynamics differ over time - in the neutrality scenario, the most significant increase in costs (even by about 80%) occurs by 2030. To achieve climate neutrality, Poland should reduce CO₂ emissions in transport by about 60% by 2050 compared to 2005. The decrease in agricultural emissions in the neutrality scenario in 2050, depending on the applied measures, could be as much as ca. 65% relative to 2005. The reduction in emissions results in changes in the volume of agricultural production and its structure. The authors indicate that the most considerable reduction in production volume concerns animal products, particularly those derived from cattle breeding.

The costs of increased reduction ambitions are reflected in the deviation of real household consumption from the baseline scenario. In the reference scenario, cumulative household consumption over the period 2021-2050 decreases for Poland relative to the baseline by USD 116bn'14 (EUR 87bn'14).

By contrast, in the neutrality scenario, the decrease in consumption for Poland relative to the baseline is more pronounced, amounting to approximately USD'14 249bn (EUR'14 188bn) over the period 2021- 2050. The transformation of the energy sector in Poland, which is necessary to achieve deep reductions, will require significant investment. The realisation of the neutrality scenario cumulatively over the period 2021-2050 would require outlays in the energy sector of approximately EUR 295bn. These outlays are nearly 60% higher than in the baseline scenario (around EUR 185 billion). It will not be sufficient to reduce fossil fuel consumption and develop renewable energy sources to achieve climate neutrality in the EU and EN by 2050. In addition, according to the author, large-scale implementation of BECCS, CCS and CCU technologies, electrification of industry, use of hydrogen, expansion of electromobility and reduction of livestock production in the agricultural sector, among others, will be needed throughout the economy. The majority of emission reductions in Poland are taking place in the energy sector, but the role of this sector in the reduction effort is decreasing over time. This sector is responsible for about 80% of the total reduction by 2030 and 55% by 2050 (relative to 2015). Climate neutrality in 2050 is achieved with high marginal abatement costs - over €400/tCO₂ eq. in the EU ETS and over €1,300/tCO₂ eq. in non-ETS for Poland. Nuclear power can significantly facilitate the achievement of ambitious reduction targets by providing a stable energy supply at an acceptable cost, the cost of the programme estimated by Minister Piotr Naimski at 70 billion PLN in 2020.

14 More: G.Pitron, Wojna o metale rzadkie - ukryte oblicze transformacji energetycznej i cyfrowej, 2018

15 Source: Enerdata, derived from EnerFuture (EnerBlue Scenario <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020SC0176>)

Transport

Users of vehicles running on petroleum-based fuels will incur additional costs due to emissions from fuel combustion. For passenger vehicles, this will be a cost increase of 30-40% in 2050, while for heavy commercial vehicles, it will be up to 100%. Electricity demand resulting from the electrification of road transport will be around 5TWh in 2030 and could reach 50 TWh in 2050.

Agriculture

The introduction of significant reductions in GHG emissions in the farm sector cannot be fully offset by reductions in unit emissions and leads to a reduction in the volume of agricultural production, especially for animal products. In response to a decrease in the supply of animal products, their prices increase significantly. In the case of beef livestock, this is a 5-fold increase over the period 2015-2050. Attempts to charge farmers for emissions, on a par with other non-ETS sectors, in ambitious reduction scenarios lead to a significant decrease in farm income. A comparable environmental effect can be achieved through the introduction of GHG emission caps, which have less of a negative impact on farmers' incomes. Reducing emissions from the farm sector can be achieved through afforestation of agricultural land with the lowest suitability for cultivation, restoration of peatlands to their natural state and locally adapted measures to increase soil organic carbon sequestration. In an interview¹⁶, Deputy Prime Minister Kowalczyk indicated that meeting the EU Green Deal in agriculture will be difficult, but it will be much more difficult for German, French or Dutch farmers than for Polish farmers. The Prime Minister pointed to differences such as less use of fertilisers, areas excluded from agricultural production, and less use of plant protection products.

