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## **THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION CRISIS ON EUROPE'S CULTURAL CONDITION: WHY ARE THE POLES 'APPREHENSIVE' ABOUT MUSLIMS?**

### **Abstract**

The 2015 immigration crisis revealed the weak cultural condition Europe finds itself in, given the adoption by a majority of states of a model for development that deliberately severs ties with common civilisational roots. However, while Poles do not really nurture prejudices against either Islam or immigrants, a decided majority of them (and even Poland's political elites, notwithstanding all that divides them) voiced their unwillingness to accept new (mainly Muslim) arrivals, in the context of a solution to the above crisis the EU was intending to impose. A change of policy was thus forced upon the Union by Poland and other CEECs, given the latter's strong guiding conviction that pursuit of a multicultural ideology leads to a weakening – rather than any improvement – in the condition of culture in Europe, and hence to a sapping of the continent's power in the international relations sphere. As the crisis has made clear, the EU will probably have to start taking more account of preferences in this part of Europe, i.a. as it strives to shape its cultural identity. This means opportunities for the political science of religion to research the likelihood of a return to the Christian component of European identity, as well as the role this might play in improving the cultural condition of this part of the world.

**Keywords:** immigration, the cultural condition of Europe, cultural identity, Polish policy on migration, Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs)

### **Introduction**

Europe's so-called "migrant crisis" (or "migration/immigrant/immigration/refugee crisis") of 2015 was one of many more recent ones to afflict the Old Continent, including in its manifestation as "the European Project", which is to say

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the European Union coming into existence as such in 1993. However, the causes and consequences of this crisis would seem to be rather different in nature from the difficulties met with up to now – with which the European institutions coped more or less adequately. Long-time President of the European Commission Jacques Delors once observed that Europe was in need of a soul. And indeed, in 2015, the rich part of the EU he did much to create gained a clear conviction that the material factor could not build a strong community by itself. For, despite the growing wealth present in its societies, the Old Continent is in a weak condition culturally – to the extent that remedial measures will be essential if the EU's unity and strength in a globalised world are to be maintained. For an economic foundation, the political will of governments, and efforts on the part of the opinion-forming elite are all ultimately insufficient, where what is truly needed is a common European identity arising out of some shared cultural core<sup>2</sup>.

The issue of an identity for the EU may not be considered in isolation from that of Europe's identity, hence a need for the rights of Europe's nations to be protected, rather than ignored<sup>3</sup>. Yet it is the CEECs that are seen as at the forefront in seeking this, presumably against a background of the particular things they experienced through 20th-century totalitarianism and war. The latter ensured that the fall of communism was associated with a rise in this part of Europe of a role for religion as an important component of both individual and national identity<sup>4</sup>. These tendencies find their political expression in the so-called "nationalist populism"<sup>5</sup> often presented as a serious threat to our continent's integration, and more widely even to progress in general. A main reason for this would seem to be an understanding of identity and "European values" that is distinct from the Western one prevailing hitherto.

Given its success with the transformation undergone, as well as its size attributes and potential and even its history, Poland is emerging as the leader of its region – a truth that has been particularly easy to discern since 2015, and the holding of the country's reins of power by the party known as *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (*PiS*, i.e. "Law & Justice"). Step by step, as the above party emerges victorious at successive elections, a start has been made to the unveiling of a "metapolitical stance" capable of being ascribed to Polish society<sup>6</sup>. Indeed, we may join with Michał Gierycz in considering whether those *PiS* victories may be bringing into

2 Piotr Mazurkiewicz, *Europeizacja Europy. Tożsamość kulturowa w kontekście procesów integracji*, Studium Generale Europa, Warsaw 2001, p. 378.

3 Ibidem.

4 Raport o religijności i przynależności narodowej w Europie środkowo-wschodniej, eKAI, 15.05.2017, <https://ekai.pl/konferencja-o-religijnosci-w-europie-srodkowo-wschodniej/> (accessed 15.08.2020); Pew Research Center, Religious belief and national belonging in Central and Eastern Europe, <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/> (accessed 15.08.2020).

5 Paweł Kowal, Liberalne państwo przegrywa z ludzką naturą, *Plus Minus*, 22.10.2017, <https://www.rp.pl/Weekend/310199834-Liberalne-panstwo-przegrywa-z-ludzka-natura.html> (accessed 5.08.2020).

6 Michał Gierycz, Polski model liberalnej demokracji?, *Plus Minus*, 18.07.2019, p. 37.

sharper relief some kind of Polish (or in fact Central European?) model of liberal democracy that in essence harks back to the one the West gave effect to at the start of the integration process, prior to the 1968 cultural revolution.<sup>7</sup>

Attempts at the top-down development of an EU identity can be and have been made, as for example in 2004, at the hands of Manuel Castells<sup>8</sup> - a Spanish sociologist and left-wing politician specialising in "identity politics" and off in search of a new utopia through the "network society"<sup>9</sup>. This might also (even) form a provision in some international treaty up for ratification; but it is far, far harder to achieve its imposition on societies, where the identity construct appears in isolation from what had hitherto been its basis for self-identification. Thus, in the face of inevitable (and still-growing) immigration into Europe of people of other cultures, adhering to other values, it is essential that there be a return to a debate – abandoned following the rejection of the EU's 2004 Constitutional Treaty – on the cultural roots shared by the whole of the Old Continent, and on the present cultural condition in which it finds itself. For the avoidance of any reference to Christianity in EU documents represents a genuine undermining of their credibility – in particular in the eyes of those who reside in the CEECs.

My assumptions underpinning the various considerations addressed here is that the cultural condition of the Old Continent – as a certain kind of culturally-designated whole – is constituted by the current state its "Europeanisation" has arrived at<sup>10</sup>. By that I understand what is usually manifested in thought, utterances and actions, i.e. the degree to which Europeans have developed awareness of (and adjusted to) the shared cultural heritage arising out of the birth of civilisation and constituting the essence thereof. In other words, this "condition" might equate to the "form" Europe finds itself in, its "efficiency" or state of fitness; and indeed its current level of "resilience". And as with the physical condition that people find themselves in, so this too may be better or worse, good, so-so, poor or bad.

Equally, the possibility of change occurring under the influence of external factors exists, while much depends on the feeding that is taking place and the "nutrition" being received, as well as the bodily "training"<sup>11</sup>. Furthermore, while a human body may be the subject of various more or less *ad hoc* and short-term forms of tending or "nursing" or restorative measures, that may not necessarily achieve much if the long-term situation is not characterised by proper nourishment and regular exercise.

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7 Ibidem.

8 Manuel Castells, *The Construction of European Identity. Statement prepared for the European Presidency of the European Union*, [https://www.chet.org.za/files/CASTELLS 2004 European Identity.pdf](https://www.chet.org.za/files/CASTELLS%2004%20European%20Identity.pdf) (accessed 13.08.2020).

