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The crisis of values in present-day society and public life

Speaking of the crisis of values in society and public life, I would like to define the causes of such a state of affairs, which may be divided into such external and internal factors as:

1) revolutionary – vehement historical, economical or political events; such incidents need not occur separately, they may be made up of several factors at once;

2) evolutionary changes occurring in the domain of culture and religion in given societies. The process of change is spread out in time.

In looking for the causes of the decline of values, one may risk the opinion that this state of affairs was influenced by both factors: the revolutionary and evolutionary one; however, I would attribute a greater significance to evolutionary changes. For the cause of these changes, one should look in the 17th century and not in the 20th. The 17th and 18th centuries were the time when ideas of the Enlightenment among others on the concepts of rationalism, empiricism, atheism, deism, utilitarianism, gave the human being a conviction that he is the creator of the world and its ruler. Until the time of the Enlightenment, the world was seen as an ordered and purposeful project of God. The new ideas which appeared at the time of the Enlightenment, influenced the later development of events in France. These ideas lead to the

revolution the effect of which was the change of the political system of France and the destruction of the hitherto existing social order.

> The epoch of the Enlightenment destroyed human ties, giving birth to a universal individualism, whilst rejecting at the same time the idea of a person in the sense given to it by western culture, i.e. an exceptional being capable of autonomy, but rooted in and dependent of its relations with a group.[1]

In the 20th century, the revolutionary factor which caused the collapse of values, were the 1st and 2nd World Wars and the new geopolitical partition. The particular social order disintegrated

> all that was sacred and secular, the Church and the state, king and parliament, the rich and the poor. In such a situation, criteria thanks to which until now one could always obtain the same answer to the question, how is one to act – at present, give way to new competitive criteria which enable the furnishing of new answers.[2]

A new type of reasoning appears which aims at the redefinition of criteria of behaviour. Criteria which hitherto designated the norms of social behaviour disintegrated, new questions in the domain of ethics morality and philosophy and answers to these emerge. Ideologies appear which are to guarantee people prosperity (marxism, communism, economic and cultural liberalism). Parallel to social, political, economic changes processes of intellectual criticism of religious convictions emerge, a gradual rejection in society of confessed religions takes place. The traditional social hierarchy is disrupted, which was hitherto the "guardian" of objective moral values. Societies touched by the effects of world wars, economic crisis and the threat of a new world war faced the challenge of building a new political, social and moral order independent of Christianity. On the one hand, violent geopolitical changes and on the other, an evolutionary process of change of social, cultural, religious and moral values affect the individual, the family and local societies, which is transposed onto public life.

Western European culture was founded on rationalism, it overcame irrational "superstitions", and despite this affected the decomposition of values. Europe owes its rationalism and ethics to Greek thought based on the enuntiations of, among others, Socrates, Aristotle and on the views of me-diaeval thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas. One of the many personalities of

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[1]   Ch. Delsol, *Kamienie węgielne. Na czym nam zależy?*, transl. and afterword M. Kowalska, Kraków 2018, p. 102.

[2]   A. MacIntyre, *Krótka historia etyki: historia filozofii moralności od czasów Homera do XX wieku*, transl. A. Chmielewski, Warszawa 1995, p. 196.

the Greek world,[3] which influence the form of Western culture, was Socrates. For him, the soul constitutes the human being, it is "our thinking and acting consciousness, our mind and the seat of our mental activity and moral action". The soul is a "conscious self, an intellectual and moral personality".[4] In using the concept of man which he formed, Socrates showed that our moral action is closely linked to knowledge and learning, or to virtue which fully realizes this consciousness and rationality. Morality, the proper behaviour of the human being was reduced by Socrates to knowledge – ethical intellectualism. By focusing on the human being, moral problems, emphasizing the value of the intellect and learning Socrates initiated the development of ethics, which came about in the classical and Hellenistic periods. For Aristotle, the highest good is the subject of the master science. This science is politics, or science regarding the state, because "it prescribes what subjects are to be taught in states, which of these the different of the population are to learn, and up to what point".[5] The philosopher considers the situation in which the same is the highest good both for the individual as for the state, which choice should therefore be made? According to Aristotle, one should choose the good of the state, because it is something greater and more perfect. In this choice, we experience the divine dimension, as the realization of this aim is of service to the nation and the state. The study of the state is concerned with moral beauty and justice. These concepts did not derive from an agreement, but issue from the nature of things.