Impact of a border tax on GHG emissions under conditions of a tightening of EU climate policy until 2030¹⁷

The authors of the report point to an increase in the price of imports into the EU - according to the projection, the prices of goods imported into the EU in the sectors covered by the border tax would increase on average by around 1.6% in 2030. They also write about the change in the value of imports - an increase in the price of goods imported into the EU would result in a change in the value of imports of approx. -3.4% in the sectors covered by the tax. The most significant changes in EU imports would occur

in the sector: ferrous metals -11.6%. Although in some of the sectors not covered by the border tax, imports are increasing (e.g. manufacturing), the total change in imports to the EU from the rest of the world was about - 0.5% and varied quite a bit between EU Member States (in the case of Poland about -1.2%). Another increase, in their view, is an increase in the price of products exported from the EU and a decrease in the value of exports - as a result of an increase in the price of goods produced in the EU, the price of goods exported from the EU to the rest of the world would also increase. The prices of exported goods in the affected sectors would increase by around 0.2% on average. The largest increase was in ferrous metal production 0.4%. The change in the value of EU exports in the taxed sectors was -1.1%.

The report says that the average change in exports to regions outside the EU considering all sectors is at ca. -0.7% and was highest in Bulgaria -1.3% and the Baltic States -1.2% (for Poland approx. -1%). KOBIZE experts indicate that the border tax has little impact on the value of GDP in the Member States (changes are close to 0%), as increases in the value of production in the sectors covered by the tax are offset by decreases in production in other sectors. Household consumption in the EU increases slightly by around 0.1%, which is related to improved terms of trade in international trade. Budget revenue - the implementation of a border tax within the EU, will mean additional financial revenue estimated at around €7.61 billion (US\$10.6 billion) in 2030 at constant 2011 prices. These funds can be used, among other things, to mitigate the effects of the transition in the countries most burdened by climate policy in the EU.

CO₂ emission reduction pathways in the transport sector in Poland in the context of the 'European Green Deal'¹⁸

The baseline scenario (BAU), which is the reference point in the simulations included in the referenced report, is consistent with the reference scenario of the PRIMES 2016 model. The average growth in transport activity assumed in the baseline of 1.5% y/y implies an increase in emissions from 61 Mt CO₂ in 2020 to 63 Mt CO₂ in 2030 and a subsequent decrease to 58 Mt CO₂ in 2050. The main analytical scenario (ProETSeq) introduces an additional tax depending on the emission intensity of the fuel a vehicle uses and a gradual decrease in the price of electric and hybrid vehicles, with the price per tonne of CO₂ emissions converging to EUR 350 in 2050. The development of electromobility increases the total electricity demand for road transport in 2050 to around 35 TWh, which would account for approximately 15% of the projected national electricity demand

Bank Pekao analysis of the impact of the Fit for 55 package on the Polish economy¹⁹

The analysis estimates the overall cost for Poland of complying with the package at approximately EUR 527.5 billion; however, the analysis does not include a comprehensive balance of costs and benefits of the Fit for 55 package, and the amounts presented in the report should not be treated as a precise forecast of the necessary investment outlays and costs of participating in the EU ETS.

Energy Forum analysis, 'Fit for 55' A guide to financing the energy transition from 2021 (XI 2021)²⁰

The document describes the key sources of funds for climate targets and the greening of the energy sector. According to the authors, thanks to its presence in the EU, Poland can allocate up to 560 billion PLN (from the EU budget and the EU ETS mechanism) for energy transformation. In the report, it is worth noting the matter of taxonomy. The authors point out that it is not only the funds that will mobilise interest in sustainable projects. The principles of sustainable finance (including

Conclusion

When looking at the debate during the Fit-for-55 negotiations, one is struck by the lack of impact of the international and economic situation on some key stakeholders. Achieving climate neutrality is very important, but what is important is the path to these ambitious goals, with the security of supply and the security of generation of electricity and heat being the primary issues. As Paweł Sałek, advisor to the President of the Republic of Poland, mentioned during the interview, "Transformation should be implemented in a sustainable and reasonable way, and where there are new technologies, where there are new opportunities, where there are new fuels, it should be shaped all the time and nobody questions that, but life brings different scenarios and different new situations".²¹

Poland has consistently argued against controversial changes to the ETS II system in the transport and construction sectors. Every time there has been a debate on this issue, we have been against it, said Anna Moskwa, Minister for Climate and Environment, in an interview for the daily *Rzeczpospolita*. She said Poland would contest changes to extend the scheme to individual households, as such measures would impoverish communities. The minister indicated that the country is not ready for Fit for 55. Poland has called for a temporary suspension of the ETS or for significant changes to it, such as freezing the price of emission allowances at EUR 32 due to rising energy and raw

taxonomy) will also trigger this. These rules will include financial sector institutions and listed companies to effectively discourage involvement in projects with negative environmental impacts, increasing transparency, and will prevent greenwashing.

