

STANISŁAW T. ZARZYCKI, SAC

THE COMMON RELATIONS AMONG CULTURE AND FAITH, AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY – HISTORIC VIEW

A b s t r a c t. The broken relation among culture and faith becomes “drama of our times” (Paul VI), thus, overcoming that broken relation has always been a challenge for the Church, catholic theology and spirituality. This article, first, signals the penetration of culture into Christianity and makes you more familiar with what ancients fought about culture. And next, gives two positive examples about shaping the culture through the faith; first, in the Karolin epoch (7th—9th century), using the example of Benedict monks’ contribution, second, in the golden era of French spirituality (17th century), using the examples of Saint Francis de Sales’ spiritual teachings and Saint Vincent de Paul’s educational and charity works. The further part of the article shows the progressing departure of culture from faith beginning with French Renaissance and through the era of Enlightenment until the complete cessation of common relation in philosophical currents of 19th century. The last part of the article shows the new relation of the Church to the world and culture initiated by the Second Vatican Council, which further was continued and developed through the teachings of the Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, and evangelism activity. Such relation is based upon a wide understanding of culture (what was worked out by secular science and expresses themselves (among other things) in inculturation of the faith, faith’s creative role of culture and intermediary role of faith in realization of evangelization.

Key words: culture; faith; education; liturgy; humanism; atheism; symbiosis of faith and culture.

It is crucial to understand the religious ideas among youth, to set up the adequate In the apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa*, John Paul II stated that our continent suffers from amnesia consisting in “the loss of Europe’s Christian memory and heritage, accompanied by a kind of practical agnosticism and reli-

gious indifference whereby many Europeans give the impression of living without spiritual roots and somewhat like heirs who have squandered a patrimony entrusted to them by history.” [...] Listening to the voices of the Fathers of the Synod dedicated to Europe (1999), he called for a return to faith in Christ, “the source of the hope that does not disappoint” and the rediscovery of “a gift which is at the origin of the spiritual and cultural unity of the European peoples and which both today and tomorrow can make an essential contribution to their development and integration” in this faith.¹ Being aware of this situation, European Catholics ask about the way to overcome this cultural amnesia and see the possibility of regaining and strengthening their identity, among others by returning to their Christian roots. How have the relationships between faith and culture evolved in the history of Christian spirituality and when the faith was of a particularly culture-creating nature?

1. THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE IN ANTIQUITY

The word “culture” (derived from the Latin word *cultura*, which comes from the word *colere*) had three basic meanings: 1) cultivation, especially arable farming (today “agriculture”); 2) moral, spiritual improvement, and (3) worship, reverence for God.² Recognizing the similarity between arable farming (*colo, colere, cultum*) and man-raising, as in the first case it is about preparing and nourishing the land, that it yields, and in the second case the point is for people to get rid of the flaws and form the right virtues, Cicero introduced another meaning of the word “culture,” namely the “culture of the spirit” (*cultura animi*).³ This etymology shows that the classical understanding of culture is related to nature, which can be refined by a man’s rational activity.⁴ Culture is not nature, in this case the

¹ JOHN PAUL II. “Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Bishops, Men and Women in the Consecrated Life and All the Lay Faithful on Jesus Christ Alive in His Church the Source of Hope for Europe.” The Holy See. John Paul II. Apostolic Exhortations. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20030628_ecclesia-in-europa.html, No. 7, 18.

² *Słownik łacińsko-polski* [Latin-Polish dictionary], vol. I, ed. Marian Plezia (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1978), 805.

³ Apart from this expression, for some time there was another expression—*cultus animi*, which was first used by Horace. The concept of *cultura*, referring to man, has been taken over by the languages: French, English and German. The same was true of the *cultus* expression. Hannelore HILGERS-SHELL and Helga PUST, “Culture und Civilisation im Französischen bis zum Beginn des Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts,” in *Europäische Schlüsselwörter*, vol. III: *Kultur und Zivilisation* (München: Max Hueber Verlag, 1967), 2.

⁴ Piotr JAROSZYŃSKI, *Nauka w kulturze* [Science in culture] (Radom: Polskie Wydawnictwo Encyklopedyczne, 2002), 321.

land, but a rational activity of a man transforming this land, making sowing on it, etc. In speaking about culture, in the humanistic sense, the Latin language needed the notion of paraphrase, for example, in the form: *humanus civilisque cultus*. (Also the word *cultus*, derived from *colere*, was used to describe the culture of mind, the formation of the spirit).⁵ The aforementioned Latin phrase defined the education of a free Roman citizen. The man, who was not a Roman citizen, was perceived as deprived of culture and the slave as not participating in any culture. This could only be the privilege of the elite of people at the time.⁶ The word *cultus* in the Roman milieu primarily meant the cult of the gods.⁷

The influence of Roman culture on Christianity does not concern religious worship, but some manifestations of intellectual culture, which include, for example, a highly developed Latin language and its influence on the clarity of thinking of those who spoke it, Roman law which has been helpful in organizing the Church since the reign of Constantine the Great.

Greek culture had a much greater influence on Christianity, which, despite the fact that the Romans subjugated Hellenes, had an impact on Roman culture, especially on its philosophy. For example, Clement of Alexandria appreciated so much the value of Greek culture that he described it as a “Third Testament.” According to René Irénée Marrou, known for his *History of Education in Antiquity*, the Greek word *παιδεία* [*paideia*] better defines the meaning of the modern word “culture,” than words: *τρόπος* [*tropos*], *ἦθος* [*ethos*], and *νόμος* [*nomos*].⁸ He claims that this word (from which the Polish noun “pedagogy” is derived) meant the child’s upbringing activity and the anticipated effect of the educational process, the result of upbringing, which is why Cicero translated it into Latin as *humanitas*.⁹ The history of the word *παιδεία* [*paideia*] dates back to the 5th century BC, when it meant: “feeding,” “bringing up children,” “physical education” (Aeschylus). In Plato’s philosophy, it meant intellectual, ethical and religious education as well as the theory and effect of education.¹⁰ Aristotle understood it as the child’s upbringing process affecting his mind, will, the soul and the causative authority and its effect achieved by appropriate means, namely intellectual cogni-

⁵ *Słownik łacińsko-polski*, vol. I, 805.

⁶ A. DONMDEYNE, “Promozione e progresso della cultura.” In *La Chiesa nel mondo contemporaneo. Commento alla costituzione pastorale “Gaudium et spes,”* ed. Enzo Giammancheri (Brescia: Queriniana, 1967), 193.

⁷ Louis DOLLOT, *Culture individuelle et culture de masse* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), 18.

⁸ Henri-Irénée MARROU, *Historia wychowania w starożytności* [History of education in ancient times], trans. Stanisław Łoś (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy 1989), 36.

⁹ L. DOLLOT, *Culture individuelle et culture de masse*, 16–17.

¹⁰ *Protagoras*, 327d; 342d.

tion, shaped moral attitude, reference to God and developed aesthetic and artistic skills (art). Aristotle regarded religion as one of the four parts of culture.¹¹ Christian vision of this relationship should be different due to the fact that religion transcends culture, that is, its superiority over religion. On the other hand, it turns out that the Christian religion always remains in close relationship with culture and is expressed through it. Clement gives a number of meanings of the word *παιδεία* [*paideia*], which can be reduced to four: 1) an educational process of an intellectual and moral nature; 2) the entirety of values in relation to which this process is carried out; 3) the science of education and (4) achieved general education in Greek philosophy, dialectics, and gaining wisdom.¹² When comparing Clement's understanding of *παιδεία* [*paideia*] with the Greek philosophy, it can be said that he borrows the meaning of the term from the Greek philosophers. Early Christian thought also adopted a stoic understanding of the spiritual culture, thanks to which the following definitions appeared: *cultura Christi*, *cultura Christianae religionis*, *cultura doloris*.¹³ This is understandable, since the Christian theology that developed in the first centuries needed Platonic, Neoplatonic and Stoic philosophy as an intellectual reflection on human life and wishing to spread the message of the Gospel in the Greek environment, it intended to express it in the Greek mentality. In the opinion of John Paul II, the spirit of ancient Greece and Rome, assimilated in history, found in Judeo-Christian tradition a force capable of harmonizing with typical Christian values, consolidating with them and developing.¹⁴

¹¹ *Politica*, VIII. Cf. Czesław Stanisław BARTNIK, *Teologia kultury* [Theology of culture]. *Dzieła Zebrane*, 6 [Collected Works, 6] (Lublin: STANDRUK, 1999), 25.

¹² Franciszek, DRĄCZKOWSKI, *Kościół-Agape według Klemensa Aleksandryjskiego* [Church-Agape according to Clement of Alexandria] (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1996), 6-62.

¹³ Stanisław KOWALCZYK, *Filozofia kultury. Próba personalistycznego ujęcia problematyki* [Philosophy of culture. An attempt to personalize the problem] (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1996), 14.

¹⁴ JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 19. According to Nicolaus Lobkowicz, the Judaic foundation of Christian culture consists of two elements: 1) monotheism, thanks to which "Europe has made a radical depreciation of the natural world," which was not the case in the world of Greeks and Romans. Thanks to the fact that Christians had a different idea about God's reign and accepted His command to subdue the earth, in Europe it became possible for science to develop and master nature through technology; 2) The concept of man shaped in Judaism and the conviction of his unique individuality and inviolability prepared the ground for the Christian notion of a person which was created during the Trinitarian and Christological disputes in the first centuries of Christianity. Nicolaus LOBKOWICZ, *The Time of Crisis, the Time of Change* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1967), 7-9.

2. TWO HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF SHAPING CULTURE THROUGH FAITH

Unable to discuss this subject in a general European context, we will focus on the context of Gaul and France, the eldest daughter of the Church (*La Fille aînée de l'Église*) throughout its long history, from which we distinguish only two periods of spirituality.

2.1. DURING THE "CAROLINGIAN RENAISSANCE"

Speaking of the relationship between faith and culture in the "Carolingian era," we mean the relationships existing in a society living on the former north-eastern areas of Roman Gaul, currently belonging to the south-east of France and the south-west of Germany. In the second half of the 8th century, the Frankish king Charlemagne came to power in the existing state, who in 800 was crowned emperor in Rome by Pope Leon III. The Carolingian dynasty had aspirations "to renew the Roman Empire." In fact, this did not happen. By becoming an emperor, Charlemagne decided to return to Roman culture, to its forms and system of administration, in order to be able to more effectively build unity among the nations included in his state. In addition, he was familiar with St. Augustine's idea of society and civilization, the idea of God's state (*civitas Dei*), that is, the state in which God's law influences the shaping of social justice.