Aristotle divided virtues into dianoetic (intellectual) and ethical virtues, which are not naturally inborn in human beings, as of nature there are only people capable of acquiring them, who develop them in themselves due to habit. According to Aristotle, obstacles in developing virtues in the human being are excess and shortage, because they cause people to be bad. By being virtuous we keep a moderation between pleasures and displeasures, we are able to behave properly in such situations. "It is a difficult thing to achieve a high ethical level; as it is difficult to hit the right measure in everything (…) this is why, that which is good is rare, commendable and morally beautiful".[6]

The human being acquires virtue by the habit of doing deeds which are ethically good, something which is related to an adequate process of upbringing. The factor of habit is essential as far as Aristotle sees, because by this the state forms civic virtues. The Stagirite distinguishes three kinds of human goods: external, spiritual and bodily ones. The spiritual ones are the highest and to

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[3]   We may already find ethical considerations in Heraclitus and Democritus.
[4]   G. Reale, *Historia filozofii starożytnej*, vol. I, transl. E.I. Zieliński, Lublin 2000, pp. 316–317.
[5]   Ibid., p. 5 (1094 b).
[6]   Ibid., p. 69.

these belong the behaviour and activity of the human being in accordance with reason. A life given over to pleasures is, according to Aristotle, one which likens human beings to slaves and is a life appropriate for cattle.[7]

The continuator of the Socratic current among Christian thinkers is, among others, St. Augustine who taught after Socrates the principle: *noscete ipsum* (know thyself), which concerns knowing one's own soul. Ethical knowledge is for Augustine a particular case of divine illumination. Moral truths are eternal, unchanging, necessary and are perceived in one's own mind and despite that, are common to all people. The moral principles which we find in ourselves constitute natural law and the consciousness of this law is conscience. A model of order which should reign in the human being, was placed earlier by God in nature. A knowledge of virtues and moral principles does not suffice to achieve a moral life, because apart from the intellect, the human being possesses a will, and when the will does not submit to moral truths, there is no morality. Moral defects appear when the will rejects submission to principles of the moral order. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the moral development of the human individual consists in the development of virtues in oneself. In this formulation, each individual consciously chooses virtues or defects and this is a result of personal dispositions, as well as upbringing and auto-discipline. For Thomas Aquinas, apart from the moral virtues i.e.: justice, temperance, fortitude, an exceptionally important intellectual virtue is that of prudence. "It is the proficiency of rightly solving particular moral problems, which is gained gradually. In reality each definite particular problem constitutes a completely separate case, different from others, because particular circumstances never repeat themselves".[8]

The mediaeval period perpetuated in the common awareness a moral and intellectual tradition deriving from ancient times enriching it with Christian thought, which was essentially theocratic thought. Life in accordance with the Church's doctrine, was to bring forth as its fruit eternal happiness, which consisted in being with God and seeing Him face to face. The human being of those times tried to bear in mind the fact that s/he is here on earth for a short time and that the true life as an immortal being awaits him/her after death in a better world, although s/he has to merit such a state. Living in a world filled with thought focused on God, the human being was sensitive to the aspect of his/her spiritual life. S/he felt free and equal as God's child despite various

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[7]   Cf. Arystoteles, *Etyka Nikomachejska*, transl. D. Gromska, Kraków 1956, p. 10 (5 1095 b 19).
[8]   É. Gilson, *Historia filozofii chrześcijańskiej w wiekach średnich*, transl. S. Zalewski, Warszawa 1966, p. 373.

social dependencies. In Christianity equality was ontologically written down in the Book of Genesis in the narration of the creation of man, although it set up the differentiation of the sexes, which generated complementariness. Freedom was founded upon the personal dignity of each human being as God's creation. People of those times acted bearing in mind the criterion whether they would merit gaining eternal life, a better world; their eyes were fixed on transcendence – God, which gave hope for a better life after death. Hope was a force which impelled progress and set it in a proper direction.

Such a way of thinking is changed, a revaluation of values follows: God is "dethroned" and His place is timidly but gradually taken over by man and his faith in reason and in the unlimited potentiality of science. A revolution in the way of thinking occurs together with the Enlightenment which rejected holism, gave birth to a universal individualism whilst, at the same time, discarding the idea of the person in the meaning given to it by Judeo-Christian thought. Enlightenment ideas lead with time to the uprooting of man, tearing him from family, group ties, which enabled him to identify himself and for self-determination. Emancipation in the Enlightenment took on the form of liberation from existing, fossilized structures. It wished for a better world not in transcendence, but here on earth, it aimed at absolute equality. At present, this ideal is realized by the gender philosophy which wants to remove the last specimen of inequality which is the biological difference of the sexes.