The authors point out that the taxonomy rules will also cover the EU budget, and the key criteria will be not to engage in projects emitting more than 270 gCO₂/kWh.

'Especially in the winter period we are in', the Radio Maryja caller pointed out. 'The just transition' is a concept that was first proposed at the COP24 summit in Katowice by President Andrzej Duda, but there the approach of President Andrzej Duda was that if we are to make the energy transition towards a low-carbon economy, we have to do it in a sustainable, sensible and prudent way, where people are to be at the centre of the transition', the presidential advisor said.

However, the European Union's current climate policy operates differently - it is man, the EU citizen, who bears the greatest cost of the transformation

material prices. Despite the difficult situation, Poland managed to win a number of tools for a wise and planned transformation. This tool is the Social Climate Fund, of which Poland will be the largest beneficiary, with 17.6 percent of the total budget - over EUR 12 billion. Financing under this Fund can be used, among others, for the thermal modernisation of buildings, replacement of cookers, development of public transport, etc. Another success of the Polish side is the increase in the pool of resources under the Modernisation Fund, from which Poland will be able to finance investment in the energy sector, industry and maintain further support for prosumers; after the increase, the pool of resources from the Fund can be estimated at over PLN 60 billion (dependent on the price of emission allowances). Support was also gained for the heating sector by obtaining an additional pool of allowances for district heating, where 30% more free allowances were obtained. Unfortunately, despite an extensive campaign and a wide range of analyses, it was not possible to exclude from the ETS those sub-components that distort the allowance market and cause sudden increases in the price of emission allowances. Sadly, the ambitions of certain stakeholders overshadowed the ideas of solidarity and understanding of the situation of individual members of the EU, which were essential to the founders of the EU, especially those who, like Poland, are paying a high price for a consistent economic policy in which people and their safety are at the centre.

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**THE PLAN TO REBUILD THE EUROPEAN
ECONOMY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR
POLITICAL FUTURE OF EUROPE**

REBUILDING EUROPE AFTER THE PLAGUES OF COVID-19 AND RUSSIA

Piotr Arak

In just two years, the global economy has experienced two major shocks: the Covid pandemic in 2020 and the barbaric aggression of Russia against Ukraine in 2022. Both of these shocks will have significant impacts on markets, particularly economic policy,

and new geopolitical priorities. For Poland, Ukraine in Europe this means new challenges and in this piece I try to describe from the economic situation through decoupling from Russia to rebuilding Ukraine how this could be done.

K-shaped recovery after the pandemic

The impact of the epidemic and its associated constraints on the economy was multichannel. Demand in the economy was constrained by stay-at-home policies, wage and employment reductions, and restrictions to travel. Supply, in turn, was depressed by the need for some firms to temporarily suspend operations, lower availability of supplies from abroad, and increased worker absenteeism.

The decline in economic activity as a result of the pandemic and related restrictions was profound but also temporary. The largest scale of the economic freeze occurred in April 2020. Since May 2020, a gradual improvement of both economic indicators and 'hard' data showing increasing turnover, production and sales in a large part of industries has been visible, indicating a K-shaped economic recovery scenario.

The restaurant and accommodation, tourism, culture, education, entertainment and recreation, transport, retail trade in durable goods, manufacturing of export, investment and consumer durable goods sectors were most strongly affected by the coronavirus pandemic. But some were less influenced, in particular those producing and selling everyday goods (e.g. food), construction, and some even benefited, e.g. courier services, logistics, e-commerce, and the production of hygiene products.

Companies responded to the new situation primarily by cutting costs, including record cuts in investment plans. Some companies laid off employees, although this happened mainly in sectors where the financial situation was already weak. The scale of job cuts was limited, among others, by the government's anti-crisis shields. Many companies decided to temporarily reduce the size of their workforces and limit salaries. Younger

workers were particularly vulnerable to losing their jobs. Layoffs, wage and working time reductions hit household incomes.

