

SUMMARY

The present volume of the *Ethos* is entitled *Belarus and Ukraine: A Closer Europe*, and it is devoted to the cultural and historical past of Belarus and Ukraine, the lands that were parts of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth from 1569 to 1795.

The text *From the Editors* presents Karol Wojtyła's fascination with the history and culture of the Slavic peoples, manifested already in his early poetry, and exemplified later in the encyclical *Slavorum Apostoli*, as well as in numerous homilies he delivered as Pope John Paul II.

In his Apostolic Letter *Euntes in Mundum* for the Millennium of the Baptism of Kievan Rus', of 25 January 1988, Pope John Paul II points that the event in question marked the beginning of a long historical process in which an original Byzantine-Slav form of Christianity developed. In the course of subsequent history it was precisely this Baptism and Christian culture – drawn from the universal Church and developed on the basis of its innate spiritual treasures – which formed the foundation of the spiritual identity of those nations and turned out decisive for their survival. Indeed the Baptism of Vladimir the Great and of his country had great importance for the whole spiritual development of this part of Europe and the Church, as well as for the whole of Byzantine-Slav culture and civilization. The spiritual patrimony of the Byzantine Church, introduced into Kievan Rus' through the Slavonic language (which had become a liturgical language), was gradually enriched on the basis of the local cultural patrimony, thanks to contacts with the neighbouring Christian countries, and came to meet the needs and the mentality of the peoples living in that great principality. Thanks to the inheritance left by Cyril and Methodius, there took place in that territory a meeting between East and West, between inherited values and new ones. The elements of the Christian heritage have imbued the life and culture of those nations. They have provided inspiration for literary, philosophical, theological and artistic creativity, making room for a totally original form of European culture.

In his pastoral letter addressed to the faithful of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Card. Lubomyr Husar presents historical, ecclesiastical and religious arguments for the creation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Patriarchate, pointing to the maturity of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, its witness to martyrdom and its need for independence from the Moscow Patriarchate.

The authors of the articles included in the first section, *The History of the Slavic Identity*, point both to the common roots of the Slavic nations and to their different histories.

Jerzy Kłoczowski poses the question whether today's Belarus, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine can be considered the heirs of the Republic of the Two (or Many) Nations (1569-1795). The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth introduced certain political principles, like those of subsidiarity and of tolerance, which contributed to the creation of a specific cultural space that affected all the nations living in its territory. The historical coexistence of so many nations: the Byelorussian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian ones, as well as of the Jewish and Muslim minorities, within one State has provided

a new area of comparative multidisciplinary study already undertaken in numerous works by Polish, Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian historians working for or cooperating with the Institute of Central-East Europe at the Catholic University of Lublin. The research done so far has demonstrated that each of the four nations in question has a right to claim to be a heir of the Republic of the Two (or Many) Nations at least in the sense of culture. Such thinking is also reflected in numerous initiatives, undertaken after 1989, to prepare historical monographs on the common heritage of the nations in question and to work for the sake of their good relations.

Taras Dobko analyzes the cultural and social context of contemporary Ukraine as to its impact on the understanding and exercise of the human person's freedom. He also attempts to draw the profile of freedom by contrasting its genuine manifestations with its counterfeits that tend to replace it in the lived experience of his Ukrainian fellow-citizens. Three major cultural mechanisms are brought to the fore in this respect, namely, post-colonial, post-Soviet and neo-liberal capitalist conditions of the human persons' shaping of their individual and collective life-projects. Some critical factors which can jeopardize the understanding and corrupt the exercise of personal freedom in Ukraine are exposed in view of the fact that Ukrainians prove to be most susceptible to them because of their particular social and cultural history and its legacy in the present. Then the idea of the project of building a nation-state as a response to the long post-colonial status of Ukraine is analyzed. The Soviet remnants of the present socio-cultural reality are discussed, as they continue to exert their power over the minds of many people or are half-consciously revitalized as an allegedly viable strategy for coping with the exigencies of present life-conditions dominated by ruthless neo-liberal capitalist market forces. In the wake of such a life-strategy, people tend to sacrifice their freedom and their personal cultural and social creativity to the collective whole of state power charged with the authority to substitute for individual life choices. Finally, the neo-liberal consumerism in its extreme alienation of the human person from his community and selfless commitment with others as indispensable conditions and manifestations of genuine human freedom is denounced. To conclude, the author attempts to identify those factors that might prove conducive to the proper awakening and exercise of the human person's genuine freedom as it is practiced in the particular social and cultural circumstances of present-day Ukraine.