9 Especially the trilogy from the author entitled *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, Blackwell, Maldon & Oxford, 1996-1998.

10 A term *inter alia* made use of by Cris Shore, *Building Europe. The Cultural Politics of European Integration*, Routledge, London & New York, 2000; Rémi Brague, *Europe, la voie romaine*, Gallimard, Paris, 1999. Piotr Mazurkiewicz, *Europeizacja Europy...*, pp. 11-21.

11 The buzzword „condition”: <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/condition> (accessed 6.08.2020).

This allegory can be applied successfully to today's Europe and its cultural condition, with it needing to be considered what in the migration-crisis context is merely a "nursing measure", and what offers "nourishment" in the true sense, allowing for growth. From the viewpoint of the political science of religion as a sub-discipline of the social sciences, the renewed debate on Europe's cultural condition denotes a new chance to contribute to the authentic development of European societies. And much may be learned from the relevant experience of the CEECs (including Poland – and especially in relation to the teaching of its son John Paul II)<sup>12</sup>.

In June 2018, EU leaders reached their final agreement as to how to resolve the problem of mass immigration and European Council President Donald Tusk (a Polish citizen) chose *Twitter* as the medium by which to inform the world of that fact<sup>13</sup>. Among the decisions taken was one that centres should be established to register immigrants and pass them on into the hands of EU states consenting to receive them (the CEECs had demanded a guarantee in this matter). Those rescued on the Mediterranean Sea would be sent back to the places from which they had set out, while the Union would designate additional funding to support North African countries. An agreement with Turkey had been signed earlier, with that country committing itself to work on holding back the influx of migrants into Europe – of course in exchange for considerable amounts of financial support.

Such pragmatic solutions arrived at under great pressure from the CEECs bade farewell to the crisis, but did not actually solve the problem – growing incessantly year in, year out – of immigration into Europe and its consequences. However, the fact that it this time proved possible to adopt common solutions may suggest it is not yet too late for EU "identity policy" to be adjusted in the direction of greater "Europeanisation". And a major role in that might be played by the CEECs, with Poland prominent among them.

### Poland's policy in the face of the immigration crisis

In the second decade of the 21st century, the EU became a victim of its own success, i.e. the embracing by processes of integration of Europe's "eastern lung"; and still-rising wellbeing. Poland resembles other CEECs acceding to the EU from 2004 in behaving differently from the majority of states of the Old EU (the Fifteen) in the face of the immigration crisis<sup>14</sup>. First and foremost, there was no more

12 Michał Gierycz, Polska debata o imigracji w perspektywie politologii religii, *Chrześcijaństwo-Swiat-Polityka* 2016, No. 20, 2016; Michał Gierycz, "Chrześcijaństwo – zapomniany warunek pojednania i integracji w Europie. Perspektywa politologiczna", in: *Oblicza pojednania. Faces of Reconciliation*, Joanna Kulka (ed.), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole, 2016, pp. 61-73.

13 Jest porozumienie unijnych przywódców w sprawie migracji. Morawiecki: to bardzo dobry kompromis, *Dziennik.pl*, 29.06.2018, <https://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/swiat/artykuly/577131,tusk-liderzy-ue-porozumieli-sie-na-unijnym-szczycie-ws-migracji.html> (accessed 16.08.2020).

14 Among sources in which it is possible to find a detailed and in-depth analysis of the immigration crisis (including from the Pol-

honouring of obligations taken on earlier – under considerable pressure from Germany<sup>15</sup> and some EU officials – regarding the relocation of determined quotas of migrants (mainly Muslim) originating in Asian and African states. In Poland this was further favoured by the victory in the October 2015 elections achieved by the aforementioned *Law & Justice*, whose manifesto transformed quickly to include content relating to the rejection of the relocation process.

That said, it is well worth emphasising that the acceptance of immigrants by Poland had also aroused scepticism within the ranks of the *Civic Platform* (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO) party ruling in the 2007-2015 period (the People's Party was its coalition partner, *Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*, PSL), and forming the main opposition from 2015 on. Ultimately, however, the PO-PSL government consented to the imposed quota, despite its earlier vacillation, and in the face of what had been established jointly by the Visegrad Group<sup>16</sup>.

The number of refugees it was planned to earmark for Poland was not large, the problem rather being that the EU was seeking a permanent mechanism by which to achieve relocations (i.e. one that would avoid the need for states to consent each time). The Polish Government in fact began making legislative preparation for this circumstance, *i.a.* via an Act of September 10<sup>th</sup> 2015<sup>17</sup>.

The Cabinet formed under Prime Minister Beata Szydło in November at first confirmed that it would honour the obligations taken on by its predecessors, even though PiS had been unwilling from the outset to accept the solutions adopted by the PO-PSL government – as was made clear by the *Law & Justice* leader in the Sejm in September 2015. However, what triggered amendment of migration policy in the form it took ultimately – very much targeted at security – were terrorist attacks perpetrated in Europe by self-declared adherents of Islam; as well as the lack of any possibility of identity checks being carried out among the immigrants arriving in Greece or Italy that would have been slated for transfer to Poland<sup>18</sup>. Legal instruments prepared included an Act and a Regulation seeking to raise the level of security at Poland's border in the event of an influx or

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ish point of view) is the work edited by Konstanty A. Wojtaszczyk and Janina Szymańska, entitled *Uchodźcy w Europie Uwarunkowania, istota, następstwa*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Aspra, Warsaw 2017.

15 Germany is seen as the state that did much to give rise to the crisis. Chancellor Angela Merkel did say that she would accept all Syrians arriving on German territory, and that basically meant a suspension of the rules that had applied up to that time and guided the EU where the protection of migrants was concerned (as set out in the so-called "Dublin III Regulation"). Coming to symbolise what was later regarded as irresponsible German policy was a further quote from the Chancellor, which was simply *Wir schaffen das* (translatable as "We'll make it" or "We'll manage"). Some observers note that this was the very moment at which the EU's principle of solidarity was infringed – with the step taken by the Federal Republic not having been consulted with other Member States, going on to cause a huge rumpus throughout the Union, Łukasz Łotocki, *Kryzys migracyjny w Europie w polskim dyskursie publicznym w latach 2015-2018*, Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, Warsaw 2019, p. 175; also Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse and Joanna Hetnarowicz, *Solidarność – zapomniana wartość Unii. Kryzys uchodźczy (migracyjny) a podziały między państwami członkowskimi*, in: Konstanty A. Wojtaszczyk and Janina Szymańska (eds.), *Uchodźcy w Europie. Uwarunkowania, istota, następstwa*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Aspra, Warszawa 2017, p. 218.

16 Łukasz Łotocki, *Kryzys migracyjny w Europie*. . . p. 175.

17 *Ibidem*, pp. 175-176.