All this led to a decision at the EU level to rebuild the development potential of the economy lost as a result of the pandemic, and to support the construction of sustainable competitiveness of the economy and increase in the standard of living of the population in the long term, which will take place, inter alia, through accelerated development of a low-carbon closed-cycle economy, which makes responsible use of environmental resources, and development based on the use of digital solutions. This was the new EU recovery agenda. The expected outcome of the strategic objective of the so-called National Recovery Plans is to increase the productivity of the economy, which will be capable of creating quality jobs.

The National Recovery Plans are financed by the EU Recovery Instrument, which was created last year by a decision of EU member states to combat the economic impact of the pandemic. It is based on two pillars: non-refundable and refundable transfers. Poland is the fifth largest beneficiary of the fund's grant part. The allocation for Poland amounts to EUR 23.9 billion, with larger grant budgets foreseen for Spain (EUR 69.5 billion), Italy (EUR 68.9 billion), France (EUR 39.4 billion) and Germany (EUR 25.6 billion). Additionally, each member state may use the loan part of the fund, but there is no obligation to do so – here, over EUR 34 billion is available for Poland. The projects started in some countries as fast as in autumn of 2021 but in some they still wait to be transferred as in the case of Poland and Hungary following the rule of law dispute between them and Brussels. In February 2022 this all changed. War started, reshaping almost everything once again.

Impact of Russian aggression against Ukraine

When Russia invaded Ukraine, it was widely believed to have expected an easy victory over its neighbor. But so far, Russia has little to show for what it has called its 'special military

operation': Its forces have been bogged down in fighting mainly on the northern, eastern and southern fringes of Ukraine and have found the country to be much more organized and well

equipped than they expected. This did not halt the brutality and barbaric atrocities that Russian soldiers committed in the occupied territories. War in Europe means consequences for the global economy not only the EU or US.

Deepening economic interdependence is, in fact, a pathway to both prosperity and security. Nothing can stop truly irrational leaders from making terrible choices, but trade makes conflict less likely.

The economic and financial war that is being prosecuted by the United States and its allies against Russia is unprecedented in modern times. Russia's economic growth since *perestroika* in the late 1980s has been predicated on increasing economic interdependence with the rest of the world. Withdrawing that interdependence imposes a massive and growing cost on Russia.

Some estimates suggest that all of Russia's income gains since 1989 will be wiped out if the war goes on into next year. That's taking Russia back to the Soviet days, when the Eastern Bloc was free from Western 'coercion' but also the prosperity it would have brought.

The world's two most populous countries, China and India, are sitting awkwardly on the fence over Ukraine's invasion. India looks set to buy discounted Russian gas. China hesitates, and is trying to distance itself from the situation.

For the global economy the war means slower growth and inflation.

According to the spring IMF projections from April 2022 the economy is going to slow down.²² The IMF cut growth forecasts in the euro zone. The Fund's analysts forecast that GDP growth in Germany will amount to 2.1% in 2022 – this is a reduction by as much as 1.7 pp. compared to the pre-war forecast. The IMF also lowered forecasts for Italy (from 3.8 to 2.3%) and Spain (from 5.8 to 4.8%). Analysts also expect weaker growth in economic activity in 2023.

Weaker growth is a direct result of the war. The outlook for economic growth for the United States remains solid. The IMF expects US GDP growth by 3.7% in 2022 and 2.3% in 2023. The forecasts were lowered compared to the pre-war scenario by only 0.3 pp. despite the rapid increase in interest rates by the US Fed. The revision for the euro zone is almost four times greater, despite the lack of interest rate hikes by the European Central Bank.

The decline in economic activity in the euro zone may be stronger than indicated by the IMF. IMF analysts took into account only the sanctions imposed by the EU on Russia until the end of March - they assume that oil and gas imports from Russia will be maintained. The embargo on Russian oil and gas could mean a decline in Germany's GDP by up to 2% and a possible recession in the Euro area.



Source: International Monetary Fund data.

Forecasts for Poland remain solid. The IMF expects GDP growth by 3.7% in 2022 and 2.9% in 2023 – this is a reduction of 0.9 pp. compared to the pre-war scenario.

The revision of GDP forecasts for Poland was almost two times smaller than for Germany and lower than the average for the Euro zone.