He was concerned with shaping the religious and spiritual culture, thanks to which this epoch is described as the "Carolingian renaissance." Charlemagne's advisor was the Anglo-Saxon monk, theologian, philosopher and educator Alcuin. Together with his disciples, he introduced a uniform liturgical rite throughout the empire, beginning with some pre-selected religious centers. Together with Bishop Theodulf, he set the text of the Vulgate, by removing foreign developments and correcting it according to the Septuagint. This initiated the revival of the classical Latin language and the reform of the characters based on the introduction of a new script called the "Caroline" minuscule, or the Carolingian minuscule. The renewed Latin language began to be used not only in the liturgy, but also in the circles of intellectuals and politicians of the Empire. Charlemagne strove for the development of culture first at his court and invited eminent intellectuals from different parts of Europe. In the center of the empire, Aachen, he created a "palace school" where aristocrats and clergymen were educated, as well as a *Schola Cantorum*, where children and youth were learning Latin Church singing. Similar schools were to be established in the provinces. Students, educated in liberal arts (the school program

that gradually became a permanent scheme of the education system, consisted of a three-year course [grammar, dialectics and rhetoric, the so-called *trivium*], and in the following years the course of arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy [*quadrivium*]¹⁵) in rural, parish or monastic schools, will be educated in the cathedral school, where they will acquire theological knowledge and pastoral preparation. In the “cathedral school” and in the emerging “city schools,” the lecture method based on the use of a *quaestio* for the Holy Bible will be used. Knowledge will be conveyed in a “spoken” style by putting the issues considered in the opening to the Revelation of God, acquainting the listeners with the solutions given by earlier known authors. The final settlement of the issue was made authoritatively by the master and given to the audience. The “scholastic theology” will be deepened in these city schools, which are already emerging in the Carolingian era and which are developing in later centuries.¹⁶

At that time, especially monasteries became the organized centers of culture. Most of the monks lived according to the rules of St. Benedict, the others lived according to the rules of St. Columban who came with his disciples from Ireland to Burgundy, Gaul. Monasteries were organized at schools where future monks and a very small number of lay people were educated. The schools functioned in accordance with the same *trivium* and *quadrivium* program, and the manuals used were written by Alcuin. However, the way of teaching in them was different from that in municipal schools. The monks were taught not by the scholastic, but by the abbot or the spiritual father, to whom a deeper analysis of the Bible and the writings of the Church Fathers, and the liturgical life characteristic of the Benedictines were introduced. The program assumed a certain level of knowledge and spiritual life, which was higher among monks than among ordinary people, and was carried out not in a speculative manner, but in the form of spiritual doctrine (*doctrina spiritualis*), associated with monastic experience and arousing the listeners’ liking for spiritual matters in the listeners.¹⁷ It was a way of seeking God in the word of God, the liturgy, fraternity, and even in the work of prayer and preparation for the final encounter with God (*querere Deum*). For it to be realized, tools in the form of reading and writing skills, knowledge of classical languages, manuscripts, schools and libraries were needed, thanks to which monastic theology and culture developed. This theology and culture, which will be discovered only in the 20th century and

¹⁵ Jacek KOWALSKI, “Francja średniowieczna [Medieval France],” in *Dzieje kultury francuskiej* [History of French culture], ed. Jacek Kowalski and Anna & Mirosław Loba (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2007), 48–65.

¹⁶ Jean LECLERCQ, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1961), 9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

called theology and monastic culture, reached a very high level in the 12th century.¹⁸ Pope Benedict XVI, considered a great friend of monks and highly valuing the Benedictine tradition, often expressed the fact that the origins of theology and the roots of Western culture were associated with the culture of monasticism. During his pilgrimage to France, at a meeting with the people of culture at the College of the Bernardines in Paris, he said: “From the perspective of monasticism’s historical influence, we could say that, amid the great cultural upheaval [after the fall of the Roman Empire] resulting from migrations of peoples and the emerging new political configurations, the monasteries were the places where the treasures of ancient culture survived, and where at the same time a new culture slowly took shape out of the old.”¹⁹ As the Fathers of the Church learned from Greek philosophy, medieval monks chose from antiquity what suited their principles and way of life.

At the turn of the 8th and 9th centuries, the best known monastic schools were those in York, Tours, Stavelot, Metz, Fulda, Monte Cassino and others. Libraries were also organized at schools.

Although the characteristic feature of Benedictine monasticism was the eschatological orientation, that is, the contemplation of the heavenly reality, one can not say that the monks were detached from the earthly reality. First, because they felt responsible for the people living in the world and for their salvation and undertook a missionary apostolate carrying the Gospel to various peoples of Europe and becoming their spiritual guides. St. Bede proclaimed the Gospel in England, Willibald evangelized the Netherlands, St. Boniface strengthened the church in Germania, and his successors went to Hungary and Scandinavia. St. Boniface contributed to the reform of the Church in the Frankish Empire, St. Adalbert ran missions in Hungary and Prussia, where he suffered martyrdom, St. Bruno-Boniface from Querfurt went on a mission to the country of Yotvingians. Benedict, John, Isaac, Matthew and Crispin came to Poland and suffered a martyr’s death in Greater Poland. Europe owes them its Christian face.

The Benedictine monks contributed not only to raising the intellectual and spiritual culture, but also to the material wealth of the inhabitants of Europe. Not having the type of work strictly defined by the *Rule*, they engaged in various works resulting from a pressing need or the economic and social situation. They

¹⁸ Ibid., 20.

¹⁹ BENEDICT XVI. “Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Benedict XVI to France on the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lourdes (September 12-15, 2008), Meeting with Representatives from the World of Culture, Address Of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Collège des Bernardins, Paris, Friday, 12 September 2008.” The Holy See. Benedict XVI. Speeches. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2008/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080912_parigi-cultura.html.

developed farming and fishing and taught the population of various craft skills. At their abbeys, they founded hospitals and devoted themselves to the service of the sick. They built roads and bridges. They provided an invaluable contribution to the development of European civilization and culture. According to J. Leclercq, it was in the Carolingian era, that is from the mid-8th to the mid-9th century, that Benedictine monastic culture took its shape.²⁰ According to the historian and expert on old French culture, J. Kowalski, without the “Carolingian Renaissance,” there would be no Renaissance, because the Carolingian Empire set a specific direction for European history and culture. A factor that animated this culture was the faith of the monks and the resulting commitment to shaping culture in the spirit of the Gospel.

2.2. IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF FRENCH SPIRITUALITY

The 17th century in France was a time of religious revival. It was manifested in the increase of the intellectual and spiritual level of the clergy, which was due to the seminars organized (from 1641) by Jean-Jacques Olier, according to the Sulpician model. Other representatives of the Berlin school also contributed to the religious life of the 17th century, in particular Cardinal Piotr de Berulle, an “apostle of the Incarnate Word,” who established the school, engaged in increasing the level of spiritual clergy (the so-called French oratory) and in political life (for example, he was involved as an adviser to Marie de’ Medici, Queen of France), and St. John the Baptist de la Salle, a founder of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (De La Salle Brothers) devoted to the formation of children and adults in the spirit of combining the values of nature, culture (mainly science) and Christian faith.

To show a closer relationship between Christian faith and spirituality, we will focus on two main figures of the period: St. Francis de Sales and St. Vincent de Paul.

2.2.1. CULTURE AS A FUNCTION AND EXPRESSION OF CHRISTIAN DEVOTION ACCORDING TO ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

St. Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva (1567-1622) showed in a word and a pen how to combine faith and its requirements with the earthly life and its duties, and proved that Christian piety is never a hindrance to professional and social life, but it is spurring its flourishing as well as human and spiritual development.

²⁰ J. LECLERCQ, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, 14 ff.

In the writings of Francis, the terms *culture* and *culture religieuse* are not mentioned, because at the time these terms do not appear yet.²¹ We also do not find the word “education” standing for “culture,” which Francis only explains in descriptive terms. He mentions farming culture, for example in the statement: “Roses [...] hardly need cultivation (*cultivage*).”²²

Francis is included in the humanistic trend called *humanisme dévot* (covering the period from 1580 to 1660), which emerged as a reaction to naturalistic humanism and its manifestations distorting the image of Christianity.²³

Being a law student at the University of Padua, Francis had the opportunity to learn about the spirit of humanism in the country, which was regarded as a predecessor and model for other European countries. His deep sensitivity and openness to another man is confirmed by his personal confession: “[...] there is no man, I think, who would love more affectionately, more tenderly and, if I may put it that way, with more love than I did, because it pleased God to shape my heart in this way.”²⁴ He was familiar with all human matters, which concerned human life experienced in relation to God, himself and others. This is especially true of *Introduction to the Devout Life*,²⁵ a textbook written for people living in the world, showing how they can live their faith.

Francis does not speak about faith in general, but about piety, which he understands the earnest love for God expressed in active and willing engagement in doing good deeds towards his neighbor.²⁶ As a special kind of virtue, it assumes God’s experience and a sense of responsibility for others. Francis notices that those who wrote earlier about piety were guided only by those who abandoned the world and lived a monastic, contemplative life, because it was believed that the path to holiness required abandoning the world and “complete isolation.” Many thought that saints could only be found in a religion and not in a “sinful” world.

²¹ The word *culture* is not in the dictionary by Algirdas Julien GREIMAS and Teresa Mary KEANE *Dictionnaire du moyen Français. La Renaissance* (Paris: Larousse, 1992).

²² FRANCIS DE SALES. “Sermons,” in *Œuvres de Saint François de Sales*, Ancecy: J. Niérat 1892-1932), vol. I., 145.

²³ The term *humanisme dévot* comes from Henri Bremond. He discusses it in Henri BREMOND, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieuse en France*, vol. I: *L’humanisme dévot 1580–1660* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1929). The Polish translation of the expression *humanisme dévot* — which means ‘pious humanism’ — does not reflect today the positive meaning that it had in history, therefore we will use the term *humanisme dévot*.

²⁴ F. DE SALES, *Lettre à la Mère de Chantal, Ancecy, 1620 ou 1621*, in *Œuvres de Saint François de Sales*, vol. X, 216.

²⁵ FRANCIS DE SALES, *Philothea, or an Introduction to the Devout Life*, trans. John K. Ryan (New York: Image Books, 1989).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

Francis notices a great discrepancy between the religious life and the life of people in the world and therefore he says: "This I speak not only for Spiritual Persons, but also for Secular."²⁷ He directs his remark to people from the upper class, nobles, representatives of various professions, such as soldiers, craftsmen, etc. He makes this turn towards the world, because he is convinced that piety should embrace the life of every man, regardless of where he lives and what he does. Francis claims that it should be based on the calling of God and be lived in every state of life. The question arises: how did Francis suggest to combine experienced piety as an expression of the committed attitude of faith and love with man's life in the world, with his "secular culture?"

Francis knew the world and its spirit, its good and bad sides. Its good sides included a lively interest in man, reaching for the works of ancient, Christian, Greek and Roman authors. He read not only the writings of St. Augustine, but also of classical philosophers (Plato, Aristotle). He was interested in the thought of the stoics (Epictetus). He knew the writings of contemporary Christian humanists (Erasmus of Rotterdam). He followed the current social life and was interested in the influence of antiquity on it and the extent to which socio-political changes lead to the formation of a new type of representative of the ruling classes. He knew Italian patterns and achievements of the civilization of that period, for example the ideal courtier's pattern given in *Il libro del Cortegiano* by Baldassare Castiglione (1528).²⁸ He was also familiar with the French writers who shaped the model of the 17th-century man, beginning with Michel de Montaigne's *Essais*, in which a new educational system based on gentleness and appealing to the student's intelligence and shaping the attitude of peace and the ability to harmonious life with others, or a man of breeding and taste (*honnête homme*) was presented. However, Montaigne relied too much on reason and did not sufficiently consider the premises of faith. He considered himself a believer, but his Catholicism was a form of submission to the religion accepted in society.²⁹

²⁷ Ibid., 295.