18 *Ibidem*, p. 176.

impending influx of immigrants of unregulated legal status<sup>19</sup>. The priorities and assumptions underpinning migration policy were also changed in general, with a manifestation of this being the 2016 annulment of recommendations from the Group on Migration that had guided the *PO-PSL* government<sup>20</sup>. As researchers emphasise, successive *PIS* governments (including that led by Mateusz Morawiecki from December 2017 on) first and foremost stressed the matter of real refugees being distinguished from economic migrants, as well as opposition to any automatic relocation within an EU framework, special provisions on rules for the acceptance of Ukrainian migrants, and the repatriation of Poles<sup>21</sup>.

2019 brought the presentation of draft new guidelines for the government in the matter of migration policy. These included a sentence critical of the model Western Europe had accepted – to the effect that: “Mindful of the migration experiences of the European Union, there is a need to emphasise that the paradigm for immigration and integration based around the multicultural model requires a rethink in the direction of the concept of the leading culture”<sup>22</sup>. The document was thus proposing an entirely different approach via which there is mantra-like repetition of the Polish word *integracja* (for “integration”). Thus: “(...) the system for the integration of foreigners should set integration as a certain kind of duty, not merely one of several options available for a foreigner to choose. In this context, the objective whose achievement is being sought should entail first the effective integration, and then the assimilation, of the given foreigner”<sup>23</sup>. What the proposed guidelines therefore mean, first and foremost, is that the choice in the case of Poland (just like other states in Europe harbouring similar convictions) assumes a direction for the development of society entirely different from that pertaining in the West. And obviously that has to have its consequences for “the European Project”, and indeed the way in which the values Europeans recognise and uphold can or should be understood.

### Are Poles afraid of immigrants and Islam?

In the eyes of many observers, the CEECs’ opposition to relocations was non-humanitarian, contrary to European values, and – first and foremost – a breach

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 178.

<sup>20</sup> Zespół ds. Migracji, *Polityka migracyjna Polski – stan obecny i postulowane działania*, 2011 version available online in pdf form. The document was amended in 2012, and it was in regard to that version that the annulment under the government of Beata Szydło took place.

<sup>21</sup> Anna Potyrała, “‘Za, a nawet przeciw’ – stanowisko Rady Ministrów RP wobec systemu relokacji i przesiedleń”, in: *Między tolerancją a niechęcią. Polityka współczesnych państw europejskich wobec migrantów i mniejszości*, Anita Adamczyk, Andrzej Sakson, Cezary Trosiak (eds.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe WNPiD UAM, Poznań, 2017, p. 201; Łukasz Łotocki, *Kryzys imigracyjny w Europie...* p. 178.

<sup>22</sup> Zespół ds. Migracji, *Polityka migracyjna Polski. Projekt z dnia 10 czerwca 2019 r.*, p. 2, <https://interwencjaprawna.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Polityka-migracyjna-Polski-wersja-ostateczna.pdf> (accessed 14.08.2020).

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. 3.

of the EU's solidarity principle<sup>24</sup>. In turn, a look taken at the same events from a Polish perspective begs the justified question of whether Poland's decision was mainly motivated by fear of terrorism<sup>25</sup>, or was (as certain politicians and journalists try to insist) more about the egotistical and xenophobic nature of Poles, their parochialism, or even indeed trends leading in the direction of fascism, chauvinism and nationalism considered to be present in Poland, in particular under right-wing governments accused of neglecting the rule of law<sup>26</sup>.

A key point to consider here might be the lack of any greater public opposition to other immigrants present in Poland in ever-greater numbers. Indeed, these people themselves tend not to accuse Poles of any particular disapproval or lack of warmth<sup>27</sup>. In 2017, Poland issued more permanent-stay permits to non-EU citizens than any other Community Member State<sup>28</sup>. Furthermore, Poles are not shown to be against assisting refugees as a matter of principle – in October 2017 as many as 61% spoke for the acceptance of people whose lives had been touched by the war in eastern Ukraine (while 35% were against). However, when it came to influxes of refugees from the Middle East and Africa, the percentage opposing or tending to oppose assisting other EU states in resolving this problem included a clear majority of Poles (in fact 75% of those surveyed). Only 20% took the opposing view<sup>29</sup>. A further point of interest to the opinion research carried out by CBOS was that the prospect of financial penalties being imposed by the EU for failure to adhere to commitments only hardened Polish attitudes to immigrants from the regions in question<sup>30</sup>.

24 Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse, Joanna Hetnarowicz, *Solidarność – zapomniana wartość Unii...* p. 208 et seq.

25 Research from 2016 found that as many as 71% of Poles (and 76% of Hungarians) regarded the acceptance of refugees as raising the threat of terrorism. (At the same time, only 15% felt it would not increase that threat – the lowest figure to be noted in any EU Member State). The difference with Western European states was rather clear (with opinions similar to the above being expressed by 61% of German and Dutch people, and only 46% of the French and 40% of the Spaniards). Jacob Poushether, *European opinions of the refugee crisis in 5 charts*, 16.09.2016, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/09/16/european-opinions-of-the-refugee-crisis-in-5-charts/> (accessed 13.08.2020).

26 Referring to this kind of portrayal of Poland abroad – in an interview with the main opposition newspaper – was former Deputy PM in the Government of Donald Tusk and EU Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska, see: Bieńkowska: W UE widzą, że Polska to kraj wykluczający, faszy zujący. Niektórzy boją się tu przyjeżdżać, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, pl/7,82983,26189538,bienkowska-w-ue-widza-ze-polska-to-kraj-wykluczajacy-faszyzujacy.html (7.08.2020). Claudia Ciobanu, *New Polish migration policy seen enshrining xenophobia*, <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/08/13/new-polish-migration-policy-seen-enshrining-xenophobia/> (accessed 13.08.2020).

27 Makana Eyre, Martin Goillandeau, *Poland's two-faced immigration strategy*, <https://www.politico.eu/article/poland-two-faced-immigration-strategy-ukraine-migrants/> (accessed 13.08.2020).

28 683,000 among 3.1 million, i.e. 22%. Most went to citizens of Ukraine, as followed by Germans (17%), Britons (16%), French people (8%), Spaniards (7%), Italians (6%) and Swedes (4%), *Eurostat Newsrelease* No. 166/2018, 25.10.2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/9333446/3-25102018-AP-EN.pdf/3fa5fa53-e076-4a5f-8bb5-a8075f639167> (accessed 13.08.2020).

29 *Stosunek Polaków i Czechów do przyjmowania uchodźców. Komunikat z badań*, CBOS, No. 87/2018, [https://cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2018/K\\_087\\_18.PDF](https://cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2018/K_087_18.PDF) (accessed 13.08.2020).