The IMF forecasts that the sanctions against Russia will have limited effectiveness. Analysts expect Russia's GDP to decline by only 8.5% in 2022 and an additional 2.3% in 2023. Subsequently, Russia will find itself in an economic stagnation – this will be the result of being cut off from importing technology and machinery. At the same time, the IMF expects an economic collapse in Ukraine. Ukraine's GDP is to drop by 35%, which is more than four times more than in Russia. The Polish Economic Institute expected a decline in Russia of app. 15-20% GDP in 2022 due to the trade sanctions and private businesses leaving their Russian subsidiaries or investments behind in large numbers.

Polish geopolitical chance

The ongoing conflict that has once again awakened memories of a dark and troubled past. As the conflict becomes more protracted with no end game in sight, a spillover of the looming Russian threat is a real possibility for many Poles today.

Fear and anxiety in the minds of Russia's western frontier nations, especially Poland, are nothing novel. Sandwiched between Germany and Russia, and annexed by both countries in the past centuries, the Poles are once again in the frontline of this latest catastrophe – both humanitarian and geopolitical. However, the current predicament that Poland finds itself in could be the cornerstone for the resurrection of its past geopolitical ambitions as a leader of Central Europe.

The Poles probably understand the seriousness Russian threat better than anyone. For almost two hundred years before its liberation in 1990, apart from the interwar period, it was one way-or another subjugated by Russia (and sometimes Germany). Apprehensive about its history of living under the constant threat of Russian domination – post-Cold War, Poland's geopolitical ambitions was displayed in its steadfast integration with the west – in the form of NATO membership (1999) and later with EU membership (2004) to keep the possible Russian threat at bay.

From the western perspective, particularly the US, the rapid expansion of NATO to the Visegrad countries (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and later Slovakia), and later to the Baltic and Balkan states was based on three assumptions. First, the liberal idea that newly integrated states in the post-Cold War 'gray zone' would promote democracy and free markets that would encourage cooperation and non-aggression to create a 'peaceful Europe'. Second, the idea that integrating the 'buffer countries' in central, south, and eastern Europe within NATO would prevent any future *rapprochement*, between Germany and Russia. Finally, the idea that such integration based on collective security principles would contain any future threat from Russia. This was also the basis for the idea of further expanding NATO as was proposed during the Bucharest

What is certain is that inflation will be high worldwide. IMF analysts expect a jump in inflation in 2022 and a stabilization in 2023. Poland is an exception in the forecast - the IMF expects the CPI in Poland to increase by 8.9% in 2022 and 10.3% in 2023. PIE expects the inflation to be at the level of 10.9% in 2022 and 7.1% the next. In some Eurozone countries the inflation on average might reach 15% due to the war and previous gas rationing by the Russian state-owned gas behemoth Gazprom. Russia teaches us a lot about economic warfare as it weaponized gas so many times before against Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova or Poland.

Summit of 2008 – with the decision to invite Georgia and Ukraine into NATO's ranks.

For the US, Poland is of particular importance for the future of NATO. Poland is an industrialised country – a middle power, and a thriving democracy at the frontier of Russia. In fact, America needs the support of Poland and other new members of NATO in its eastern flank as its western allies, such as France and Germany.

Any containment strategies that NATO adopts for Russia must include Poland as its leading eastern flank ally. This is manifested by Poland becoming America's stalwart NATO ally by being one of the few countries in the alliance to spend 2% of their GDP on defense; implementing military modernization; and welcoming the presence of NATO troops, defense systems and battlegroup alliances.

With the current war in Ukraine still unfolding, the Poles are naturally apprehensive apropos the Russian bellicosity. Poland has already become the geopolitical and logistical epicenter for NATO's current man oeuvres against Russia.

In this regard, although Poland finds itself facing an uncertain future once again, the current Russo-Ukrainian war could be a pedestal for Poland to move beyond its strategy of survival to one of success.

Freedom of Poland is intrinsically linked to the freedom of Ukraine today – hence it is even more important for Poland on one hand to play a leading role in bolstering the integration and security of the central, south, and eastern European states in the Three Seas region and to deter the possibility of any future Russian advances on the other.

To achieve this, Poland must first reinforce its position as a key and unwavering NATO ally against an encroaching Russia. Poland's survival depends on the ability of NATO and its alliance to quickly respond to any threats from Russia. NATO members, and the world in general, have finally woken up to the Polish warning regarding Russia.