²⁸ In his book, Baldassare Castiglione, after serving in several manors, in a vivid and attractive manner showed the lifestyle, culture and customs at court, and presented the profile of the courtier. The ideal courtier is a man from a noble family, physically fit, elegant, using weapons, educated, sociable, witty, etc. This is someone who in a sense is the heir to the medieval knight, but adapted to the model and lifestyle of the Renaissance, and its moral and aesthetic values. Józef HEISTEIN, *Historia literatury włoskiej. Zarys* [History of Italian literature. An Outline] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1987), 75–6. Francis's knowledge of this book is justified by his style of writing concerning the moral shape of social life and a certain type of argumentation used by him.

²⁹ In his writings, Francis refers several times to Michel de Montaigne, for example in his "Controverses," in: *Œuvres de Saint François de Sales*, vol. I, 180, 182, 186; Gustave LANSON

Francis wondered how he should teach people from the upper class about piety.³⁰ France of that time, after the religious and political wars, the Huguenots wars, was full of anxiety. Théodore-Agrippa d'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques* (1616) written in the heat of religious struggles, aroused passions and stimulated religious fights. In the *Introduction* to his *Treatise on the Love of God*, published in the same year as *Les Tragiques*, Francis wrote that "the language of war differs from that of peace."³¹ In view of the great need to calm down the disturbed minds and build more stable relations, Francis chose a special language that would allow him to reach out with the science of piety to the people of the court, nobility and other social strata.

In these environments, piety was regarded as a "harsh and rigorous" practice, creating a "grim disposition."³² Francis says that people who practice it can seem like that, if they are appraised only by external observers, because not seeking sensual pleasures, but making a prayer, fasting, serving the sick and gaining forgiveness from other injuries do not always reveal feelings of joy. It does not mean, however, that they do not experience such feelings. Francis is convinced that such people are "merry and friendly"³³ Their piety has an impact on the whole attitude of man, on his external, "secular" activities, for which it provides "sweetness." The fact that spiritual life can be accompanied by spiritual sweetness was known to those who read the works of Bernard of Clairveaux. At first he was a tough and austere man towards his fellow men, but after experiencing the vision of the birth of Jesus, when God replenished his soul "with admirable Sweetness," he became a gentle and forgiving man.³⁴ Francis was familiar with him, and, similarly to him, he followed Christ, being gentle and humble in heart (Mathew 11:29), trying to win over human hearts. He said: "you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." This statement of Francis justifies the fact that sweetness, or gentleness, is a virtue perfecting the love of neighbor, similar to humility, perfecting man's love for God. It is like a "flower" of neighbor's love. Reflecting on the manner in which he could get to the communities of the court and all those

and Paul TUFFRAU, *Historia literatury francuskiej w zarysie* [The history of French literature in outline], trans. Wiera Bieńkowska (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1965), 114.

³⁰ The fact that Francis intended to reach these circles with his teaching does not mean that the influence of Philothea was limited to them. It means that thanks to the recognition which he received there and the positive reception in other circles (for example, among the clergy), he reached all the circles.

³¹ FRANCIS DE SALES, *Treatise on the Love of God*, trans. Rev. Henry Benedict Mackey (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1997), 60.

³² F. DE SALES, *Philothea, or an Introduction to the Devout Life*, 278.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

who need the teachings of piety in the world, he decided to do so in the spirit of the gently understood virtue of charity. In this theory and practice of the virtue of piety, the following aspects are important:

1. Rooting in love for God. True piety requires God's love in the soul of man, which is achieved through prayer and participation in the sacramental life, especially in the Eucharist. The believer motivated and empowered becomes capable of carrying out works of love towards his neighbor where he is involved. The humanism of that time did not provide an ordinary person with such motivation and spiritual strength, because it was restricted to formal participation in the Mass, and subject to a pleasant life.

2. Fulfilling the duties of one's vocation and profession. Piety, not being an attitude centered only on the cult of God and detached from life, expresses itself in conscientious and willing fulfillment of the duties of man's vocation and profession, which is an important manifestation of doing God's will. No one should neglect his family and professional duties, because they are an expression and a sign of love for his neighbor. Therefore, the strength for their fulfillment should draw from internal piety and adapt it to these duties and even to his own strength and the amount of tasks completed.³⁵ An example of a man who perfectly combined social activity (rule in the kingdom, running a court, etc.) with internal devotion (prayer, participation in Holy Mass, etc.) was St. Louis.³⁶

3. Search for the peace of the soul. According to ancient philosophers, man never remains in one state, but he is subject to changing feelings and moods depending on the situation, which is why he should seek the balance and peace of his soul. This issue was vividly lived in France in the 17th century after religious wars, when the anxiety of the spirit was expressed in excessive pursuit (of nobility) for honor, quarrelsomeness, willingness to fight, etc.³⁷ Francis not only advised to look for the balance of the soul in the way that philosophers (Aristotle, Seneca, Epictetus) or contemporary humanists (Montaigne) suggested subordinat-

³⁵ Ibid., 129.

³⁶ Ibid., 119. Cf. Robert J. LORENC, *Życie duchowe świętego Ludwika IX w kontekście społeczno-politycznym średniowiecznej Europy* [The spiritual life of Saint Louis IX in the socio-political context of the Middle Ages of Europe] (Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne i Drukarnia, 2016), 177–265.

³⁷ According to Lestoile, from the beginning of Henry IV's reign to 1607, four thousand noblemen were killed in duels, and in 1609, when *Philothea* was published, he gave the number of seven to eight thousand of the nobleman killed in duels since 1589. Ruth MURPHY, *Saint François de Sales et la civilité chrétienne* (Paris: A.G. NIZET, 1964), 33. In a letter to one of the penitents, Francis reveals his scandal on the grounds that there are some Catholics who, without caring for their salvation, put themselves in danger of losing it by fights, which is prompted by "courage in disorder." S.F. DE SALES, "Lettres," vol. V, 328.

ing feelings to reason, but also treated this attitude as a means to unify the soul with God.³⁸ According to him, the way to acquire the balance of spirit and peace of heart is the practice of virtues: patience, humility and sweetness (gentleness).

4. Practice of courtesy within piety. For the aforementioned socio-political and moral reasons, Francis understood the need to emphasize the role of courtesy in Christian morality and in the social dimension of experiencing faith. It is worth noting that the core of the French word *civilité* (courtesy) is related to the word *civil* (civil, civic), that is, to the social dimension of human life.³⁹ The virtue of courtesy was then propagated in France by a movement inspired by Baldassare Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* and other similar treatises. Francis was brought up in the Jesuit college, where education was a matter of courtesy and the treatise being an adaptation of Giovanni Della Casa's textbook was used.⁴⁰ Analyzing *Philothea*, we see in it many elements enhancing courtesy as a virtue shaping the quality of interpersonal relations. However, Francis unlike the authors of similar treatises, regarded the need for courtesy as a manifestation of Christian piety, that is—as we would say today—Christian culture. Wanting to make the faithful more willing to combine kindness towards their neighbor with piety, in the second edition of *Philothea* he placed the virtues shaping Christian's relationship with others (patience, humility, simplicity, gentleness) before the virtues of perfection. Emphasizing the relationship between kindness and piety, he also shows that the rudeness of a person goes against the love of God and his neighbor.⁴¹ Thus he regards the first as important in the Christian and not only human sphere. He writes about the ability to discuss with others, the value of true friendship, proper dressing, entertainment and games, and how to reconcile these manifestations of social life with piety. Due to the fact that *Philothea* has become a very popular spiritual guide for many lay people,⁴² it has contributed to reducing the gap between spiritual life and mortality, faith and culture.

³⁸ Ibid., vol. IV, 13, 247.

³⁹ There is no word "civilization" in Francis's writings that will appear in French in the 18th century and become synonymous with the word "culture." H. HILGERS-SHELL and H. PUST, *Culture und Civilisation*, 12. We find the word *se civiliser* in the sense of "getting used to something." F. de SALES, "Lettres," vol. VIII, 142.

⁴⁰ R. MURPHY, *Saint François de Sales et la civilité chrétienne*, 76.

⁴¹ F. DE SALES, *Philothea, or an Introduction to the Devout Life*, 276.

⁴² In the first ten years since its publication, the work *Philothea* had more than 40 issues in France and then was translated into all European languages. E.-M. LAJEUNIE, *La spiritualità di San Francesco di Sales* (Torino, Leumann: Editrice LDC, 1967), 84.

2.2.2. ST. VINCENT DE PAUL († 1660)
AS AN APOSTLE OF THE INCULTURATED MERCY

The 17th century in France was also the time of St. Vincent de Paul, whom John Paul II called “the herald of God’s mercy and goodness” and “the brilliant initiator of the charity and social action.”⁴³ His spirituality was shaped to a large extent under the influence of Cardinal Peter de Berulle, who was his spiritual director. From him Vincent took over “the sacred habit of remembering Christ the Lord in all matters and every matter in Christ” (Father Abbelly),⁴⁴ seeking His will and pleasing it. However, unlike the Founder of the oratorians, who explored the mystery of the Incarnation in connection with human nature and preached the calling of a man to deification in Christ, St. Vincent chose the path of Christology and more practical spirituality.

Francis de Sales also had a great influence on Vincent, although they met personally only once, when Vincent had the opportunity to listen to Francis’s lecture delivered to the Sisters of the Visits in Paris (1618). However, he read and studied the writings of Francis and recommended them to others as a spiritual reading. He learned from Francis about God’s will, affective and effective love, sacred indifference. Moreover, he drew practical inspiration from Francis that made him an innovative founder. It was Francis who wanted to give to the Congregation of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, founded together with Jane Frances de Chantal, not only a spiritual but also an apostolic purpose—serving the poor and the sick. However, due to the perception of the religious life by the Church (mainly by the bishop of Lyon) as completely separate from the world, he could not realize this concept of the congregation. He told Vincent about this. A year before the meeting with Francis, Vincent devoted himself to the service of a God present in the poor, to which he was inspired by the experience of the great misery of the rural population which he faced at Châtillon les Dombes. Then, enlightened by the grace of God, he saw the poor as Christ Himself and based on this he used to say: a poor man is similar to a medal that has two sides, “what is visible is a human being and what is invisible is Christ.” First, he founded the Brotherhood of Mercy gathering married women, ready to devote themselves to the service of the poor and the sick.

⁴³ JOHN PAUL II, “List do przełożonego generalnego Zgromadzenia Misji [Letter to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission],” in *Kontemplacja i działanie* [Contemplation and action], (W nurcie zagadnień posoborowych [In the stream of post-Conciliar issues], 15), ed. Bohdan Bejze (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1983), 183, 186.

⁴⁴ Stanisław NOWAK, “Źródła duchowości wincentyńskiej [Sources of Vincentian spirituality],” in *Kontemplacja i działanie*, 203.