30 The research stressed that, among the people of the Czech Republic “views on accepting refugees from conflict-hit regions and more unfavourable than in Poland. Indeed, even in the matter of accepting refugees from Ukraine, a majority of Czechs (55%) express negative opinions”. Ibidem.

So might an aversion to Islam underpin the decision to reject the relocation?<sup>31</sup> While the research presented above might seem to indicate that, it is worth recalling how Poland has accepted around 5000 Muslim refugees from Chechnya in recent decades<sup>32</sup>.

Beyond that, the “souvenirs” of the historical Union between Poland and Lithuania persisting between the 14th and 18th centuries include Poland’s Tatar people, whose ongoing devotion to Islam has not stood in the way of excellent assimilation, and in fact distinguished service of the cause of freedom and independence in the adopted country. The presence of Tatars within Polish society arouses no controversy whatever<sup>33</sup>. Furthermore, Poland was the second country in Europe to extend official recognition to Islam, granting approval to the statute of the Muslim Religious Union in 1936. In general, the pre-2015 attitude of Poles towards Muslims (of which any more major influx was only observed after 1989) is dubbed “indifferent tolerance” in relevant literature<sup>34</sup>. This does not mean that no conflicts (or anti-Muslim incidents)<sup>35</sup> have arisen; but rather that the level of occurrence is low, given the limited numbers of devotees of Allah in Poland.

Aversion to Islam is not then a hard-wired feature of the Polish character, with the main expressed reasons for opposing the acceptance of refugees from the Middle East and Africa – immediately following a conviction that the necessary resources for that were lacking (as 44% of surveyed Poles felt in 2015) – was the reason of “fear of the consequences” (which attracted 41% of respondents, among them the Islamisation of Poland and Europe (9%) and terrorism (8%) were indicated). 13% of Poles in turn saw the main reason as a recognised culturally

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- 31 In the crisis context there appeared an accusation regarding the “Islamophobia” of *PiS* – and in consequence Poles in general – that spread rapidly online. interview with Dominik Tarczyński for *al-Jazeera: Islamophobia in Europe: Why won't Poland take in any Muslims?* <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Multiculturalism+debate+in+Poland&docid=608035565170590378&mid=0722A28A93E13BD1A67C0722A28A93E13BD1A67C&view=detail&FORM=VIRE> (accessed 12.08.2020).
- 32 Data after: *Addressing tolerance and diversity discourses in Europe. A comparative overview of 16 European Countries*, Michal Buchowski, Katarzyna Chlewińska, *Poland*, [w:] Ricard Zapata-Borrero and Anna Triandafyllidou (eds.), University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, 2012, p. 358. Probably even about 90,000 Chechen refugees have passed through Poland since 1994, albeit with many of these later travelling on to places further west. Katarzyna Zuchowicz, *Polska przyjęła już ponad 80 tysięcy Czeczenów i wciąż przyjmuje następnych. Czy komuś to przeszkadza?*, 21.09.2015, <https://natemat.pl/155107,polska-przyjela-juz-blisko-90-tysiecy-uchodzcow-z-czecenii-dzis-zostala-ich-tylko-garstka-bo-nie-chcieli-u-nas-zostac> (accessed 15.09.2020).
- 33 Following the shift of Poland’s eastern border as a result of the USSR’s 1939 aggression, their number was estimated at 3000. The pre-War figure was around 5500. Data from: *Ibidem*, p. 357. For more on the MRU, see: <http://mzr.pl/historia-mzr-w-rp/> (accessed 13.08.2020).
- 34 Michal Buchowski and Katarzyna Chlewińska, *Poland*. . . p. 358. Today they number some 30,000 – representing around 0.1% of the Polish population (*Ibidem*). Renata Włoch, *Islam in Poland. Between Ethnicity and Universal Umma*, *International Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2009.
- 35 For example, in 2010 the building in Warsaw of a Muslim Culture Centre alongside a Mosque – as sponsored by the Muslim League – was protested against. However, the organiser of that protest – *Stowarzyszenie Europa Przyszłości* – did a great deal to stress that its opposition was to the politicisation of Islam, as opposed to Islam itself. *Muzułmanie: nie będziemy reagować na protest*, <https://warszawa.naszemiasto.pl/muzulmanie-nie-bedziemy-reagowac-na-protest/ar/c1-2978414> (accessed 13.08.2020). A rising number of attacks of different types on Muslims were referred to by the *Nigdy Więcej* (“Never Again”) Association: <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/kraj/1780002,1,w-polsce-rosnie-liczba-napasci-na-muzulmanow.read> (accessed 13.08.2020).

and religiously “alien” nature of the anticipated refugees<sup>36</sup>. In turn, those speaking for the acceptance of refugees were bearing moral consideration in mind (in 66% of cases), in fact with much emphasis of the way this was “a Christian duty”<sup>37</sup>.

### **So what guides Poland's elites as they assess the crisis?**

Poland's public debate over the migration crisis was very much characterised by a view that the problems went beyond the logistical, the material and the humanitarian. Rather, the causes and effects were considered to extend far more deeply into the culture sphere, as well as the matter of the identity of Europe and the nations forming it. This therefore denoted an area of interest the specialist literature terms cultural security<sup>38</sup>. As the crisis peaked, it was *Law & Justice* leader Jarosław Kaczyński that manifested this especially, as the Sejm debated (on September 16th 2015) the decision of the Civic Platform–Polish People's Party (*PO-PSL*) government agreeing to the relocation of refugees.

What Kaczyński drew attention to first and foremost was the fact that the relocation had been agreed against the will of a majority of the Polish people. At the same time, the leader said, its consequences were very far-reaching indeed, given that it might ultimately denote Poles ceasing to be at the helm in their own country. Drawing on examples from other European states that had already opened up their borders to immigrants, Kaczyński offered a vivid depiction of what might be called “salami tactics”, i.e. a steady appropriation of public space by traditions and customs that are culturally alien. In the face of those in need, he advocated application of the *ordo caritatis* (“order of love/charity”) principle, which requires us to care for those closest to us first – i.e. for the family and the nation – and only then for others. In Kaczyński's view, adherence in turn to the principle of solidarity ought to see Poland helping the needy, but in a manner that is safe for Poles themselves, and thus is financial in nature. For him, economic emigrants – which needed distinguishing from genuine refugees – represented an issue the Germans had generated, and it was Germany that would now need to set about resolving it<sup>39</sup>.

The leader of *PiS* won the debate domestically with the above intervention (and shortly thereafter *Law & Justice* won the election too, with Poland then joining the list of countries governed by “nationalist populists” (or “populist nationalists”). The leader is also felt to have made his voice heard abroad, as “he clearly came up with a correct civilisational and political definition of the threat arising

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36 *O uchodźcach w przededniu unijnego szczytu poświęconego kryzysowi imigracyjnemu. Komunikat z badań CBOS no. 133/2015, Warsaw, October 2015, [https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2015/K\\_133\\_15.PDF](https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2015/K_133_15.PDF), pp. 6-7, (accessed 14.08.2020),*

37 *Ibidem*, p. 7.