²² International Monetary Fund (2022), *World Economic Outlook April 2022 – War Sets Back the Global Recovery*, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2022/04/19/world-economic-outlook-april-2022> [access: April 23, 2022].

Poland's future prospects, both in maintaining its independence and playing a greater geopolitical role in the region, will be forged in the upcoming months. Its ability to unite the west, and more importantly its region against the common Russian

enemy, might finally correspond to the realization of its geopolitical ambitions, yet against them is the paradigm shift in the energy sector.

Europe can do without Russian oil and gas

The EU is heavily dependent on imports of energy resources from Russia. This country accounts for 25% of crude oil imports by Europe, 45% of natural gas imports and 44% of hard coal imports. It is possible to significantly reduce the EU's dependence on Russia. The EU could limit its gas imports from Russia by as much as 91% already in 2022.²³ This is what the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki calls for in response to acts of barbarism in Bucha and other cities. 'The EU must confiscate all Russian assets in its western banks as well as those of Russian oligarchs. It must sever all trade relations with Russia without delay,' Morawiecki said. Imports of energy resources supply as much as 1/3 of the Russian budget and directly finance the Putin regime's war machine. We are at a historic moment of opportunity for a breakthrough in EU energy policy. Europe should be free of oil and gas from Russia.

EU oil imports in the last three years are less dependent on supplies from the east. Apart from Russia, which supplies about 1/4 of oil, the EU imports the raw material from Norway, Kazakhstan, the USA, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Iraq and other countries. The Bruegel think tank calculates that Russia supplied 3.5 million bpd out of total EU imports of 15 million bpd in 2021. It noted that the EU and U.K. together paid Russia €88 billion for those imports.²⁴

In Poland, the share of Russian oil in total consumption and imports has declined by some 30 pp. over the past decade and currently amounts to slightly more than 60%. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe are more dependent on Russian oil than Western countries. France, Austria and Spain imported less than 10% of this raw material from Russia. In nominal terms, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium imported the most oil. Here, the share of Russian oil imports was ca. 20-30%, while in Slovakia, Finland, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland oil from Russia accounted for over 60%.

Gas imports from Russia to the EU account for about 45% of total imports and 40% of demand. As in the case of oil, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are characterized by greater dependence on gas supplies from Russia. The nominally largest importers are Germany, Italy, Hungary and the Netherlands.

In March 2022, the European Commission proposed an outline of a plan to build EU independence from Russian fossil fuels by 2030. Thanks to diversification of supplies, substituting gas with energy from RES, nuclear and coal and using potential energy savings by e.g. reducing air conditioning by 2 degrees in summer and appropriate management of the demand side reducing consumption on the industry side, it would be possible to reduce gas imports from Russia by as much as 91% at the EU level.

Coal imports from Russia have been on the rise in the Union in recent years and amounted to 56 million tons in 2019. Russian hard coal accounts for about 45% of raw material imports and about 30% of consumption. Nominally, Germany and Poland import the most coal from Russia. Russian coal is relatively cheap, which is why its imports increased in several countries. Low supply on the world markets limits alternatives to Russian supplies. Potential directions for increasing imports are the US, Australia or South Africa. In Poland, coal consumption decreased in the years 1990-2020 by more than 40%. Currently, about 80% of coal imported from Russia is used as fuel for households. Further decarbonization of the EU economy, including Poland, will reduce the role of coal as an energy resource in the coming years.

Possibilities of limiting import of particular energy resources from Russia are diversified. In the short term, activation of spare production capacities, redirection of supply chains and use of current reserves would allow the EU to prepare for a long-term cut-off from Russian oil and thus reduce the value of exports of the Russian Federation by over \$50 billion.

Sustainable diversification of oil supplies does not require significant infrastructure investment. Already today, most imports to the EU are transported by sea. Last year, not even half of the capacity of the Polish Naftoport was used. Increasing oil production in North America would allow to obtain nearly 1 million barrels a day, that is about 40% of oil imported from Russia. In case of favorable negotiations with OPEC countries, including Saudi Arabia, UAE and Iran, the increase in supplies from these directions could reach as much as 3.8 million bpd. The average utilization of European LNG terminals in 2021 was only 46%.