Adam F. Baran presents the situation of Polish ethnic minorities in Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, pointing to the initiatives undertaken by the Republic of Poland as well as by the non-governmental and scouting organizations in order to stimulate rapprochement between the people, in particular the youth, living in the four states in question. The author reflects on the social and cultural initiatives that can engage the youth and simultaneously be part of the Polish *raison d'état*. The cooperation between Polish scouting organizations and the scouting organizations active among the Polish minorities in post-Soviet states, which started in 1989, has gradually developed and resulted in hospitality schemes, in visit exchange programs and in common undertakings. During that time the independent Polish scouting organizations have demonstrated selfless dedication to that mission. However, one can see a big difference between the role of the non-governmental sector in Lithuania, on the one hand, and in Belarus and Ukraine, on the other. Another purpose of the cooperation with Polish minorities in the post-Soviet states is to encourage them to foster democracy there. The text concludes with the information that, in September 2007, the Polish Charter was adopted by the Polish parliament. The law grants people of Polish origin living in post-Soviet states similar rights to those enjoyed by Polish citizens.

The succeeding section bears the title *In Unity with the Bishop of Rome* and includes articles on the current situation of the Catholic Church in Belarus and Ukraine.

Roman Dzwonkowski, SAC, presents the history of the revival of the Catholic Church in Belarus and Ukraine after the persecution it had suffered under the communist regime. In the 1930's, the Church ceased to exist there as an institution, and religious life survived mainly in a clandestine form. The present rebirth of the pastoral structures and Church institutions, initiated by lay faithful and their pastors, had its spiritual source both in the activity of the priests who did not abandon their posts despite the oppression they suffered in particular from 1944 to 1948 and in the heroic perseverance demonstrated by lay members of the Church. However, despite its present

renewal, reflected in a growing attendance at Church services, in a growing number of priests and bishops, in a return of the institutes of religious life, in the emergence of diocesan press, as well as in the establishment of the diplomatic relations with the Holy See, the Church in the states of Belarus and Ukraine is still facing numerous challenges. Among them is the problem of the language of the liturgy, the prevailing tendency being to celebrate the liturgy exclusively in the local languages. However, the Polish minorities in Belarus and Ukraine constitute a majority of the Catholic believers in these countries. The author postulates that the faithful identifying themselves as Poles should be allowed to use their native language in the liturgy as it is the case with Catholics of various national minorities in Poland, who can attend Church services offered in their native languages.

Małgorzata Stopikowska presents an overview of Belarusian Catholic press, pointing to the difficult presence of the Catholic Church in this post-Soviet state, where people of Polish nationality are a majority of the Catholics, as well as to the determination of the Catholic Church to make use of modern mass media in its appeal to the faithful, and stresses the irreplaceable role of Catholic periodicals in shaping the cultural life among Poles in Belarus.

Ryszard Montusiewicz describes new evangelization of Belarus, initiated by the Neocatechumenate Movement in 1990, when two Polish families volunteered to settle in Belarus and give testimony to their faith by an example of Christian life.

The authors of the articles included in the section *One Baptism – One Faith...* point to the cultural and oecumenical heritage of the Orthodox religion.

Marek Melnyk contributes an article presenting the profile of St. Peter Mohyla (1596-1646), Metropolitan of Kiev and great reformer of the Orthodox religion, proponent of oecumenical approach and promoter of rapprochement between the Catholic and the Orthodox religions. Mohyla was also the author of an important Catechism of the Orthodox religion and founder of the Kiev-Mohyla Academy in Kiev and of the Kiev Caves Monastery (Pecherskaya Lavra) printing house, where numerous theological works, created by himself and by his collaborators were printed.

Ewa Rybałt presents the Kievan Hagia Sophia icon as an oecumenical inspiration for the theological and philosophical reflection of the Russian thinkers Vladimir Soloviev, Nikolai Berdyaev and Sergei Bulgakov. The icon in question, influenced by the Catholic worship of the Immaculate Conception accepted by the Kievan Orthodox Church, became a new visual representation of the Hagia Sophia, or the Holy Wisdom.

The succeeding section, entitled *The Beauty of the Slavic Soul*, includes two articles presenting the influence of the Orthodox religion on Byelorussian art and old Rus'ian literary texts.

Fr. Michał Janocha contributes a concise presentation of Byelorussian icon painting on the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (within the borders of the former Union of Lublin). Stylistically, Byelorussian icon painting was closely related to Ukrainian icon painting and it belonged to the same artistic region, which embraced the eastern lands of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Today, Byelorussian icons can be found in museums (mainly in the State Museum of Byelorussian Art in Minsk and in Old Byelorussian Culture Museum in Minsk), as well as in Orthodox and Uniate churches in Belarus, in the region of Podlasie in Poland, and in Lithuania. Two essential trends in Byelorussian icon painting can be distinguished: the "high" one, represented by guilds painting in large cities, and the country folk one. From the end of the 16th century onwards Byelorussian icon painting, influenced by Polish church art, was subjected to spontaneous occidentalization. The Russian partition of Poland and the dissolution of the Uniate Church in 1839 were among the factors that stopped the growth of genuine Byelorussian icon painting. The research on the Byelorussian icon carried by Belarusian scholars was limited to the objects that could be found in the territory of Belarus. It was only a short time ago that Polish and Russian scholars also showed an interest in Byelorussian icon painting. The newly started cooperation holds promise that the Byelorussian icon will find its place on the map of *Slavia orthodoxa* and on the cultural map of the European region in question.