38 Małgorzata Jaroszyńska, *Bezpieczeństwo kulturowe Europy w XXI wieku*, Wojskowa Akademia Techniczna, Warsaw, 2016.

39 Jarosław Kaczyński – his intervention in the Sejm on 16.09.2015, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYcVL\\_CLxRU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYcVL_CLxRU), (accessed 14.08.2020).

out of mass migration into Europe involving people whose cultures and value systems are distant from that of Europe, while also emphasising how an alternative policy on migration might be pursued<sup>40</sup>.

Similar threads appeared in many other speeches, not only on the part of sympathisers with the ruling party, but also in opposition circles. Tangible above and beyond the political divide was care and concern for the futures of both Poland and Europe, and for the success of the “European Project” in its entirety<sup>41</sup> – even if this found various kinds of expression. For Jarosław Kaczyński’s greatest political adversary – former PM and head of PO through to 2014 Donald Tusk – also came out against any enforced relocation. During the time of the crisis (in the 2014-2019, two-term, period), he was President of the European Council, and as in essence the supreme official of the European Union, he sought to hold back from what he saw as the EU’s mistaken and harmful decisions for tackling the problem. He even went so far as to in fact resemble Kaczyński and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán in ascribing the development of the crisis to Germany, while making it clear that he saw the CEECs’ fears regarding the relocations and their consequences as justified. He was consistently of the opinion that refugees ought to be helped as close to their homelands as possible, insisting therefore upon the reinforcement of the Community’s external frontiers. Diary entries show how Donald Tusk perceived the civilisational threat that the crisis brought with it, and felt that Europe’s cultural identity was a value needing to be protected at all costs<sup>42</sup>.

Of interest is also the *de facto* way Tusk resembled *Law & Justice* politicians in noting how the circumstances of a crisis facing Europe’s liberal values seemed to be being used by the European Commission as a chance to increase its own authority vis-à-vis the Member States. For Tusk, the threat to European integration was a tangible one, given how people might turn away if faced by policies from European elites that were incomprehensible to them; and look elsewhere for a guarantee of security – or even safety – for themselves<sup>43</sup>.

The penetrating observations of the President of the European Council can thus be seen to correspond quite clearly with utterances from Jarosław Kaczyński.

40 Jerzy Ciechański, *Kryzys migracyjny Unii Europejskiej: odrzucenie ideologii multikulturalizmu?*, unpublished article in the author’s collection, p. 14.

41 Concerns of these kinds were expressed many times by Prof. Roman Kuźniar, as a former advisor to Polish President Bronisław Komorowski. Roman Kuźniar, *Kryzys czy kres, Rzeczpospolita*, 04.04.2018, <http://www.rp.pl/Publicystyka/304049934-Kuzniar-Kryzys-czy-kres.html> (accessed 18.08.2020); Roman Kuźniar, *Przyjmujemy uchodźców, ale z głową*, 19.09.2015, <https://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/1,124059,18849653,przyjmujemy-uchodzcow-ale-z-glowa.html>, (accessed 18.08.2020). Speaking up in the same kind of way were various Polish publicists and academics, seasoned observers of the political scene even as their political sympathies and affiliations were various. Along with the words of Roman Kuźniar, Jerzy Ciechański also considers those from Andrzej Nowak, Jan Maria Rokita, Grzegorza Lindenberga, Adam Michnik and Donald Tusk. See: Jerzy Ciechański, *Kryzys migracyjny*. . . p. 32, et seq.

42 Donald Tusk, *Szczerze*, Wydawnictwo Agora, Warszawa 2019. Analysis of Tusk’s utterances, in: Jerzy Ciechański, *Kryzys migracyjny*. . . pp. 36-40.

43 Donald Tusk, *Szczerze*. . . p. 160.

Indeed, though presented rather differently, the way of understanding the issues proves to be very similar, while the diagnosis as to Europe's cultural condition is in fact identical. The approach can therefore be seen as characteristic for the region both politicians hail from – and must at the same time be regarded as entirely different from the one prevailing in the Old EU's elites and governments<sup>44</sup>.

### **Cultural specifics of Poland and the region – the role of religion, The Pope and The Church**

In the context, it would thus seem critical to address the matter of the CEECs' place in respect of Europe's integration project, given an understanding of European principles and values differing rather from those of the Old EU – as the situation regarding the migration crisis made abundantly clear. Even the most EU-oriented members of Poland's elite are fully aware that succumbing to pressure from the West when it comes to matters of cultural identity will prove harmful to what have thus far been very much pro-Europe sympathies in the societies of the region. Support to a large extent founded upon economic benefits and the opening-up of borders could rapidly turn into opposition or even hostility, were "EU institutions" (effectively boiling down to the strongest Western states apparently now making the decisions in Brussels) to opt to impose their authority on nation states, with EU funding even cut should a policy encounter resistance<sup>45</sup>. As the results of opinion-polling in Poland make clear, the threat of financial penalties only served to increase resistance to imposed solutions, with the worst-case consequence even being attempts to "show countries the door" out of the European Community. Financial penalties are thus a double-edged sword from the point of view of the EU, which will certainly try to avoid resorting to them, especially where the continent's east is concerned.

In the main, the pluralism of European values reflects historically-conditioned differences in the way nations in the continent's eastern and western parts have been shaped. As somebody once said, cultural identity may be deemed to resemble the air – we breathe it in every day, mostly unaware of its existence; until for some reason it starts to look in short supply. The standpoints on the immigration crisis characterising Poland's elites show that the air Poles and the nations in other CEECs breathe on a daily basis does indeed differ somewhat from the version present in Western Europe.

And – from the point of view of the considerations taken up here – there is no way of not stressing the exceptional (not least because still-extant) link(s) between national identity and Christendom present in some parts of Eastern

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44 Jerzy Ciechański, *Kryzys imigracyjny*. . . p. 32.

45 As of June 2019, more than 90% of Poles were still declaring their support for the country's EU membership. Mateusz Gąsiorowski, Polak kocha Unię dla pieniędzy? „Popelniony został poważny błąd”, <https://businessinsider.com.pl/finanse/fundusze/poparcie-dla-ue-w-polsce-fundusze-unijne-podstawa/14xh185> (accessed 15.08.2020).

Europe at least. In Poland, the Catholic Church has had a state-creating role to play in the whole period since the 10th century, with this only giving way (to a nation-shaping role) over the “long 19<sup>th</sup> century” of Poland’s absence from the map of Europe due to partitions. From a Polish perspective, there is nothing non-obvious about a statement that “religion matters” in today’s world, because experiences with the period of transformation remain current and vivid; and very much centred around the Church-linked “Solidarity” (*Solidarność*) movement seen quite justifiably as a direct causal factor behind the overthrow of communism in Europe and around the world.