The mounting evidence of war crimes committed by Russian troops in places such as Bucha and the launch of a major new Russian offensive in the eastern Donbas are raising the pressure on all European countries to at least consider a gas import ban. Europe also faces the risk that Russia could itself retaliate against western sanctions by unilaterally stopping the flow of gas to Europe. Either way, the EU is facing a scenario unthinkable even a few weeks ago – a gas and oil supply shock

that would force it to ration energy to industry and could shutter some of the continent's largest factories.

We must prepare and brace because the unthinkable might happen. With the creation of a roadmap of decreasing the reliance on Russian resources Europe needs a plan to rebuild a sovereign Ukraine, which would be a candidate country.

Rebuilding Ukraine

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is taking its toll. Most tragic are the terrible loss of life and human suffering, but the material damage is also enormous. Before the war, the IMF predicted that Ukraine's gross domestic product would grow by as much as 3.6% this year. Now, the Economist Intelligence Unit predicts that it will fall by an alarming 46.5% in real terms. According to Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, taking into account the damage already done and the expected decline in production in the coming years, the losses will exceed one billion dollars, of which the destruction of infrastructure will amount to hundreds of billions of dollars.

In the current phase of the crisis, humanitarian and military aid is the most urgent. However, there will come a time when the gunfire dies down. The next day, not only immediate aid but also long-term support will be necessary. Understandably, Ukraine aspires to EU membership. It should be admitted over time, but not on an emergency or express basis. Ukraine must meet the conditions of membership, which is expected of other accession candidates. In the case of Ukraine it is fundamental to deoligarchize the economy. Corrupt economic and political structures have hindered the country's development for years. In purchasing power parity, Ukraine's GDP per capita in 2021 was only 74% of its 1989 level.

In the previous processes of granting candidate status to a given country, the European Commission required appropriate reforms earlier. In order to issue an opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's request, the EC asked a total of 3,242 questions to the authorities in Sarajevo and 655 follow-up questions. It took the authorities 22 months, or almost two years, to prepare a response to it.

The average time between applying for membership and granting candidate status was 4 years, and 8 years from the start of negotiations. The mere positive opinion of the proposal from the Commission took 3 years. However, there are exceptions – Croatia and North Macedonia were granted candidate status within one year. Therefore, taking into account the still pre-war situation of Ukraine, it would be possible to show goodwill and grant emergency candidate status. Before the war, Ukraine made reforms, but its economic system based on the enormous power of the oligarchs would be a problem with the opinion of the Commission under normal conditions. Assuming that the candidate status does not mean meeting all the criteria,

and with a commitment to a reconstruction, reform program and acceptance of technical assistance from the European Commission, there would be a chance for a positive opinion from the European Commission. In 2020, the European Commission issued a new membership strategy for the Western Balkans, which accelerated the process of starting accession negotiations. On the occasion of the candidate status for Ukraine, the European Commission could announce a new strategy due to threats to Europe's security.

The next step to granting candidate status is the consent of the Council of the European Union. Here we should expect considerable resistance from the Member States, which do not want a repetition of the Turkey quagmire - which has had the status of a candidate country since 1999, open negotiations since 2005, but without the prospect of membership. Particularly strong resistance will be expressed by the Netherlands, Spain, Italy and Cyprus, possibly also by other countries.

To support Ukraine's reconstruction, the EU should create a special long-term financial instrument, the European Fund for Reconstruction of Ukraine. Successive multi-billion euro tranches should finance infrastructure investments and human capital development. Launching such a fund, to which the European Commission should invite the UK, Norway and Switzerland and possibly others, will not be easy. It will be much more expensive than providing weapons to fight the Russian aggressor and we know how this worked out up to this point in countries like Germany.

The EU plans to spend hundreds of billions of euros to finance the bloc's post-pandemic recovery. No less costly will be the energy transition and the switch to renewable energy sources. Not for climate change but to decouple Ukraine from Russia for good.

It is necessary to develop power lines connecting Ukraine with the West. Only in Poland, the renovation of the Rzeszów-Chmielnicki 750 kV line can provide up to 2 GW, or 44% of the current total transmission capacity from Russia and Belarus (4.5 GW). In the future, this connection can be used to import cheap energy from Ukrainian nuclear power plants to Poland. At the same time, Ukraine should be supported in the rapid reduction of electricity consumption from fossil fuels by investing in renewable energy sources (in 2020, RES

²³ Lipiński, K., Maj, M., Miniszewski, M. (2022), *An EU independent from Russia? Alternative sources of energy commodities*, Polish Economic Institute, Warsaw, <https://pie.net.pl/en/eu-could-become-independent-from-russian-commodities-already-in-2022-2/> [access: April 23, 2022].