In 1625, Vincent established the Congregation of Missionary Fathers who first devoted themselves to the evangelization of the poor in the countryside, but over time developed their activities also in cities, serving in prisons, hospitals, orphanages, and later in various provinces of France tormented by wars, famine and pestilence. In one of the conferences, he encouraged the priests of his congregation to devote themselves to the pastoral and charitable ministry: "Are we ready to endure the hardships that God will demand from us and master the movements of nature, to live only the life of Jesus Christ? Are we ready to go to Poland, to the Gentiles, to India, to sacrifice our pleasures and our lives to Him? If so, let's bless God! But if there is someone among us who is afraid to give up his own comforts, if there are those who are sorry for the lack of the smallest thing, that is, Confreres, if some of you are the slaves of nature, devoted to sensual pleasures ..."⁴⁵ According to Vincent, priesthood exercised in a spirit of devotion to God and neighbors, including the most needy, requires mastering one's own nature and transcending it moving towards Christ, in order to be able to unite with Him in prayer and to welcome willingly His will. The nature that must be overcome is in this case a synonym for "the flesh" opposed to the spirit (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:3). However, this is not about denying one's own body and its natural inclinations, but about negating a self-centred attitude, one's selfish goals and not Christ's goals. Vincent demanded of himself and his fellow men to renounce pleasure and to form an attitude of freedom within which the priest becomes capable of serving Christ embodied in the poor. Such asceticism was and is a requirement of priestly formation and, at the same time, spiritual culture. "We live in Jesus Christ through the death of Jesus Christ, we should also die in Jesus Christ through the life of Jesus Christ," he said, pointing to the need for the priest to be identified with Jesus Christ in life and death.

In 1633, together with Louise de Marillac and Marguerite Naseau, Vincent established the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity. The sisters began their charitable activities for the poor and the sick in their immediate surroundings, soon moved to schools and hospitals, to places where various cases of human poverty were revealed and they devoted to the suffering, beggars, prisoners, socially marginalized individuals, illiterates, cripples and abandoned children. Their lifestyle, according to the Founder, should be as follows: "and what a sight it will be to see in paradise a Daughter of Charity who had lived in this world in the way I've just described, and who had for cell only a rented room and for enclosure obedience! Yes, Sisters, if you have obedient spirit you'll be better cloistered than

⁴⁵ Pierre POURRAT, *La spiritualité chrétienne*, vol. III: *Les temps modernes* (Paris: Gabalda, 1927), 585.

nuns [...]”⁴⁶ This style was clearly different from the lifestyle of the sisters from traditional religious congregations. The Daughters of Charity celebrated two meditations a day, practicing affective love for Christ, with whom they united during the Eucharist. Their prayers had nothing of infertile quietism, but they were oriented towards the world of people and its temporal and supernatural needs. Watching the world in the light of God, the sisters saw the meaning of life with effective love, that is, the love of doing everything for God and neighbor, not seeking sweetness, compensation for themselves.⁴⁷ Seeing the poor as “God’s friends,” they showed them concrete love, supportive in specific needs, uplifting and pouring a new sense of dignity. Is it not an expression of Christian humanism to raise a man from moral and material poverty and to let him know that he is a child of God? Was it not a way to shape a culture of charity? St. Vincent de Paul gave Christian love a very specific humanistic face in the French society of the 17th century and gave witness to the charitable act of this love towards the needy—an act that shaped a new culture sensitive to man and his spiritual and temporal matters.

3. THE GROWING DISCREPANCY BETWEEN CULTURE AND CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE PERIOD FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO THE 20TH CENTURY

In the French Renaissance of the 16th century, as in the Italian Renaissance, marked by the aspirations of a return to ancient culture, the interest of humanists—and not only philosophers, but also school teachers teaching grammar or rhetoric—focused mainly on ancient languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew), literature, art, and philosophy (the writings of Plato and Neoplatonists). The former made it possible for young people to interact with classics, while the latter convinced them that returning to the works of antiquity would help in freeing themselves from “the barbarousness of the middle ages” and in getting to know human nature and its ennoblement.⁴⁸ They believed that human nature has a great potential for development, which along with the “discovery of man” and his values can be unleashed and developed.

⁴⁶ VINCENT DE PAUL. *Correspondence, conferences, documents*, vol. X, ed. Pierre Coste (New York: New City Press, 2006), 532

⁴⁷ Stanisław NOWAK, “Czyn chrześcijańskiej miłości w ujęciu św. Franciszka Salezego i św. Wincentego à Paulo” [The act of Christian love in terms of Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Vincent de Paul], in *Kontemplacja i działanie*, 228.

⁴⁸ Eugenio GARIN, *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 12.

This renaissance was also the result of the internal development of Christianity, which took place under the influence of rational Thomistic theology. Inspired by Revelation, discussions were made about the relationship between human free will and divine grace, which were often distanced from the earlier ascetic principles defined by clerics and religious who subjected human nature to excessive restrictions. Freedom Renaissance tendencies aimed at freeing an individual from the “protection of the Church.” A reform of the Church, the life of the clergy, the introduction of appropriate renewal in convents and the renewal of pastoral work were advocated. Over time, these efforts will become stronger and find their realization.⁴⁹

In the 17th century, in France, there was a significant reception of ancient philosophies, especially stoicism, revived by the renaissance. Stoicism was seen as wisdom, which, combining the laws of nature with reason, helped man not to be too emotional, which was very useful in times of anxiety caused by religious wars. This trend was propagated in isolation from Christian doctrine and morality (Pierre Charon) and sometimes in connection with them (the Jesuit colleges). Next to stoicism, there were also skepticism and epicureanism spread by philosophers who became a moral authority. The righteous man gives way to a “man who is respectable” (*honnête homme*), meaning a man who wants to shape his own diversity and originality in a free way and to personify some features of court culture (for example, a taste for being in good company).⁵⁰ The respectable man, in turn, gives way to a “philosopher” who distanced himself from revelation, dogmas and the Church. Generally man was more and more perceived as a thinking being, a “thinking reed” (Blaise Pascal).

⁴⁹ At the beginning of the Renaissance, humanism was of a fully Christian character. The intellectual movement, aroused at that time, resulted in a greater interest in the Bible in the religious culture and in its various translations from original languages, the correction of the Vulgate and translation into the national language (1473). At the same time, there were conflicts between humanists demanding autonomy for philology and theologians from the University of Paris who were afraid that sharing the Scriptures with ordinary faithful, not prepared for its proper understanding, would do more harm than good. Leading European humanists, such as Erasmus of Rotterdam, have proclaimed the need to return not only to classical philosophy, but also to biblical sources and the internalization of Christianity. The reformers’ milieu reinforced these aspirations of evangelism. The Bible, the writings of the Church Fathers and the works of many humanists (philosophers, theologians, writers, lawyers, etc.) were published especially in the two most famous centers, Paris and Lyon (A. LOBA and M. LOBA, “Francja nowożytna [Modern France],” in *Dzieje kultury francuskiej*, 246). Moreover, the publishing centers were a place of organized meetings for people of the world of culture. The Council of Trent will be in favor of preserving the Latin language in the Church’s liturgy.

⁵⁰ A. LOBA and M. LOBA, “Francja nowożytna,” 299.

According to Hilgers-Schell and Pust, the renaissance was followed by the development of a portable concept of “culture.” This happened under the influence of humanism, people started to use the terms “culture of science” (*culture de science*), “culture of arts” (*culture de arts*), “culture of spirit” (*culture de l’esprit*). As a result the term *culture* meant “upbringing,” “education.”⁵¹ In France, these more detailed terms were more widely used at the end of the 17th century.⁵²

The first, who at that time defined culture in Europe in the anthropological sense, was the Lutheran philosopher of law and historian Samuel Pufendorf († 1694). According to him, “culture allows every human being to attain a truly human life, thanks to the cooperation, efforts and discoveries made by others, but also thanks to his own reflection and effort, as well as thanks to God’s inspiration.”⁵³ Speaking of the “truly human life” that man desires, Pufendorf pointed to the role of the spiritual dimension and even the supernatural dimension of culture. His legal and social thought influenced John Jacques Rousseau and French encyclopedists.

As a result of emphasizing the importance and special role of human reason there is a discrepancy between philosophy and theology.

This is reflected in the thought of René Descartes, who rejects the scholastic way of knowing and accepting the method of knowing and explaining the world based on the doubt in all knowledge acquired through speculation or experience. For Descartes, doubts became the starting point in seeking a certain, clear knowledge. He said: “I doubt, therefore I think.” Proclaiming the thesis: “I think, therefore I am” (*Cogito ergo sum*), he pointed to the undeniable existence of the soul, the human subject, and the fact that the foundation of knowledge should be sought not in the external world, but in man, not in matter, but in a conscious spirit.⁵⁴ For this reason, he was recognized in our time as a philosopher of subjectivity and as the “precursor of the technical vision of the world.” Many scholars adopted the method developed by him, believing that they choose the path of universal truth. And although Descartes did not reject the existence of God, being a deist,⁵⁵ his philosophy, detached from real existence and not taking into account

⁵¹ H. HILGERS-SHELL and H. PUST, *Culture und Civilisation*, 11–12.

⁵² L. DOLLOT, *Culture individuelle et culture de masse*, 20.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 21: “quae vita humanae ex auxilio, industria et inventis aliorum hominum propria meditatione et ope aut divina monita accessit.”

⁵⁴ Władysław TATARKIEWICZ, *Historia filozofii* [History of philosophy], vol. II: *Filozofia nowożytna do roku 1830* [Modern Philosophy until 1830] (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1978), 48.

⁵⁵ Descartes had a vague approach to theology. He did not accept scholastic theology and the subtle reasoning typical of it, he postulated “a new theology available to a simple people and to people of culture” (Morel). According to Blondel and Gueroult, Descartes did not rationally

the primacy of existence (*esse*), closed many “scholars” to the path to God. John Paul II wrote: “According to the logic of *cogito, ergo sum*, God was reduced to an element within human consciousness; no longer could he be considered the ultimate explanation of the human *sum*. Nor could he remain as *Ens subsistens*, or “Self-sufficient Being,” as the Creator, the one who gives existence, and least of all as the one who gives himself in the mystery of the Incarnation, the Redemption, and grace. The God of Revelation had ceased to exist as “God of the philosophers.” All that remained was the idea of God, a topic for free exploration by human thought.”⁵⁶

The French Enlightenment was a time in which the emancipation of reason and knowledge progressed more and more, and with it came the formation of a “new order” and a new society. The mentality and culture of that period, inspired by English thinkers, especially by John Locke († 1704),⁵⁷ expressed in freedom of thought, built anthropocentrism entirely detached from scholasticism. In the humanistic sciences, Descartes’ rationality was regarded as a guide and new ideas were sought in an elegant, often strong language, which moved to salons, academia gathering people from the upper class (aristocrats, writers, wealthy burghers), and even to cafes organized in many cities. Like in the ancient Greek *city-states*, in the “age of light,” culture began to develop in cities where citizens met with each other. The morality of this time became more and more subjectivist and became susceptible to what was more accepted and shared in society. The moral freedom was propagated.

The experimental sciences (physics, chemistry, botany) were more popular than before, in which the principles of scientific knowledge discovered by Gali-

penetrate the truths of faith, because by pointing to simple, uneducated people (*les plus idiots*), for whom these truths are available in faith, he believed that the will alone would reach the mysteries of faith by the grace of God. This approach, however, did not result from humility and simplicity towards God, but from the conviction that philosophy should not deal with the truths of faith, but be an autonomous area, not subject to theology. Georges MOREL, *Questions d’homme. L’Autre* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1877), 62–67.

⁵⁶ JOHN PAUL II, *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of the Millennium* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005), 10.