And in that a key role was indeed played by the teachings of Pope John Paul II (Poland’s Karol Wojtyła), whose calls for moral renewal at the levels of both individuals and nations found its reflection in Poland’s “revolution of conscience”. And that revolution fostered the courage needed to stand up against evil, and ultimately to bring down a system entirely structured around big lies and a long-term willingness to ride roughshod over human dignity<sup>46</sup>. In line with this reasoning (at least), there is no doubt from a Polish – and often from a CEEC-wide – perspective that religious conviction has its positive influence on politics and policy, including also that pursued internationally.

Researchers deem it worth emphasising that The Pope’s support for freedom movements reflected his “Polishness” or “Polish roots and identity”<sup>47</sup>, as well as his deep sense of patriotism<sup>48</sup>. Likewise, following the fall of the Iron Curtain, the vision that the Pope set out for a united Europe of the future – and its civilisational mission – was very much concerned with the place and role of the CEECs within the family of European nations. In the view of His Holiness, for it to be able to live and develop, Europe needed to breathe with “both of the lungs” to which John Paul II compared the continent’s western and eastern cultural traditions<sup>49</sup>. Europe between the Baltic and Adriatic was a place in which the Roman and Byzantine traditions became intertwined. And while it certainly leaned westwards, it retained its own complex identity<sup>50</sup>. Perhaps thanks to this, this part of Europe came through wars and totalitarianism still attaching great weight to religion, the nation and the state, as factors interlinked through history<sup>51</sup>.

Respect for The Pope does not mean that Poles supply unreserved accept-

46 The role in the overthrow of communism played by John Paul II may also be read about in: Arragon Perrone, *John Paul II’s Role in the Collapse of Poland’s Communist Regime: Examining a Religious Leader’s Role in the International Relations*, Honor Scholar Theses. 2004, Spring 2012, [https://opencommons.uconn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1244&context=srhonors\\_theses](https://opencommons.uconn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1244&context=srhonors_theses) (accessed 5.08.2020).

47 “His national identity defined him from the start of his papacy, as soon as the College of Cardinals voted him the first non-Italian Pope elected since Adrian VI in 1522”. Arragon Perrone, *John Paul II’s Role...* p. 4.

48 His Holiness very often stressed the deep love he felt for his homeland. for example: Jan Paweł II, *Przemówienie powitalne na lotnisku Okęcie*, 16.06.1983, <http://nauczaniejp2.pl/dokumenty/wyswietl/id/539> (accessed 5.08.2020)

49 Sławomir Sowiński, Radosław Zenderowski, *Europa drogą Kościoła. Jan Paweł II o Europie i europejskości*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo, Wrocław-Warsaw-Kraków 2003, pp. 26-30.

50 Ibidem, pp. 32-34.

51 Miroslav Hroch, The nation as a cradle of nationalism and patriotism, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 26, No. 1, 2020, pp. 5-21.

ance of the Church's stance on every matter – and this is particularly the case where they might sense some threat to liberty or sovereignty. Indeed, the migration crisis evokes some interest precisely because Poland's ruling *Law & Justice* party – undoubtedly supportive of the Catholic Church and rarely missing a chance to refer to its teaching – nevertheless chose to adopt a standpoint markedly different from the one Pope Francis had been advocating. It is then worth stressing that Poland's own John Paul II – absolutely regarded as the supreme moral authority in the country, and not merely on the political right – did in fact preach of the need for Europe to open up, not just to refugees, but to immigrants in general<sup>52</sup>. Of course, given the fact of His Holiness's death back in 2005, the question of what position he might have adopted in 2015 is unknowable; though it would be hard to envisage his attitude differing more markedly from that of the Bishops of Poland – of which he had been one.

Indeed, the utterances of Poland's Catholic clergy, though obviously open to Pope Francis's appeal to take in refugees (and quite often actively engaged personally in the effort to assist the needy in the Middle East), are nevertheless quite lukewarm in their approach to the idea that Muslims should be relocated to Poland. Fear is *inter alia* aroused by Islamism (even as it clearly not against Islam *per se*), as well as by the degree to which potential incomers would be alien in cultural terms<sup>53</sup>. In September 2015, a response to a papal request to local Churches saw the Polish Episcopate call upon believers to supply "Christian hospitality", while at the same time suggesting that charity should be extended to those in need in their countries of origin. This marks a difference from, for example, the communique issued by the German Episcopate, in that the position taken up by Poland's Bishops includes no appeal to the authorities to invite in refugees. Likewise, there is no support for the Polish government's already-agreed decision to accept relocation.

On the other hand, notwithstanding the crisis context, there is nothing here about the need to defend Polish and/or Catholic identity, and no words in anyway suggesting judgmentalism and negativity in the appraisal of Islam<sup>54</sup>. The statement confirms that the Polish Church is not averse to Islam – just like Polish society in fact; and counts on the strength of Poland's Christian identity which an influx of Muslims would not be in a position to limit.

In this regard it is worth noting the statements made by Bishop Henryk Hoyer, who knows the realities of the West's multicultural approach very well. He has stressed the negative consequences of the policy, the lack of assimilation and

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52 Anna M. Solarz, Ochrona praw uchodźców i migrantów we współpracy Stolicy Apostolskiej z Urzędem Wysokiego Komisarza ds. Uchodźców, *Stosunki Międzynarodowe-International Relations*, No. 1-2, 2005, pp. 144-154.

53 Kamil M. Kaczmarek, „Głos biskupów w polskiej debacie o przyjmowaniu uchodźców”, in: *Religia wobec wyzwań współczesności z perspektywy nauk społecznych*, Irena Borowik, Stella Grotowska, and Piotr Stawiński (eds.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw, 2018, pp. 125-135.

54 *Ibidem*, pp. 125-126.

ghettoisation of societies – all of which he feels helps facilitate the radicalisation of young Muslims. Hozer further maintains that religious Muslims see the West's atheisation as justifying a portrayal of European societies as inimical to God. In the cleric's view, that of itself ought to incline Europe to come back more fully into the Christian fold<sup>55</sup>. It would seem that this approach conveys very well the standpoint of most of the Polish Church towards the migration crisis and it in fact offers a reflection of Pope John Paul II's teaching vis-à-vis the cultural condition Europe already found itself in, back in his day.