²⁴ McWilliams, B., Sgaravatti, G., Tagliapietra, S., Zachmann, G. (2022), *Can Europe manage if Russian oil and coal are cut off?*, Bruegel, <https://www.bruegel.org/2022/03/can-europe-manage-if-russian-oil-and-coal-are-cut-off/> [access: April 23, 2022].



accounted for only about 10% of Ukrainian electricity demand). According to the most ambitious scenarios of the International Renewable Energy Agency, Ukraine in 2030 could produce up to 71 TWh (more than half of the current consumption) from renewable energy - mainly from onshore wind turbines (35 TWh), hydropower plants (14.5 TWh), biogas (13 TWh) and solar power plants (8 TWh). Common Polish-Ukrainian-American investments in new nuclear units at the Chmielnicki power plant may be for consideration.

Ukraine should create the most stable and transparent energy market with investments in transmission and distribution networks and with the maintenance of flexible reserve capacity. The extension of the Polish power exchange to the Ukrainian power exchange is also to be considered.

Ukraine's power system has been an element of attacks by Russian hackers for years. Such attacks can be expected to intensify in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to consider increasing the support that Ukraine has received from the EU and the US since 2016 in order to improve systems of protection of critical infrastructure against cyber-attacks.

As regards gas infrastructure, a plan should be developed to redesign the entire gas industry and distribution system from scratch. Consideration should be given to the analysis of gas consumption in individual customer groups and the potential of alternating low-emission gases, such as biomethane and hydrogen. Ukraine also has a very large potential of biomass and geothermal energy, which can be used in heating, replacing some of the gas consumption in this sector. The energy alliance between Ukraine and Poland can be developed by joint investments in the Ukrainian gas extraction sector and joint collectors as well as the use of Ukrainian storage facilities. Ukraine has one of the largest warehouses in Europe. Investment plans in the field of shale gas extraction in Ukraine, which Western companies gave up in 2014, should be resumed.

Ukraine may benefit from Europe's independence from Russian oil. European countries may increase imports of crude oil and petroleum products from destinations other than Russia, including the US and Kazakhstan. Forecasts indicate that growing exports would be able to meet the needs of the EU. The

current pipeline infrastructure connects Ukraine with Western Europe via Slovakia and Hungary. However, this process would require additional infrastructure modernization. One of the six large Ukrainian refineries is currently operating. Some of the disused facilities may be modernized, which would affect the country's self-sufficiency in fuel supplies, mainly diesel, which is mostly imported and used by the military.

Border points and unloading points in the east of Poland are adapted to transport coal by road. Any shortages in coal supplies were previously supplemented by Ukraine with imports from Poland and the US. The resignation from the Russian gas will require an increase in the share of, inter alia, Australia in the volume of supplies.

The way to reduce the use of most of the imported gas for heating purposes is to improve the energy efficiency of buildings. This requires the development of a stable government policy and incurring significant costs, assuming the protection of households most exposed to energy poverty.

The second instrument for helping Ukraine should be deep cuts in foreign debt. We know from experience how much this matters. In 1994 Poland the London Club agreed to halve the debt owed to private banks. This amounted to \$6.3 billion, which was 5.7% of Poland's GDP at the time. It allowed access to global capital markets and opened Poland to more Western investment.

Ukraine's public debt at the end of 2021 was about \$94 billion, or 61.7% of GDP. Of that total, foreign debt is about \$57 billion. The West can afford a far-reaching reduction of these liabilities, or even their complete cancellation. Ukraine's partners should declare their willingness to help, combining gradual debt reduction with progress in de-oligarchization and building a market economy in place of corrupt state capitalism.

As soon as political conditions allow, Ukraine needs to be helped economically because it cannot do it alone and as a Pole I think we need to help. After the plague of the coronavirus, we fight the plague of Russian imperialism, barbarism too well known from the past. We must unite as Europe to help Ukraine as it is in our own good interest to have a thriving and independent neighbor and possible EU member.



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