⁵⁷ Locke did not share Descartes’ view of intuitionism and the basic concepts of man as innate concepts, and claimed that the source of human knowledge is the experience gained by observation (and self-observation), description and classification of various phenomena. In the experiment only the impressions are given, not the things, and it is impossible to know the latter. He was in favor of the freedom of thinking and action of each individual according to the discernment of his own reason. He preached religious tolerance and was an advocate of separating the church from the state. With his views he started the enlightenment in England and on the European continent. Stanisław JUDYCKI, “Locke John,” in *Encyklopedia katolicka* [Catholic Encyclopedia], vol. 10 (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 2010), col. 1294–7.

leo, Pascal and Newton and enhanced by the Cartesian spirit were to lead the seekers to explore all the secrets of reality and civilization progress.

The French Enlightenment in philosophy, science and morality was anti-Christian. Its humanism was radicalized and became more and more critical of religion and the Church. The definitive confirmation of this was the cultural project contained in the *Encyclopédie* published by Diderot and d'Alembert, which was an expression of the main ideas and tendencies of the Enlightenment, including sensualism, rationalism, deism and anthropocentrism. The result of their adoption and propagation was the separation of the principles of morality from Revelation and the turning of man into nature. Although in the *Encyclopédie*, the spirit culture is interpreted as a "special kind of art, instructing how to cultivate and improve all parts of the human spirit," according to Paul Hazard, "there is no reference to the Christian and religious spirit in it and it is rational, political and social."⁵⁸

From then on man would be the one who would create the world and free it from the ignorance of the "darkness of superstition" and religious "superstitions." It will soon be that the Catholic religion, as a result of the decrees enacted by the Legislative Assembly, will be unlawful, and the clergy will be forced to obey the new state and will be persecuted. During the French Revolution (1789), the activities of the Church were completely paralyzed. Churches were transformed into Atheist temples of Reason, for this cult and the cult of Nature were considered only right and worth promoting.⁵⁹ The thesis that if the existence of a true God is denied, man will become the Absolute turned out to be true.

In the 19th century there was an even greater secularization of French society and its confrontation with the Church. This was grounded in, among others, the minimalist philosophy of Augustus Comte († 1857), the founder of the positivist system⁶⁰ and Charles Renouvier († 1903), the founder of neocriticism.⁶¹ Positivists'

⁵⁸ L. DOLLOT, *Culture individuelle et culture de masse*, 22.

⁵⁹ Marian BANASZAK, *Historia Kościoła katolickiego* [History of the Catholic Church], vol. III: *Czasy nowożytne 1758-1914* [Modern times 1758-1914] (Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1991), 37.

⁶⁰ According to Comte, honest knowledge should give up searching for the causes of things, their essence, the meaning of life and its secrets, and limit itself only to the registration and description of facts and relationships existing between them. There is no point in asking about God, because His existence can not be verified by means of purely descriptive sciences, especially sociology. Stanisław KAMIŃSKI, "Comte Auguste," in *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 3, col. 565–6.

⁶¹ Renouvier was inspired by Kant's thought denying the possibility of all metaphysics. However, he did not justify his views in the positivist sense, but he preached the freedom of the cognizer and his inability to know. Julia DIDIER, *Słownik filozofii* [Dictionary of philosophy], trans. Krzysztof Jarosz (Kraków: Książnica, 1992), 300.

ally was Ernest Renan († 1892), philologist and historian,⁶² author of the book *The Life of Jesus*. He presented Jesus as a “dreamer, an admirable man, devoid of metaphysical dimensions” (P. Pierrard), an “incomparable man,” which caused a great scandal among the faithful not only in France but also in Europe. In this context, we can name more authors using positive methods for the fields and texts previously considered inaccessible to theological sciences who caused the modernist crisis. In France it was largely contributed by an exegete, Alfred Loisy († 1940), later called the father of Catholic modernism,⁶³ whose views on the independence of biblical criticism and history from Revelation and dogma were condemned by the Holy Office in a decree of December 4, 1903.⁶⁴ Theological, exegetical, philosophical and historical modernization was solemnly condemned by Pius X in the Decree of *Lamentabili sane exitu* (1907) and in the encyclical *Pascendi* (1907).

Based on the views of the above-mentioned positivists and their supporters, a generation of intellectuals was formed who believed that scientific progress would bring full knowledge of man and the world and would satisfy all the needs of human intelligence. Scientism, as a kind of religion of science, then mastered the minds of many intellectuals and survived until the mid-20th century. Born in the 19th century, the way of thinking, separated from religion and faith, found its expression in atheistic existentialism, whose leading representatives in France were Jean-Paul Sartre († 1980)⁶⁵ and Albert Camus († 1960).⁶⁶ Sartre became

⁶² Renan was an advocate of skepticism. He considered observation and experimental research conducted by natural sciences supported by philological and historical studies as the source of knowledge about reality. He did not recognize metaphysics as a science. He regarded it as speculation devoid of any cognitive value. God, according to him, is impersonal, unknowable, changeable, and religion is a matter of feelings and not recognition. Radosław KRAJEWSKI, “Renan Ernest,” in *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 16, col. 1440–1.

⁶³ Influenced by German rationalists and Renan, of whom he was a student, Loisy questioned the historicity of many of the salvific events described in the Gospels, the historical nature of Jesus' teaching and the fact of His resurrection. He explained miracles in an allegorical sense. He was deprived of the right to teach Hebrew and exegesis at the Catholic Institute in Paris (1893). Artur SANECKI, “Loisy Alfred,” in *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 10, col. 1328–9.

⁶⁴ Pierre PIERRARD, *Historia Kościoła katolickiego* [History of the Catholic Church], trans. Tadeusz Szafrński (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1984), 304.

⁶⁵ Sartre claimed that the existence of a man is absurd, meaningless, because he exists before he gives meaning to his existence (“existence precedes the essence”). Man is “condemned to freedom,” arbitrarily making choices that can not be justified. Sartre's philosophy is considered a synthesis of Marxism and individualism. J. DIDIER, *Słownik filozofii*, p. 310–11.

⁶⁶ Although many philosophers classify Camus as existentialists or “existentialist writers,” Camus himself described his philosophy as “non-existential” or as a “philosophy of exile.” He justified this with a certain “nostalgia” for something accompanying human existence, but he did not accept “higher reality,” he was an atheist. He was close to Hegel, the “patron of existentialism adoring history.” Tadeusz Gadacz describes Sartre as “a philosopher of existence.” Tadeusz GA-

very popular among intellectuals, writers and artists after World War II, acting against American capitalism and imperialism. Camus was involved in political disputes and ideologies, for example those against Soviet totalitarianism.

The culture of the spirit (philosophy, literature) was mixed with politics so that soon the state policy extended to the cultural sphere, embracing not only science, but also literature, art, cinema, etc. In France, cultural centres and policy-making and cultural animation centres were established, supported by the Ministry of Culture. The extension of the concept of culture to politics had consequences for civil law, for example, emphasis on the right to culture being more and more explicit.⁶⁷ The concept of culture, hitherto associated with philosophy, theology and natural sciences, covered various fields of science and detailed scientific disciplines emerging during the scientific and technical development leading in the 19th century to the industrial revolution and the implementation of mass production of various types of articles, causing a change in the nature of work. The 19th century labor masses were exploited slavishly by entrepreneurs, and only after some time the state began to play a significant role in order to deal with the harmful economic activities of entrepreneurs and to defend the rights of workers. The development of industry entailed the necessity to acquire higher professional qualifications, so that in the 20th century there was a narrow scientific and professional specialization. It should be noted that the scientific and technical development contributed at this stage not only to material and cultural progress, which was mainly due to the mass media (cinema, radio, tape recorder, television, press published in large numbers), especially audiovisual. Thanks to the mass media, socialization of culture took place, every citizen could gain access to important information about social life and, in a sense, also to many goods of civilization. According to cultural scientists, these factors led to the “cultural revolution”⁶⁸ in the 20th century, that is, the transformation of the concept of culture, which until then had referred to educated individuals or layers. It gained a broad social significance. Culture became a term for collective consciousness and lifestyles characteristic of a social group, for society. It turned out to be true what the English historian and anthropologist Edward Tylor wrote in 1871 that “culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law,

DACZ, *Historia filozofii XX wieku. Nurty* [History of 20th century philosophy. Streams], vol. II: *Neokantyzm, filozofia egzystencji, filozofia dialogu* [Neo-Kantianism, philosophy of existence, philosophy of dialogue] (Kraków: ZNAK, 2009), 493.

⁶⁷ In 1948, the Third General Assembly of the United Nations voted for the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR). Art. 26 of the UDHR states that “everyone has the right to education” and Art. 27 states that “everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.”

⁶⁸ L. DOLLOT, *Culture individuelle et culture de masse*, 31–46.

customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society.”⁶⁹

4. THE NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD AND CULTURE IN THE 20TH CENTURY — INCULTURATION OF FAITH

The new approach of the Church to the issue of culture can be seen only starting from the great cultural event that was the Second Vatican Council. As the concept of culture in the secular environment was shaped in conjunction with the emergence of a new form of social life in Europe and efforts for social justice, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council favored a new, anthropological vision of culture after prior understanding of the situation of man in the modern world, his anxieties and problems, aspirations and hopes for the development and prosperity of human society.⁷⁰ This anthropological optics was favored at the Council by a large and culturally diverse representation of bishops coming from different countries of the world and the exchange of ideas and experiences during the discussion, especially on the Constitution on the Church in the modern world. Being aware of the fact that “the human person deserves to be preserved [and] human society deserves to be renewed.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 3) in the light and power of the Gospel of Christ, the participants of the Council carried out a sociological analysis of the human situation in the modern world. Understanding the conditions of the age, they were able to see how urgent it was for the Church to perform its mission “so that all men, joined more closely today by various social, technical and cultural ties, might also attain fuller unity in Christ” (*Lumen Gentium*, 1). The mentioned sociological analysis served to provide an outline of theological anthropology for the current needs of the Church and issues related to culture.

⁶⁹ Edward Burnett TYLOR, *Primitive Culture: Researches Into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*, vol. I (London: John Murray, 1871), 1. Tylor used this original and groundbreaking definition of culture in his work *Primitive Society*, written on the basis of research into the “savage culture” of Toltecs in central Mexico. He claimed that “everything that manifests itself in the life of the people, at any level, is [their] culture.” Culture is no longer opposed to nature, but it includes it. L. DOLLOT, *Culture individuelle et culture de masse*, 25.

⁷⁰ Earlier, that is, in the period from Leon XIII to Pius XII, official documents mentioned Christian civilization instead of culture when it came to church involvement in various sectors of the social life of the faithful. Mentions about culture appeared at that time only in connection with statements about civilization. Herve CARRIER, *Gospel Message and Human Cultures: From Leo XIII to John Paul II*, trans. John Drury (Duchesne: Duchesne University Press, 1989), 43 ff.

4.1. THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN FULFILLING THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Guided by the message to each person and to the entire human family, the Council Fathers defined culture in several ways that can be deduced from its general description, which is as follows: culture is “everything whereby man develops and perfects his many bodily and spiritual qualities; he strives by his knowledge and his labor, to bring the world itself under his control. He renders social life more human both in the family and the civic community, through improvement of customs and institutions. Throughout the course of time he expresses, communicates and conserves in his works, great spiritual experiences and desires, that they might be of advantage to the progress of many, even of the whole human family.”