### **Migration, multicultural policy and the problem of Europe's "de-Europeanisation"**

Migrations have always accompanied the development of Europe also as a "cultural whole". However, the post-War period saw immigration into Western Europe that emerged as unprecedented in terms of both scale and the ethnic origin of those involved. Young immigrants and their descendants have helped re-charge ageing Western societies, whose rates of natural increase have remained at levels well below those elsewhere in the world. While in 2000 citizens of the EU15 born abroad accounted for 7.9% of the population overall, 10 years later that figure had already reached 11.2%<sup>56</sup>. Furthermore, if the frame of reference shifts to people at least one of whose parents were born outside the state of which they have citizenship, then the share rises dramatically – for example to 19.3% in the case of Germany as of 2010 (with a figure as high as 34.8% applying to children aged 0-5<sup>57</sup>). That of course means upcoming years that will see these shares rise on markedly, even with no influx of new immigrants – with Germany becoming far less German in terms of its origins than it was even just a few years ago<sup>58</sup>.

In the face of post-War waves of immigration, the states of Western Europe had to accommodate to "what is different" ever closer to home – and that required a certain re-evaluation when it came to the assessment of their own culture and identity. In Germany, it was first and foremost abrupt economic development that inclined the government to open the borders to the *gastarbeiters*. In turn, in the cases of France, the UK, The Netherlands and other countries with former empires, it tended to be the inhabitants of colonies achieving independence that came in<sup>59</sup>. From the 1960s onwards, these states pursued a home af-

55 Ibidem, p. 134.

56 Data after: Hannes Weber, "Does immigration contribute to the formation of a European identity? A multilevel analysis in Western Europe", in: *European Identity Revisited. New approach and recent empirical evidence*, Viktoria Kaina, Pawel I. Karolewski and Sebastian Kuhn (eds.), Routledge, New York & London, 2016, p. 157.

57 Ibidem.

58 Ibidem.

59 More on the issue of migration and the policies of different European states *inter alia*, see: Rita Chin, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe. A History*, Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford 2017.

fairs policy based to varying extents on an ideology of multiculturalism<sup>60</sup>. This approach is regarded as an appropriate social model by which to achieve the co-existence within a single state of different ethnic, racial and religious groups, while at the same time representing a rejection of the model based around assimilation – under which it is anticipated that incomers will adjust to the dominant culture (i.e. a Western European one in this case)<sup>61</sup>. It is possible to consider whether the introduction of the policies of multiculturalism was a cause or consequence of the cultural weakness of host societies. Either way, they need to be linked with a “de-Europeanisation” of this part of the continent.

While it was in classical times and more or less through to the middle part of the Mediaeval period that the bases of Europe's common culture and civilisation took shape, the whole period from the Enlightenment through to today has witnessed their progressing, at least partial dismantlement<sup>62</sup>. In the view of Piotr Mazurkiewicz, Europe in the cultural sense comprises ideas deriving from the classical period, such as *logos*, *ethos* and *nomos*, as well as the input of Christianity – as *Deus*, *persona* and *societas*<sup>63</sup>. It is the presence and cultural impact of these that designates Europe's actual borders, and it is on the basis of them that European nations developed, along with their political and legal traditions, and their identity. As may be anticipated, it is likewise from the above source that we have the “European values” invoked by European institutions, in particular the European Union and Council of Europe.

In truth, both organisations have Western European roots, coming into being as a reflection of what this part of Europe was striving for in the post-War period. While for many years this was basically manifested in effort and interests alone, the concepts as such did evolve along with Western democracy. Michał Gierycz stresses how, post-1968 in particular, the West experienced the development of a current of “emancipatory” liberalism whereby people define by themselves, and for themselves, just what is important and what is not. This way leaves it unnecessary for the experiences of history to be referred to, as all of that is a construct potentially modifiable. What then follows on from that is a liberation from all restrictions and limitations, including those appertaining to moral convictions. Furthermore, unlike the current entailing “libertarian” liberalism, which prevailed in Christian Democrat-ruled European states after the War, the emancipatory approach to things has no time for the role of reason in recognising moral truth by reference to God or natural rights. Rather, the philosophy has the human being as a plastic construct that may develop in basically any direction, where there are appropriate techniques and technologies in place, as well as relevant shaping

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60 States' activities in respect of this policy are as *i.a.* described using the *Multiculturalism Policy Index*. For more, visit: <https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/about> (accessed 12.08.2020).

61 “Multiculturalism”, in: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/multiculturalism/> (12.08.2020).

62 Piotr Mazurkiewicz, *Europeizacja Europy*. . . , p. 380.

63 *Ibidem*.

and processing from early childhood onwards<sup>64</sup>. It must be said that the activity of the elite has played a huge role here, it having tasked itself with “giving effect to the idea of radical emancipation”<sup>65</sup>.

However, the end put to the Iron Curtain saw Western Europe’s institutions encroached upon by the post-communist states, whose development after the War had taken place in circumstances characterised by a lack of liberty. This often left religion as the only sphere of life in which a person might find some kind of asylum and feeling of freedom. In Poland, this took on a nationwide dimension, most especially once its very own Cardinal Karol Wojtyła has been elected Pope, and promptly made his first visit in that capacity to his home country. Winfried Thaa accounts for difference in the development of societies in Europe by reference to the two neighbouring countries of Poland and Germany. In the first, the openness to Europe that followed on from half a century of communism coincided with the regaining of state sovereignty and reconstruction of national identity. In contrast, in Germany, the most recent decades of European integration had been perceived as a means of counterbalancing (at least) the nation state, with the possibility then arising for collective identity to be redefined in a non-national (or indeed anti-national) manner<sup>66</sup>. Furthermore, a policy of multi-lateralism was part and parcel of what the German – and European – elites were striving for, entirely consciously.

The construct of “emancipatory” liberalism had no place for the religion or tradition in which the roots of Europe lay. J. H. H. Weiler notes that the Cross – which may be met with in every corner of Europe, be it east, west, south or north – is basically the only universal sign of its culture<sup>67</sup>. However, the framers of the key EU treaties resigned from any reference to Christianity whatsoever, even if values that are indicated and prevalent, like “respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights (including the rights of persons belonging to minorities), as well as pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men”<sup>68</sup> all draw inspiration from the Christian tradition. Indeed, these are widely defined and promoted as “European values”, even as the level of “Europeanisation” of EU documents (in the sense of their grounding in European history, tradition or culture) proves very superficial.

It may be presumed that the lack of the word “Christianity” in European Union documents seeks to ensure that those “European values” will be pursued in

64 After Michał Gierycz, *Polski model...*

65 Ibidem.

66 Thaa Winfried, „Kryzys postnacionalizmu: przypadek Niemiec”, in: *Religia-tożsamość-Europa*, Piotr Mazurkiewicz and Sławomir Sowiński (eds.), Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław-Warsaw-Kraków, 2005, p. 33.

67 J. H. H. Weiler, *Chrześcijańska Europa. Konstytucyjny imperializm czy wielokulturowość?*, Wydawnictwo W drodze, Poznań, 2003, p. 19.