> In accordance with the new concepts, reason is not able to provide any true understanding of human aims – the domination of reason over the passions has been questioned and then done away with. Reason begins to be treated purely in a calculative manner. It is no longer able to comprehend the essence of things, to indicate the direction. Catholic and Protestant theology have been demolished and in science, the Aristotelian paradigm is rejected.[9]

The moral behaviour which until now was founded on reason, underwent change. Until the time of the Enlightenment, intellectual learning concentrated on grasping the actual state of matters (the Socratic heritage), whereas practical action comprised the objective norms of behaviour. Now, a change of orientation occurs, it focuses on definite, practical action, meaning that it grasps that which should be done in a given situation, in order for it to be effective both in the professional, moral and economic order of life for the individual. The profit which may be gained by the individual becomes its primary purpose.

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[9]   P. Machura, "O *Dziedzictwie cnoty* Alasdaira MacIntyre'a", in: *Folia Philosophica* 20, 2002, p. 79.

The next revolutionary factor is the economic revolution which gives birth to the class of the owners of the means of production – the capitalists and the proletariat. Marxist thought fights for an equal division of means of production and the overthrowing of the propertied class. In this period grave social disproportions appear: society is divided into the rich and the poor. The 20th century brings about subsequent radical social changes, among others, the October Revolution which promotes a new type of man: the *homo sovieticus* and a new type of morality. World wars destroy the geopolitical and social orders hitherto in force. Man needs once again to find his place in the existing social and political reality. A greater social consciousness is formed by the means of, among others, the media, through which people know their duties and rights, which the state constitutions guarantee, as well as those of the European Union (the start of the construction of a new Europe is Robert Schuman's declaration of the 10th of May 1950,[10] and the year 1952 when the European Community of Coal and Steel came into being – an economic and political union of six European countries: Belgium, France, Holland, Luxemburg, Germany, Italy) which had an influence on further changes in the domain of values and moral norms. Societies which rapidly assimilated the changes in which they were to live after the Second World War and which concerned not only the public sphere, but also the economic one (they took advantage of the plan of Marshall), brought about an economic increase. As the years went by, a so-called prosperity emerged n these countries. After dealing with the effects of the war, Western Europe began a process of social changes. At first, changes in the domain of ethical and religious values were not perceptible, as the older generation was strongly attached to the Judeo- -Christian tradition. As time passed, when the younger generation took over, the values represented by religion were forsaken, a manifestation of this may be, among others, the sexual revolution in Western Europe. These changes led to the laicization of this part of Europe, the cause of which may be that the Catholic Church did not keep pace with the rapid social-cultural changes. It was not in a state to react immediately to that which was happening in the world and what this meant for the faithful. The life of Roman Catholics, as well as of other Christian denominations, was put to the test of laicization of social life, of the reception of the communist or atheistic ideology. The whole sphere of Christian values appeared to be some irrational superstition, the confession of which is a threat to the law and order of the state and to social

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[10]   See: *Deklaracja z 9 maja 1950 roku wygłoszona przez Roberta Schumana*, https://www.ro-bert-schuman.eu/pl/doc/questions-d-europe/qe-204-pl.pdf (access: 24.10.2019).

morality. Among others, J. Maritain and E. Mounier realized this in defending Christianity and its moral values, by devising Christian personalism which was to save mankind, showing it man's calling as understood by Christianity.

The 20th century which was to achieve changes in the world and create a new man (Lenin's man, the Aryan) brought about a loss of faith in progress. None of the concepts of the new man proved themselves, because attempts to form it were introduced using force, terror and these circumstances caused their failure. Despite this defeat, modernity brought about the rejection of inward boundaries which each natural being possesses and by which it is described.