When it comes to terminology, in the cited constitution, in addition to the Latin word *cultura*, the expression *humanus civilisque cultus* is used.⁷¹

The first aspect of culture that can not be ignored is its anthropological aspect, and also its ontological aspect. Man is a spirit and a body, and culture is his activity that serves to improve him in the spiritual dimension (mental culture) and in the physical dimension (physical culture), while this improvement is made in the combination of elements of his bodily and spiritual nature. “Man comes to a true and full humanity only through culture, that is through the cultivation of the goods and values of nature. Wherever human life is involved, therefore, nature and culture are quite intimately connected one with the other” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 53). Culture is presented as an extension of the goals of the rational and free nature of man appointed by God. Speaking about the full humanity, brought about through culture, we point to the subjective side of culture. “The cultivation of the goods and values of nature,” and thus human culture, applies to all human history (*Gaudium et Spes*, 54). The goods, which are the result of such human activity and can be separated from it (material goods, for example: work tools, cultivated land, constructed machines, and spiritual goods, for example: literary works, musical works), make up the cultural side of the subject.

The second aspect of culture are its various manifestations visible in all its dimensions, because it is “everything whereby man develops and perfects” himself and “strives by his knowledge and his labor, to bring the world itself under his control.” The mention of “knowledge and [...] labor” as specific activities of a human being, reveals not only the human skills, but also their effects, for exam-

⁷¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, 53: “man [...] draws the values which permit him to promote civilization. (homo [...] ad humanum civilemque cultum promovendum haurit). “Costituzione pastorale sulla Chiesa nel mondo contemporaneo (Latin and Italian version),” in *La Chiesa nel mondo contemporaneo. Commento alla Costituzione pastorale “Gaudium et spes”*, 448. Cf. *ibid.*, no. 56, 57, 58 and 60.

ple, the broad field of science (anthropology, history, humanities, natural sciences) and technology. On the other hand, the mention of the “improvement of customs and institutions” taking place in human life, points to the development of culture both in the legal (institutions) and moral sense. It is possible because man as a being created in the image and likeness of God is able to build communion with others and to rule over the world of things (Genesis 1:28). This aspect can be called a phenomenological aspect of culture (*Gaudium et Spes*, 54).

Moreover, there is a social and ethnological aspect of culture closely related to the two mentioned. It results from the fact that culture “renders social life more human both in the family and the civic community, through improvement of customs and institutions.” Since culture applies to all people and to all social life in its historical development and evolution, there are many cultures and many connections between them. Culture in this aspect is a dynamic process in which all people are involved motivated by the will to improve man and social shape of human life.

The presented aspects of the Council’s concept of culture show that, analyzing the situation of man in the contemporary world and its more pressing problems, the Council used the detailed concept of culture developed by the sciences and accepted it for the fulfillment of its goals. Bearing in mind two goals: the salvation of the human person and the renewal of society in the spirit of the Gospel, the Council advocated the integral vision of man and culture.

This concept of culture will be referred to by Paul VI and John Paul II. John Paul II said: “Culture is specific way of man’s “existing and “being” [...] Culture is that through which man as man, becomes more man, “is” more, has more access to “being”.”⁷²

Considering the recent deep social and cultural changes and appreciating the values they bring (for example, scientific inquiry, scientific cooperation), the Council speaks of “a new age of human history” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 54), which demands an attitude of responsibility and care for the human being in the temporal and supernatural dimensions (*Gaudium et Spes*, 3). Care and responsibility result from deep concern that the spreading of technical culture does not contribute to the disappearance of spiritual culture, which at the anthropological and humanistic level is provided by classical studies based on different traditions; that the dialogue between old and new culture would not “destroy the wisdom received from ancestors” and the value of tradition, and would not weaken national values; that the progressive specialization in the field of particular sciences would not

⁷² JOHN PAUL II. “To the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (June 2, 1980).” *Interdisciplinary Encyclopedia of Religion & Science*. Accessed 15 June 2018. <http://inters.org/John-Paul-II-UNESCO-Culture>,

disturb people's ability to contemplate and admire, including the contemplation of the Creator of the world, what could happen if the methods used in natural sciences were considered the only way to the truth; finally, that recognition of the autonomy of culture and the excessive belief in technological progress would not lead to "humanism which is merely terrestrial, and even contrary to religion itself" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 56). Thus, it is not only scientific-technical but also spiritual development of culture that is desirable for man to remain open to the transcendental dimension and to search for God as the ultimate meaning of his life. Therefore, the Fathers of the Council meant an integral man who should fulfill himself in the spiritual and religious dimension. If the content of this dimension becomes faith, as a response to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, the scope of culture expands to the metaphysical sphere and culture acquires meaning in the entire Christian vocation of man. It consists of both a call to unite with God and a call to build a more human world (*Gaudium et Spes*, 57). The purposes of man's calling are compatible with each other, because, according to God's original plan, expressed in the creation of the world and man, faith in God the Creator is connected with the duty of subduing the earth and perfecting created things (Genesis 1:28) (*Gaudium et Spes*, 57). In culture, understood in the spirit of the Council, the Christian obtains an additional, supernatural motivation to build a more human world. His physical and mental work should not only be the fulfillment of a particular social profession, but also cooperation with God the Creator. Its fruits serving others are not only an expected productive good, but also a manifestation of the realization of the commandment of love of one's neighbor. The relationship of faith and culture is not limited to the level of creation, but is complemented in the work of the redeeming incarnation. Here, it is important that the Son of God embodied Himself in specific social, historical and cultural conditions, that in the preaching of the Good News He took into account the culture and mentality of His listeners, and spoke to them in their language (see *Gaudium et Spes*, 58). By redeeming man from sin, as John Paul II emphasized, "He also redeemed human culture, which is the basic expression of man as an individual, as a community, as a people, as a nation. All human values are redeemed and saved by Christ, who gives a new dimension to the entire reality of man! The grace of salvation that heals, perfects, merges and elevates the nature of man, in the same way heals, perfects, merges and elevates culture."⁷³ Assuming this theological fact, the Council

⁷³ JOHN PAUL II, "*Formowanie sumień zadaniem przedstawicieli świata kultury*. Przemówienie do intelektualistów europejskich przybyłych do Rzymu z okazji Jubileuszu Odkupienia. Rzym, 15 grudnia 1983 [*Forming consciences as a task for representatives of the world of culture*. Speech to European intellectuals who came to Rome for the Jubilee of Redemption. Rome, December 15, 1983]," in IDEM, *Wiara i kultura. Dokumenty, przemówienia, homilie* [Faith and

stated that “the Gospel of Christ constantly renews the life and culture of fallen man, it combats and removes the errors and evils resulting from the permanent allurements of sin. It never ceases to purify and elevate the morality of peoples. By riches coming from above, it makes fruitful, as it were from within, the spiritual qualities and traditions of every people of every age. It strengthens, perfects and restores them in Christ” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 58).

4.2. THE LIFE-GIVING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHRISTIAN FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY AND CULTURE TODAY

The congregational teaching of culture, having regard to the reflection of modern science and the Christian vision of man, opens a new chapter in theology, which is theology of culture and initiates a new way of proclaiming the saving message by the Church. This is a preaching directed not only to the nations (*ad gentes*), but also to secularized societies that do not practice faith and abandon the Christian principles of morality.

From the very beginning, the Church expressed the Gospel by means of the concepts and language of the peoples to whom it preached and tried to adapt it to their ability of understanding. The Second Vatican Council recognized this adaptation of the Gospel as the principle of all evangelization (*accomodata praedicatione lex omnis evangelizationis*), justifying it by the necessity of communion of the Church with different cultures and fostering “the ability to express Christ’s message in its own way” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 44) in every nation. The adaptation in question does not mean conformism in the preaching of the saving message, but only an attempt to update it, concretize it, and refer it to the mentality of the recipients of the Gospel and the changing conditions of their lives. The Church is sent by Christ with a saving message to all people (Matthew 28:19). As a divine-human institution it transcends all the natural or human limits of nations, cultures, races and sexes (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1267).

In the past, adaptation meant a certain method of evangelization carried out by Catholic missionaries, who, depending on the needs of the mission, were modified in order to build the Church. This method often did not touch the deeper cultural layers of the peoples, among whom missionaries worked usually keeping their way of thinking and acting, which they acquired in their country of origin.⁷⁴ During the Synod of Bishops on evangelization (1974), African bishops expressed

culture. Documents, speeches, homilies], ed. Marian Radwan (Rome, Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL, 1988), 224.

⁷⁴ Herve CARRIER, *Évangélisation et développement des cultures* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1990), 86.

their reservations about evangelization understood as adapting the Gospel to their culture, seeing it as if adding some external elements to it only, while evangelization—as explained by the Church—ought to show the “incarnation” of Christ in local African cultures.⁷⁵ A deeper reflection on the manner of evangelization, conducted in the 1970s, confirmed the rightness of what Pope Paul VI wrote in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, that “what matters is to evangelize man’s culture and cultures (not in a purely decorative way, as it were, by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots” (20). To express this process in the official church terminology from the Synod of Bishops in 1977, the term “inculturation” was accepted, understood as the “incorporation of the Gospel into culture.”⁷⁶ It expresses the function that transforms the Gospel in relation to the culture of man and nations, better than the earlier term “adaptation” and better serves the question of leveling, sometimes very clear, discrepancy between the Gospel and culture, which—according to Paul VI—is “the drama of our time.”

Therefore, faith does not exist in a “pure” spiritualist form, superimposed over the nature of a believer, but it needs to be rooted in his spirit, in his decisions, in his moral-spiritual attitude and demands to be visualized in an external attitude (language, speech, deeds, works). Nor should it be reduced to the subjective or private dimension without revealing itself in the social sphere of human life and its various fields (for example, family, politics, economy, culture understood as science and art and morality associated with religion) (Matthew 5:13-16; *Gaudium et Spes*, 58). “A faith which does not become culture is a faith which has not been fully received, not thoroughly thought through, not faithfully lived out”⁷⁷ as John Paul II says, referring to: 1) the need for a fuller “adoption” of it, that is, submitting to God’s action in the act of faith and accepting the obligations associated with the grace of faith received. Because faith is a grace, the culture-forming act of faith must first and foremost be seen in connection with God and his actions. „God has made a covenant with man in the work of culture. God Himself became the creator of culture for human development. St. Paul says Dei agricul-

⁷⁵ Antoni LEWEK, *Nowa ewangelizacja w duchu Soboru Watykańskiego II* [A new evangelization in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council], vol. II (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 1995), 90.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 89. Thus, the term “adaptation” has not lost its *raison d’être*; it is still used, especially in connection with inculturation. Conciliar statements about the adaptation of the Gospel, for example to the spirit and character of individual cultures (*Ad Gentes*, 22), remain valid.