68 The preamble and Art. 1a of the *Treaty of Lisbon*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12007L/TXT> (accessed 16.08.2020)

the spirit of “emancipatory” liberalism – as opposed to the “libertarian” version to which the Christian Democrats devoted themselves after World War II<sup>69</sup>. On the other hand, as John Paul II foresaw, this kind of approach also undermines the credibility of the whole “European Project”, especially in the eyes of the CEECs. It was then possible for the consequences to lead to misunderstandings, of which the 2015 migration crisis is only one preliminary manifestation.

### **Is there some alternative solution for Europe?**

In July 2020, in the wake of further elections being won by *Law & Justice* (whose campaign had strongly expounded the need for traditional values to be protected), Jarosław Kaczyński declared that: “(..) progress is a concept needing to be supplied with content, being of itself empty. Hence the need to ask what that progress would denote. Today it means the breakup of certain traditional structures, above all the family; as well as traditional values. In other words, destruction of the foundations of the kind of society that gave rise to today’s civilisation, today’s human rights and all that is associated with it”<sup>70</sup>.

In Kaczyński’s opinion, “the consequence of the full pursuit of this kind of idea will be an oligarchic system in which the overwhelming majority of society are deprived of identity, deprived of any kind of permanent point of attachment, and just an easy target for manipulation”<sup>71</sup>. Thus, for Jarosław Kaczyński, this is nothing less than a kind of “unwitting enslavement”, with it needing to be emphasised that “this is a road to nowhere, to the destruction of our civilisation, not only in its Polish dimension, but far more widely (...). And it leads to a situation in which those civilisations that do not accept the model in question are in fact the ones who win out.”<sup>72</sup>

These utterances offer further insight into the political philosophy of Poland’s ruling party, while also conveying the approaches taken by other governments in the CEECs, which – furthermore – offer an undoubted expression of the views many people in this region hold dear. Yet this is an attitude diametrically opposed to the one predominating in the West<sup>73</sup>. At more or less the same

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69 Michał Gierycz, *Polski model*... Piotr Mazurkiewicz, Where does the moral groundwork come from in today’s society?, *Chrześcijaństwo-Świat-Polityka*, No. 21, 2017, pp. 25-34.

70 *Postęp? Prezes PiS: Trzeba zapytać, co miałyby oznaczać; dziś oznacza rozbić tradycyjnych struktur z rodziną na czele i tradycyjnych wartości*, 19.07.2020; <https://wpolityce.pl/polityka/509996-postep-prezes-pis-trzeba-zapytac-co-mialby-oznaczac> (accessed 18.08.2020)

71 Ibidem.

72 Ibidem.

73 Although this way of thinking is also present there and is breaking through to the public. This is usually referred to as “right-wing populism” and seen as a threat to “European values”. However, in the face of many wrong decisions of governments and EU institutions, politicians and parties of this option are gaining in importance. Thomas Greven, *The Rise of Right-wing Populism in Europe and the United States*, May 2016, [https://www.fesdc.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/publications/RightwingPopulism.pdf](https://www.fesdc.org/fileadmin/user_upload/publications/RightwingPopulism.pdf) (accessed 3.09.2020). Chantal Delsol, “Populism” jako protest wobec nadmiernego uniwersalizmu i obrona zakorzenienia, *Chrześcijaństwo-Świat-Polityka*, No. 21, 2017, pp. 94-103.

time – following the Summit at which the so-called “COVID Budget” was agreed upon, and indeed the way EU funds would be carved up for some years to come – the Editor of Germany’s *Die Welt* wrote to the effect that the Polish authorities were shaping an anti-liberal alternative to the open society, coming to serve as a model for all of the EU’s retrograde forces<sup>74</sup>. In this way he voiced what is probably the conviction held by most of Europe’s elite, who treat any Polish successes as nothing more or less than a threat to the position they hold. Giving voice to those “retrograde forces” would doubtless weaken their contribution to the way societies in their own countries are being moulded and led<sup>75</sup>.

Yet the migration crisis was ultimately resolved in the spirit of what Kaczyński and Tusk had been saying (along with other CEEC leaders) – and this was doubtless received by Europe’s elites as a “backward step”. However, in the mind of John Paul II, Europe was born out of a synthesis of culture and traditions, and this circumstance is what gives it its strength, and its mission in the world<sup>76</sup>. This means that the cultural condition of Europe might once again have a chance to benefit from a “nourishing” meeting of cultures – this time in particular between the eastern and western parts of the continent.

74 “Die Welt”: Polska tworzy antyliberalną alternatywę dla społeczeństwa otwartego, 24.07.2020, <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/die-welt-polska-tworzy-antyliberalna-alternatywe-dla-spolesczenstwa-otwartego-6535509524809857a> (accessed 24.07.2020)

75 The assessment of the present Polish socio-political reality and of the Polish contribution to the “European Project” in the Western press is also different. Anna Richards, Who teaches Poles and what does Poland teach us? Western lessons to be learn from the Polish presidential election, *The Critic*, 20.07.2020, <https://thecritic.co.uk/who-teaches-poles-and-what-does-poland-teach-us/> (accessed 3.09.2020); David Engels, Ongoing lessons from the Battle of Warsaw. After the Miracle at the Vistula, a Miracle at the Oder?, *The Critic*, 14.08.2020, <https://thecritic.co.uk/ongoing-lessons-from-the-battle-of-warsaw/> (accessed 3.09.2020).

76 Sławomir Sowiński and Radosław Zenderowski, *Europa droga Kościoła*. . . p. 12, et seq.

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## **УТИЦАЈ ИМИГРАНТСКЕ КРИЗЕ НА ЕВРОПСКИ КУЛТУРНИ УСЛОВ: ЗАШТО СУ ПОЉАЦИ “УПЛАШЕНИ” ЗБОГ МУСЛИМАНА?**

### **Сажетак**

Имигрантска криза из 2015. године показала је слабост европске културе, у којој је већина земаља дала предност моделу који раздваја везе са уобичајеним цивилизацијским коренима. Међутим, иако Пољаци у ствари не гаје предрасуде према исламу или имигрантима, већина је ипак исказала неспремност да прихвати нове имигранте (углавном муслимане), у контексту решења кризе које је Европска унија предложила. Оваква политика је била наметнута Пољској и другим централним и источно-европским државама од стране ЕУ, иако су ове земље мислиле да мултикултурна идеологија води до слабљења – а не јачања – културних услова у Европи и њеног јачања у међународној сфери. Како је криза показала, ЕУ ће морати да води више рачуна о овом делу Европе, у складу са идејом да обликује свој културни идентитет. Ова чињеница представља шансу за политикологију религије да истражује могућности повратка хришћанству као компоненти европског идентитета, ако и улози који хришћанство може да одигра у поправљању културних услова у овом делу света.

**Кључне речи:** имиграција, културни услови у Европи, културни идентитет, Пољска политика према миграцијама, Централна и Источна Европа

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