> Modernity transfers the boundaries outward causing them to be changeable and haphazard. And thus due to a lack of boundaries a dizziness happens: unlimited freedom, unlimited equality, unlimited power and supervision, unlimited happiness etc. (…) We negate boundaries, because we mistake them for evil, although they are only linked to being.[11]

The 21st century develops a new vision of man who will live without violence, wars, existential questions, transcendence and will become immortal. Man created by post-modernity will be able to attain to all this, perhaps not at the moment, but soon. At present, immortality consists in removing the limits of death, doctors will prolong life as far as possible and by doing so will produce an deceptive feeling of human immortality. The postmodern epoch has transformed the criteria of good and evil. Good is solely progress, whereas evil is the attachment to one's roots and search for boundaries which would define the human being, nation, society, state. Postmodernism has accepted other tactics in order to continue the work began in the previous century. These are: derision, mockery, ridicule, and constitute weapons analogical to violence used previously, although they are much more effective. Their effectiveness consists in being unnoticed, acting painlessly and clandestinely. They become a powerful weapon against rootedness, religion, culture, because they lead to a removal of the meaning of words, to making them invalid. Words appear, but these are only a conglomeration of characters. The changing of the meaning of words in colloquial language "give birth to metamorphoses of social morality and mentality".[12] The French thinker, Chantal Delsol, considers that behind derision lies hidden an ideology which evades a univocal declaration regarding any values at all, because it wants to destroy family and social ties, to

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[11]   Ch. Delsol, *Nienawiść do świata. Totalitaryzmy i ponowoczesność*, transl. M. Chojnacki, Warszawa 2017, pp. 18–19.

[12]   Ibid., p. 72.

overthrow the patriarchal model of the family. This ideology uses relativism, all differences disappear, nothing is important, lack of authority is upheld.

> This hidden ideology is a continuation and a twin sister of the communist ideology. It adopts two principal, fundamental aspects: equality and the transformation of human nature. In this sense, in the same way as communism, this ideology is a degeneration of Christianity. It is a degenerate form of the equality, preached by St. Paul; it is a perverse form of awaiting the coming of the new man.[13]

This ideology achieves the destruction of communities by a rebellion against the moral vision in force. Thus European societies are divided, wrecked, deprived of a moral consensus, full of divergence, among others, as regards family life. "How can a society be divided so much that its members have completely divergent moral convictions? This happens in multicultural societies in which different religions or cultures meet and are confronted with each other".[14] In her observations, Delsol notices that societies of the West evolve all the time and that together with this constant change the concept of morality develops which in many cases leads to a regress, for the reason that the identity and cultural standards from which this morality stems, are questioned. Every culture is determined by all that is sacred, the sacrum which cannot be ridiculed. Too many things which constituted a point of reference were profaned in the 20th century, traditional values were desecrated, i.e. work, family, fatherland.

> As everywhere structured founded on authority are questioned, because human ties are destroyed in order to put an end to hierarchies and inequality, we stand before the perspective not so much of a different world of culture, but of a society without a world.[15]

According to Delsol we are no longer capable of defending "our world", the only thing left for us is to defend biological life. The place of classical culture (the civilization of the West) has been taken by a technical civilization. We no longer speak of a *homo sapiens* or *homo faber*, but a new type of man appears: the *homo technologicus* who by the rush to gain new technological products affirms his presence ever more strongly in a world founded on possession and not being.[16] The more I possess, the more I am, being is a marginal way of being, it is depreciated as something not very essential. In the world only that counts what a given individual possesses, spiritual values are second-rate. In

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13   Ibid., p. 85.
14   Ibid., p. 88.
15   Ibid., p. 94.
16   G. Marcel writes on the subject of "being" and "possessing" in his book *Being and Having*.

this way, the *homo technologicus* takes the place of God and creates the world and the reality around it, he is the causative power. The primary aim which man is to achieve is professional success which becomes the major value by which he is at present evaluated. In accomplishing the demands of the employer, who constantly strives for the raising of productivity, the employee spends more and more time at work. Quite often, he takes work home and then the father or mother become inaccessible for their children. This causes a loosening of family ties and sometimes even destroys them, leading to the disintegration of the family. The effect of professional success at all costs is a lack of time for the children for which more sensitive parents recompense by giving presents or hiring guardians who would take their place. Multi-generation families are a thing of the past, families where the role of the grandparents was essential, as on the one hand they looked after their grandchildren, on the other they were an example for them and guardians of tradition. Such a structure of the family allowed for the building of stronger family, social ties and for particularity. At present, parents concentrate on guaranteeing their family material wellbeing and on the raising of their social status, in other words on gathering goods, forgetting about spiritual ones which cannot be bought for money. Of secondary importance is the matter of gaining eternal happiness or honouring the principle: one should do good and avoid evil. In today's world one man is a threat to the other, he does not see a fellow brother in the other, but a dangerous competitor who may be an obstacle in the realization of such an aim as e.g. better wages or promotion at work. The upbringing of the human individual on new values worked out by the technical civilization (on the so-called cult of success, in the conviction that the human mind has unlimited possibilities) leads gradually to the dehumanization of public life, because individuals may be replaced by other ones when they only fulfill certain functions and not social roles. Excess and shortage, which for Aristotle were the cause of moral evil, characterize post-modern societies. They also appeared in various forms of particularism in the 20th century, which the 21st century contests. Modernity and post-modernity sees in particularism the source of inequality and inward tyranny not perceiving in this the normal group mechanisms. Post-modernity endeavours to make everyone a part of that which is universal, as individuals without particular structures. Adherence to a group demands identity and a separate existence. The rejection of the existence of groups, due to which individuals described themselves and built their identity has two destructive consequences. The first is the isolation of the individual, the second is the impoverishment of singularity itself. The problem