⁷⁷ JOHN PAUL II. “Foundation Letter of the Pontifical Council for Culture (May 20, 1982).” Pontifical Council for Culture. Accessed 15 June 2018. <http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/magistero/papa/JohnPaulII/fondazione.html>.

tura estis — ‘you are God’s husbandry’ (1 Corinthians 3:9)”⁷⁸ Adopted faith in the God of Jesus Christ gives men the right to become children of God (John 1:12); 2) the necessity to “rethink” the faith, that is basing it on reason and not only on feelings and subjective experiences; to meditate on the truths of faith and their reference to individual life; 3) the need to live by faith, that is, to grow in the inner knowledge and love of Christ and live in his image (Galatians 2:20), loving God above all and loving brothers following the example of Christ. Pointing to the culture-forming relationship between the Gospel and man, John Paul II encouraged the evangelizers to shape “what is called living culture, that is, the whole of the principles and values which make up the ethos of a people.”⁷⁹ Consistency of these principles and values in one’s attitude can be achieved through faith in Jesus Christ, with which a Catholic enters into a personal relationship and because of Him he is guided by the mentioned *ethos*. According to John Paul II, “there is [...] a Christian concept of culture, because faith in Christ is not a pure ordinary value among other values that are in the area of the interests of different cultures; for the Christian it is the final judgment to which all these values are subject, with full respect for their own content.”⁸⁰ Therefore, for example, the values of technology derived from exact sciences should be harmonized with the values of conscience, for which the light is faith in Christ, so that man can use the technical discovery in a responsible way, serving his real good and the common good. John Paul II says that “the first and basic cultural dimension is the spiritually mature man himself, that is, a man fully brought up, capable of raising himself and others”. Such a man, that he could keep his Christian identity in a secularized world, should be guided by “sound morality.”⁸¹

Today, the real threat to human beings is, for example, that living in a world created by technological development and using its achievements, he can close within the technocratic cultural horizon in which, although he may even function well, he will never find any sense other than the one made by people.⁸² The technocratic cultural horizon narrows the way of realization of man, dehumanizes him and

⁷⁸ JOHN PAUL II, “*W dziele kultury Bóg zawarł przymierze z człowiekiem*. Przemówienie do przedstawicieli świata kultury. Rio de Janeiro, 1 lipca 1980 [*God has made a covenant with man in the work of culture*. Speech to representatives of the world of culture. Rio de Janeiro, 1 July 1980],” in IDEM, *Wiara i kultura*, 72.

⁷⁹ JOHN PAUL II. “Foundation Letter of the Pontifical Council for Culture.”

⁸⁰ JOHN PAUL II, *Istnieje — trzeba to stwierdzić bez lęku — chrześcijańska koncepcja kultury*, *Audiencja generalna*, Rzym, 8 lutego 1984 [*There is — it must be said without fear — the Christian concept of culture*. General Audience, Rome, February 8, 1984],” in IDEM, *Wiara i kultura*, 235.

⁸¹ JOHN PAUL II, “*W dziele kultury Bóg zawarł przymierze z człowiekiem*. Przemówienie [*God has made a covenant with man in the work of culture*. Speech], 71–2.

⁸² BENEDICT XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 70.

reduces him to the immanent dimension. Industrial products are not only good for a man, making his life easier when it comes to controlling nature, but also dangerous, destructive if he loses his sense of human dignity. Apart from material and utility goods produced by technology, man needs to know the truth, the experience of good and beauty and reference to God, that he may become more fully human and realize himself in his final destiny. He often manifests these desires in various ways, not always expressing them directly and positively towards others. That is why, apart from material and technical culture, a culture based on spiritual values (*cultura animi*) and organized education and religious formation are needed to help a man show the spiritual and religious dimension of his life and introduce him into it. John Paul II repeatedly emphasized the priority of spiritual values in all areas of culture and explained that without them “man is not true to himself because [...] he denies or neglects his essential dependence on the source of his existence, on his Creator.”⁸³ He also urged that Christians should rediscover *the newness of the faith and its power to judge* a prevalent and all-intrusive culture and discern the path of the Gospel truth and walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:8).⁸⁴

This is why an evangelization is needed based on the understanding of contemporary culture in its characteristic elements and in its expectations and needs. It should not be a doctrinal, abstract message of the content of faith. In a speech to members of the Pontifical Council for Culture, John Paul II said: „In order to effectively evangelize, a firm stance of exchange and understanding must be taken to be able to feel empathy with the cultural identity of peoples, ethnic groups and various sectors of modern society [...] So evangelization assumes simultaneous penetration into specific cultural values [...]”⁸⁵ According to some theologians, such evangelisation from those responsible for it—and these are not only priests and religious, but also lay faithful—requires: a) learning the attitude of accepting others as they are and to critically distinguish between the values accordingly to which they live; b) “the capacity to perceive the spiritual expectations and human aspirations of the new cultures” and (c) “the aptitude for cultural analysis.”⁸⁶

⁸³ JOHN PAUL II, “*W pracy naukowej, w badaniach służycie człowiekowi*. Homilia wygłoszona podczas Mszy św. dla studentów i intelektualistów. Ibadan, 15 lutego 1982 [*In scientific work, in research, you serve man*. Homily given during the Mass for students and intellectuals. Ibadan, February 15, 1982],” in IDEM, *Wiara i kultura*, p. 116.

⁸⁴ JOHN PAUL II, *Veritatis Splendor*, 88.

⁸⁵ JOHN PAUL II, “*Kościół—twórcą kultury w stosunkach z dzisiejszym światem*.”

Przemówienie do członków Papieskiej Rady Kultury, Rzym, 18 stycznia 1983 [*Church—the creator of culture in relations with today’s world*. Address to members of the Pontifical Council for Culture, Rome, 18 January 1983],” in: IDEM, *Wiara i kultura*, 187.

⁸⁶ INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION. *Faith and Inculturation* (1988). The Holy See. The Romana Curia. International Theological Commission. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_1988_fede-inculturazione_en.html.

Therefore, it assumes not only knowledge of the truths of the faith and their meaning for human life, but also empathy for the situation of brothers and sisters, their world of values and moral choices, decisions and types of spirituality, which can be based on Christian values or can be reduced to the horizontal dimension, or even trapped in what is sensual. The new evangelization conducted by Christians towards baptized brothers and sisters, who have become religiously indifferent and have no practical reference to God, assumes the ability to dialogue on the level of cultural values and their relationship with faith, in the light of which evangelized helpers can make a “final assessment” of these values and (re)choose Christ. Such a dialogue with non-believers or with followers of other religions, it requires being an authentic member of the Christian community of faith and a witness of Jesus Christ. Such an assessment of accepted values and the (re)choice of Christ under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit can be described as a “cultural and spiritual conversion.”⁸⁷ John Paul II says that “only a faith that is the source of radical spiritual decisions can have an effect on an era’s culture. [...] [Such] faith [...] gives cultures a new dimension, that of hope in God’s kingdom.”⁸⁸

The living faith of Christians needs prayer and rooting in the liturgy of the Church, especially in the Eucharist. “In order that the mystery of Christ be “made known to all the nations... to bring about the obedience of faith,’ (Romans 16:26) it must be proclaimed, celebrated, and lived in all cultures in such a way that they themselves are not abolished by it, but redeemed and fulfilled (*Gaudium et Spes*, 53): It is with and through their own human culture, assumed and transfigured by Christ, that the multitude of God’s children has access to the Father, in order to glorify him in the one Spirit. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1204).

The fact that culture is subjected to the influence of faith, is sanctified by it and takes its evangelical perspective, does not mean that it is something only passive to it, as the “object of redemption and exaltation.” It is called to actively mediate, and the man who embodies it, in all his way of existence and being, is called to cooperate with God⁸⁹ in the salvation of himself and others and in the renewal of the entire temporal order, which is accomplished by penetrating and perfecting the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 5).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ JOHN PAUL II. “Address of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council of Culture, Friday, 14 March 1997.” The Holy See. John Paul II. Speeches. Accessed 15 June 2018. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1997/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_1997_0314_plenaria-cultura.html.

⁸⁹ JOHN PAUL II, “*Kultura służy wyniesieniu człowieka i rozwojowi współpracy między narodami*. Przemówienie do intelektualistów, Coimbra, 15 maja 1982 [*Culture serves the elevation of man and the development of cooperation between nations*. Speech to intellectuals, Coimbra, May 15, 1982],” in: IDEM, *Wiara i kultura*, 142.

Interesting methodical suggestions regarding evangelization taking into account the spiritual expectations and aspirations and values that contemporary man lives, are included in the *Letter of French Bishops to Catholics in France* showing a “simple and decisive” way of proposing faith to contemporary man, emphasizing its evangelical novelty and confirming its value with a testimony of his conversion. This testimony must be prepared by the evangelizers.⁹⁰ Proposing the Gospel does not mean in this case any cultural or social counterproposal, but bringing into the social sphere, the power of the Spirit that encourages others to return to God.⁹¹

*

On the basis of the historical outline of mutual relations between faith and spirituality and culture, one can notice the progressive development of the concept of culture and the fact that it was shaped to a significant extent by Christian faith and spirituality. Derived from the rational and social nature of man, culture has reached its peak in philosophical thought, education and the concept of upbringing of ancient Greece and Rome. From the beginning, this antiquity culture was valuable for Christianity, which, taking many spiritual values from Judaism, meeting and confronting classical Greek and Roman cultures and assimilating values from barbarian peoples that entered the civilized world in the Middle Ages, led to a new quality of cultural reality, which has become so-called Western culture. Christianity is recognized as its roots, because its axiological foundations were Christian. Since Christ, through His incarnation, became a participant in a concrete human culture, and, through His redemption, tore down the dividing wall between the people of the covenant and the pagans and “made the two one” (Ephesians 2: 13-14), barriers dividing various cultures have fallen, and the “promise of salvation in Christ has gained [...] a universal dimension,” [...] it has been granted to all nations as a heritage from which everyone can freely draw; a new “cultural reality” was created.⁹² The Good News of salvation, lived with faith, has become culture-forming, capable of permeating the value of any culture depending on how much the person immersed in it surrenders and accepts the deeper meaning and supernatural perspective given to his culture by faith.

⁹⁰ LES ÉVÊQUES DE FRANCE. *Proposer la foi dans la Société actuelle*, 3. *Lettre aux catholiques de France*, ed. Claude Dagens (Paris: Les Éditions du CERF, 2003). The content of this Letter consists of three issues: 1) to understand our situation of Catholics in the current society; 2) to turn to the heart of the mystery of faith; 3) to create a Church that proposes faith.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁹² JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et Ratio*, 70.

This was the culture especially in the Middle Ages, when the inhabitants of Gaul, knowing the heritage of Roman culture, became intermediaries in passing it on to the Germanic and Celtic peoples.⁹³ The origins of this culture date back to the Carolingian era and are related to religious reforms carried out by Charlemagne and the invaluable contribution of Benedictine monks. The flourishing of the culture took place in the 12th century, when scholasticism began, first universities were established, emotional piety appeared, focused on the humanity of Christ, and the ethics and spirituality of the knights flourished.

Another form of merging of culture and faith existed in later epochs. In the Renaissance, by turning to antiquity, especially to Plato, and placing the man and his affairs at the center of the religious culture, it was often expressed in religious individualism (Ockham, Luther, and Calvin). In France, where religious revival took place only a hundred years after the Reformation due to religious wars, the method of shaping religious culture was, among others, education of the clergy and religious commitment of the great apostles of lay people. As it was shown, one example is St. Francis de Sales, a man of great culture, introducing a new type of piety among the laity, helpful in integrating their faith with everyday life. Today, we can say that, going beyond the religious conception of piety and proposing secular piety adapted to their state, and thus taking into account all secular matters (marital life, family life, widowhood, work, wealth management), also the way of experiencing relationships with others, friendship, etc.), he used the inculturation of the Gospel, without mentioning it. The same should be said about St. Vincent de Paul, thanks to whom the central value of Christianity, which is an expression of active love of a neighbor in need, poverty—charity, has become a social value, shaping a deeper sensitivity to others. This value, thanks to religious congregations, was passed on to other generations and societies of Europe and the world.