Aleksandra Sulikowska-Gaska describes the cult of the Holy Rood in Kievan Rus' after its Christianization in 988 and throughout its medieval history. The common belief about the veneration due to the Holy Cross was not a consequence of seeing it as a punishment which hit the Innocent or as a tool of the satisfaction of God's justice. Neither was the cross perceived as a sign of justification, but rather as the symbol of the Incarnate God's victory over death. Thus, it was seen not as the rood of punishment or death, but rather as the rood of life. The veneration of the Holy Rood was accompanied by the cult of icons, by wearing encolpions, as well as by a cult of the relics of True Cross. In the course of the article the author refers extensively to Russian literary sources, including the literature of medieval Rus'.

The final block of articles, entitled *Servant of Life, Family and Fatherland*, is devoted to the profile of the late Abp. Kazimierz Majdański, long-term member of the Board of the John Paul II Institute, Founder and Director of the Institute of Studies on the Family in Warszawa-Łomianki. The section opens with two lists of Abp. Kazimierz Majdański's publications included, respectively, in the *Ethos* and in the monographs published by the John Paul II Institute at the Catholic University of Lublin. Then, the text of the funeral homily for Abp. Kazimierz Majdański, delivered by Bp. Ignacy Jeż, follows, together with the obituary by Fr. Jerzy Bajda.

The section *Interviews of the Ethos* includes three talks. Fr. Alfred M. Wierzbicki talks to Ambassador Jerzy Bahr about the ongoing social transformations in the post-Soviet states, including Ukraine and Belarus. Then, Fr. Jan Sochoń talks to Bogumiła Berdychowska about the culture of the Eastern borderlands encompassing territories which currently belong to Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania, and about the mutual relations between Poland and Ukraine. Finally, Prof. Wojciech Kaczmarek and Prof. Sławomir J. Żurek talk to Prof. Zofia Klimaj-Goczłowa and Prof. Kris Van Heuckelom about the development of Polish Studies in two Belgian universities: the University of Brussels and the Catholic University of Leuven.

The section *Thinking about the Fatherland...* includes an essay by Bohdan Urbankowski on Józef Piłsudski's concept of a federalist state that would embrace the ethnically Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Latvian lands.

In the section *Notes and Reviews*, Adam F. Baran reviews *Doświadczenie Boga w GUŁagu* [The Experience of God in the Gulag] by A. Morka, OP; Cezary Ritter discusses B. Cywiński's *Baśń niepodległa, czyli w stronę politologii kultury. Wykłady witebskie* [An Independent Tale, or Towards the Political Science of Culture: The Vitebsk Lectures]; Anna Szary presents a review of the exhibition of Antoni Rząsa's works "The Human Fate" held at the Museum of Modern Sculpture in Orońsko; Józef F. Fert discusses Bohdan Królikowski's book *Akt oskarżenia* [Act of Accusation], and Marek Woźniak reviews *Aktualność przesłania paryskiej "Kultury" w dzisiejszej Europie. Zbiór studiów* [Relevance of the Heritage of Parisian "Kultura" for Contemporary Europe. A Collection of Studies]. The section concludes with the *Proposals of the Ethos*.

In the section devoted to *Reports*, Anna Kawalec discusses the presentation of a book *Papież Jan Paweł II do Polonii i Polaków za granicą 1979-2003. Przemówienia, listy, telegramy* [Pope John Paul II Speaks to the Polish Diaspora and Polish Immigrants: Speeches from the Years 1979-2003] by Roman Dzwonkowski, SAC, held at the Catholic University of Lublin; Łukasz Jasina reports on an International Conference "«Where We Stem From...» The Ancestral Relations within the Great Families of Byelorussia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine, and the Place of their Descendants in Today's World," held by the Institute of Central-East Europe; and Cezary Ritter presents a report on the Third International Piano Forum "Bieszczady without Borders."

The section *Through the Prism of the Ethos* includes a feuilleton by Piotr Ślęczka, SDS, on the place of philosophy and theology within a modern academic curriculum.

The section of *Bibliography* contains a bibliography of John Paul II's speeches on Ukraine, Belarus and the mutual relations between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The volume concludes with the *Notes about the Authors*.

Summarized by *Dorota Chabrajska*