of our times is a citizen produced in this way who is only the beneficiary of the state and not a creative and independent individual directing the state politics and having an influence on the form of society. A society of beneficiaries soon gives way to the elite who ridicules their convictions. No one wants to be accused of harbouring backward ideas which become the subject of derision, but rather to be in line with the rest of society. Life in such a community frees individuals from decision making, from thinking about what is good and what is evil, from making moral choices. In order to avoid ostracism, individuals accept conformism, submit to the majority although they fought against such submission. They accept the principle that what the law allows is also moral. As Delsol would say, we have lost the morality of Antigone, we are unable to oppose an unfitting legislation and to follow the voice of our heart, conscience.

The communities of Western Europe struggling with their cultural identity, experience a crisis of migration brought about by the crowds of refugees and immigrants and the ineffectiveness of the European Union in solving this problem. These are new situations in the face of which European communities stand completely unprepared. Nietzsche would say that Europe has killed God, but is afraid to admit this pretending that God still lives. For what would happen if it all of a sudden turned out that He is not, and that there is no guardian of morality? Is Europe ready to reject the old values and are people prepared for what is new, to become super-human beings, to create new norms and values? Will they, having been terrified by the emptiness, the lack of values, because God has died, not adopt the values of other cultures in order to become cultural slaves and forget metaphysical speculations?

The crisis of values, which we observe in the smallest social cells, is transferred onto public life, as nobody else creates it except particular individuals. One may put forward the hypothesis that the appearance of this crisis of values is connected to the abandoning of metaphysical speculation by present day Europe. Barbara Skarga speaks of this in a conversation with Paweł Hertz and Krzysztof Zanussi on the subject: "European Culture, a time of change or its decline?"

> From biblical times, from the time of Parmenides, there is something in European culture that we may call a movement towards the infinity. It has taken on very different forms over the ages, but at heart, the European is a metaphysician. And this in itself is enough to create certain values, certain *imponderabilia* [unthinkables] which are dear to the European despite criticism, even the contemporary kind, that of post-modernism, which, if one obviously recognizes it, is not in the least an incarnation of the devil.[17]

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17   B. Skarga, "Kultura europejska: czas przemian czy czas schyłku?", in: *Więź* 1995, no 11, p. 19.

Deprived of a transcendental dimension, the world has been reduced to an economic one, in which money rules. By rejecting the whole spiritual and metaphysical sphere man loses his identity and humanity. The reflections on the morality of the above mentioned philosophers were closely connected with metaphysical and religious considerations, and so over many ages constituted the pillars on which one could build modern ethics. The Scottish philosopher, Alasdair MacIntyre perceives the changes in the moral system in the fact that until our times, a fragmentary dictionary of ancient terms of ethics has survived detached from any social context in which they functioned, and they only make sense in a given social context, otherwise they are without meaning. They became abstract notions devoid of meaning for most people, ones which need to be given a new meaning.

> Some philosophers even wrote that if moral concepts were to belong to the class of beyond time and unchangeable concepts, clearly described and defined, of necessity having the same characteristics in their whole history, as though there existed a certain part of language which needs to be submitted to philosophical studies and which merits to be called the only correct language of morality (stressing the fact that only one such language may exist).[18]

For MacIntyre, moral concepts undergo change together with social changes, they are embodied in forms of social life and are, as he says, a part of these forms. "One of the most important ways of distinguishing a certain form of social life from other forms is the identification of differences between moral concepts which they are made up of".[19]

Paradoxically, it is the conscience, as the factor which directs our action, which may overcome the crisis of norms and moral values.