The gradual discrepancy between culture and faith and spirituality which has taken place starting from the Enlightenment, continues to this day. Philosophy, surrendering to rationalism, has deviated from Revelation and not only ceased to be universal wisdom, but turned against faith, recognizing it as an alienating factor. In these times it has often been subordinated only to pragmatic and utilitarian purposes. Natural research, focusing only on empirical experience and devoid of references to metaphysics and personal human dimension, has limited the horizon of a man who only in the last decades has become more aware of the harmful effects of rationalism and has often inclined to skepticism and agnosticism. This cultural background is still not indifferent to Christian spirituality, which should

⁹³ Teresa BORAWSKA and Karol GÓRSKI, *Umysłowość średniowiecza* [Medieval mentality] (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1993), 40

never be considered in isolation from culture and its philosophical, humanistic and scientific-technical conditions.

Considering the situation of Christian culture in a secularized world, Franc Rodé concludes that “our times are similar to the era of late antiquity. This is indicated by the collapse of great ideologies, growing dissatisfaction caused by existential materialism, moral confusion and a sense of uncertainty about the future of our planet. This raises the search for a humanity leaning towards gnosticism, esoterism and emotionality of the sacred character as a reaction to the modern myths of reason, knowledge and progress. In essence, it is about searching for meaning, reconciliation with oneself, overcoming the inner fragmentation, having a new possibility of dialogue with oneself and with others, and perhaps with God.”⁹⁴

For a Christian who feels Christ’s commitment to become an evangelical leaven in various areas of culture, the philosophical and sociological understanding of the state of culture is only an introduction to his mission, bringing faith and leading others to the paschal mystery of Christ, given that for man and for culture there is no other way to salvation but in Christ and through Christ.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BANASZAK, Marian. *Historia Kościoła katolickiego*, vol. III: *Czasy nowożytne 1758-1914*, Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1991.
- BARTNIK, Czesław Stanisław. *Teologia kultury*. Dzieła Zebrane, 6, Lublin: STANDRUK, 1999.
- BENEDICT XVI. Encyclicals. *Caritas in Veritate*. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html.
- BENEDICT XVI. “Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Benedict XVI to France on the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lourdes (September 12-15, 2008), Meeting with Representatives from the World of Culture, Address Of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Collège des Bernardins, Paris, Friday, 12 September 2008.” The Holy See. Benedict XVI. Speeches. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2008/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080912_parigi-cultura.html.
- BORAWSKA, Teresa, and Karol GÓRSKI. *Umysłowość średniowiecza*. Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1993.
- BREMOND, Henri. *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieuse en France*. Vol. I: *L’humanisme dévot 1580-1660*. Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1929.
- CARRIER, Herve, *Gospel Message and Human Cultures: From Leo XIII to John Paul II*. Translated by John Drury. Duquesne: Duquesne University Press, 1989

⁹⁴ Franc RODÉ, “La cultura cristiana in un mondo secolarizzato,” in *Culture, incroyance et foi. Nouveau dialogue*, études reunies par Bernard Ardura et Jean-Dominique Durand en hommage au Cardinal Paul Poupard (Roma: Edizioni Studium, 2004), 492.

- CARRIER, Herve. *Évangélisation et développement des cultures*. Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1990.
- DIDIER, Julia. *Słownik filozofii*. Translated by Krzysztof Jarosz. Kraków: Książnica, 1992.
- DOLLOT, Louis. *Culture individuelle et culture de masse*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974.
- DONMDEYNE, A. "Promozione e progresso della cultura." In *La Chiesa nel mondo contemporaneo. Commento alla costituzione pastorale "Gaudium et spes,"* edited by Enzo Giammancheri, 193–212. Brescia: Queriniana, 1967.
- DRĄCZKOWSKI, Franciszek. *Kościół-Agape według Klemensa Aleksandryjskiego*. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1996.
- FRANCIS DE SALES. "Controverses." In *Œuvres de Saint François de Sales*. Vol. I. Annecy: J. Niérat 1892-1932.
- FRANCIS DE SALES. *Philothea, or an Introduction to the Devout Life*. Translated by John K. Ryan. New York: Image Books, 1989.
- FRANCIS DE SALES. "Lettres." In *Œuvres de Saint François de Sales*. Vol. X. Annecy: J. Niérat 1892-1932.
- FRANCIS DE SALES. *Treatise on the Love of God*. Translated by Rev. Henry Benedict Mackey. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1997.
- GADACZ, Tadeusz. *Historia filozofii XX wieku*. Nurty. Vol. II: *Neokantyzm, filozofia egzystencji, filozofia dialogu*. Kraków: ZNAK, 2009.
- GARIN, Eugenio. *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.
- GREIMAS, Algirdas Julien, and Teresa Mary KEANE. *Dictionnaire du moyen Français. La Renaissance*. Paris: Larousse, 1992.
- HEISTEIN, Józef. *Historia literatury włoskiej. Zarys*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1987.
- HILGERS-SHELL, Hannelore, and Helga PUST. "Culture und Civilisation im Französischen bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts." In *Europäische Schlüsselwörter*. Vol. III: *Kultur und Zivilisation*. München: Max Hueber Verlag, 1967.
- INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION. *Faith and Inculturation* (1988). The Holy See. The Romana Curia. Congregations. International Theological Commission. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_1988_fede-inculturatione_en.html.
- JAROSZYŃSKI, Piotr. *Nauka w kulturze*. Radom: Polskie Wydawnictwo Encyklopedyczne, 2002.
- JOHN PAUL II. "Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Bishops, Men and Women in the Consecrated Life and All the Lay Faithful on Jesus Christ Alive in His Church the Source of Hope for Europe." The Holy See. John Paul II. Apostolic Exhortations. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20030628_ecclesia-in-europa.html.
- JOHN PAUL II. "Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship between Faith and Reason." The Holy See. John Paul II, Encyclicals. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html.
- JOHN PAUL II. "Foundation Letter of the Pontifical Council for Culture (May 20, 1982)." Pontifical Council for Culture. Accessed 15 June 2018. <http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/magistero/papa/JohnPaulII/fondazione.html>.

- JOHN PAUL II. "List do przełożonego generalnego Zgromadzenia Misji." In *Kontemplacja i działanie*. (W nurcie zagadnień posoborowych, 15), edited by Bohdan Bejze, 183–7. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1983.
- JOHN PAUL II. *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of the Millennium*. New York: Rizzoli, 2005.
- JOHN PAUL II. "Address of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council of Culture, Friday, 14 March 1997." The Holy See. John Paul II. Speeches. Accessed 15 June 2018. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1997/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_1997_0314_plenaria-cultura.html.
- JOHN PAUL II. "To the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (June 2, 1980)." Interdisciplinary Encyclopedia of Religion & Science. Accessed 15 June 2018. <http://inters.org/John-Paul-II-UNESCO-Culture>.
- JOHN PAUL II. Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*. The Holy See. John Paul II. Encyclicals. Accessed 15 June 2018. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html.
- JOHN PAUL II. *Wiara i kultura. Dokumenty, przemówienia, homilie*, edited by Marian Radwan. Rome, Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL, 1988.
- JUDYCKI, Stanisław. "Locke John." In *Encyklopedia katolicka*. Vol. 10, col. 1294–97. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 2010.
- KAMIŃSKI, Stanisław. "Compe Auguste." In *Encyklopedia katolicka*. Vol. 3, col. 565–66. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1979.
- KOWALCZYK, Stanisław. *Filozofia kultury. Próba personalistycznego ujęcia problematyki*. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1996.
- KOWALSKI, Jacek. "Francja średniowieczna." In *Dzieje kultury francuskiej*, edited by Jacek Kowalski, Anna & Mirosław Loba, 19–230. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2007.
- KRAJEWSKI, Radosław. "Renan Ernest." In *Encyklopedia katolicka*. Vol. 16, col. 1440–41. Lublin: TN KUL, 2012.
- LAJEUNIE, E.-M. *La spiritualità di San Francesco di Sales*. Torino, Leumann: Editrice LDC, 1967.
- LANSON, Gustave, and Paul TUFFRAU. *Historia literatury francuskiej w zarysie*. Translated by Wiera Bieńkowska. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1965.
- LECLERCQ, Jean. *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1961.
- LES ÉVÊQUES DE FRANCE. *Proposer la foi dans la Société actuelle, 3. Lettre aux catholiques de France*, edited by Claude Dagens. Paris: Les Éditions du CERF, 2003.
- LEWEK, Antoni. *Nowa ewangelizacja w duchu Soboru Watykańskiego II*. Vol. II. Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 1995.
- LOBA, Anna, and Mirosław LOBA. "Francja nowożytna." In *Dzieje kultury francuskiej*, edited by Jacek Kowalski, Anna & Mirosław Loba, 231–366. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2007.
- LOBKOWICZ, Nicolaus. *The Time of Crisis, the Time of Change*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1967.
- LORENC, Robert J. *Życie duchowe świętego Ludwika IX w kontekście społeczno-politycznym średniowiecznej Europy*. Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne i Drukarnia, 2016.
- MARROU, Henri-Irénée. *Historia wychowania w starożytności*. Translated by Stanisław Łoś. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy 1989.
- MOREL, Georges. *Questions d'homme. L'Autre*. Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1877.

- MURPHY, Ruth. *Saint François de Sales et la civilité chrétienne*. Paris: A.G. NIZET, 1964.
- NOWAK, Stanisław. "Czyn chrześcijańskiej miłości w ujęciu św. Franciszka Salezego i św. Wincentego à Paolo." In *Kontemplacja i działanie*. (W nurcie zagadnień posoborowych, 15), edited by Bohdan Bejze, 216–30. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1983.
- NOWAK, Stanisław. *Źródła duchowości wincentyńskiej*. In *Kontemplacja i działanie*. (W nurcie zagadnień posoborowych, 15), edited by Bohdan Bejze, 202–15. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1983.
- PIERRARD, Pierre. *Historia Kościoła Katolickiego*. Translated by Tadeusz Szafranski. Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1984.
- POURRAT, Pierre. *La spiritualité chrétienne*. Vol. III: *Les temps modernes*. Paris: Gabalda, 1927.
- RODÉ, Franc. "La cultura cristiana in un mondo secolarizzato." In *Culture, incroyance et foi. Nouveau dialogue*. Études reunies par Bernard Ardura et Jean-Dominique Durand en hommage au Cardinal Paul Poupard, 483–500. Roma: Edizioni Studium, 2004.
- SANECKI, Artur. "Loisy Alfred." In *Encyklopedia katolicka*. Vol. 10, col. 1328–9. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 2010. 1328-1329.
- Słownik łacińsko-polski*. Vol. I, edited by Marian Plezia. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1978.
- TATARKIEWICZ, Władysław. *Historia filozofii*. Vol. II: *Filozofia nowożytna do roku 1830*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1978.
- TYLOR, Edward Burnett, *Primitive Culture: Researches Into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*. Vol. I. London: John Murray, 1871.
- VINCENT DE PAUL. *Correspondence, conferences, documents*. Vol. X, edited by Pierre Coste. New York: New City Press, 2006.

Translated by Karolina Jurak



The preparation of the English version of *Roczniki Teologiczne (Annals of Theology)* issue 5 and its publication in electronic databases was financed under contract no. 753/P-DUN/2017 from the resources of the Minister of Science and Higher Education for the popularization of science.