> However, the conscience may be defective, (…) may improperly recognize (assess) the worth of a given act. A person with such a "insuperably faulty" conscience is something internally broken: it uses reason irrationally, it behaves out of accord with its own nature. This is one of the paradoxical characteristic features of human existence. There is therefore a need and duty to adequately improve our intellect, to assure the proper upbringing and control of our conscience. We need here instruction and competence and the cooperation of others.[20]

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[18]   A. MacIntyre, *Krótka historia etyki*, op. cit., p. 29–30.
[19]   Ibid., p. 30.
[20]   A.B. Stępień, *Wstęp do filozofii*, Lublin 1995, p. 242.

I contend that without a proper forming of the human conscience, the *daimonion* – to use Socrates' term[21] – the voice of God in us – the human being may bring about an annihilation of those values which we have from Judeo--Christian tradition and from ourselves as persons. As the voice of God within us, the conscience demands the recognition of God and paying attention to what God tells us about man, if the values on which we wish to build the world are to be constructive and not destructive for humanity. We are not able to restore the holism of bygone times, but we must work out new solutions which would enable us to preserve the Judeo-Christian tradition, transcendence and the dignity of the person, with the differences which define us and describe us as Europeans, whether this be the French, English, Poles, Germans etc.

It was the cardinal and saint, John Henry Newman,[22] convinced of the great worth of the conscience, who said: "If I were to raise a toast to religion (although I do not think this a good idea), I would give it to the pope, but – if you permit me – first of all to conscience and then to the pope".[23] Following the voice of his conscience, Newman asked to be received into the Roman Catholic Church, being until now a member of the clergy of the Anglican Church.

In order to put an end to the growing crisis of values, Europeans should return to their roots which spring up from Greek philosophical thought, which is distinguished by metaphysical speculation and study, as well as from Christian philosophy. Europe previously knew of this and it allowed her to create a spirit of unity in order to exist and act as one body in times of menace. Today, we seem to forget the source of values and models of behaviour, we are simply ashamed of our cultural heritage. This seems to have been caused by the process of "dephilosophizing" – as B. Skarga calls this – of European culture, responsible for such a state are philosophers themselves, starting with Hume and Kant.

The most important philosophical questions concerning God, the soul and the world lead to faulty conclusions therefore it is up to the philosophers to take in hand that which in man's reach – the phenomenal world.

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[21]   Socrates' *daimonion* cannot be taken as the same as conscience, because the conscience reacts after doing a moral act whereas the divine voice, as Socrates teaches, is something present before producing an act, a factor warning the philosopher not to act in such a way.

[22]   Cardinal J.H. Newman was canonized on the 13th of October 2019.

[23]   Quotation after J. Kłos, *Pewność wobec niepewności. Szkic o filozofii wiary Johna H. Newmana*, Lublin 2003, p. 99.

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Summary
The crisis of values in present-day society and public life

The 21st century is an age of post-modernism and, as Chantal Delsol maintains, it is a descendant of the French Enlightenment and its continuator together with the change in attitude to society and values held by it. The terror (communism, fascism, Nazism) experienced in the 20th century reigns no longer and democracy, which has successfully replaced terror, has achieved more than when physical force was applied to citizens. Inconvenient ideas are coped with in post-modernism by using irony, ridicule or by discrediting the values which a given group upholds. In this way, the individual is uprooted, torn from the world, from a definite social group, in order to make it happy. This state would consist in the fact that the modern individual would dispose itself of its particularity for a universality, wishing to become a human being, citizen of the world and not a man or woman. Post-modernism propagates, as did at one time the French Revolution, an ideal of equality which is to realize itself in the gender ideology.

The thesis of the paper concerns the influence of revolutionary and evolutionary factors on the decline of values in present-day public life. Greater significance should, however, be attributed to evolutionary gen-

eration changes, which are at first unnoticed by society, but when they reach their apogee, take society by surprise. In my text, I wish to present the views of chosen philosophers, among others, of Socrates, Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Nietzsche and J.H. Newman, on the subject of the formation of the philosophy of values in Western Europe over the ages. Also taken into consideration are economic changes, the migration crisis and the dangers this produces for Christian values, which are fundamental to European civilization. The conclusion of the paper is the confirmation that a crisis of values occurred due to society's disjoining itself from its roots, out of which Europe grew, and due to the falling into oblivion of the integrality of humanity.

Streszczenie
Kryzys wartości we współczesnym społeczeństwie a życie publiczne

Wiek XXI jest wiekiem ponowoczesności oraz, jak utrzymuje Chantal Delsol, spadkobiercą oświecenia francuskiego i jego kontynuatorem, wraz ze zmianą podejścia do społeczeństwa i wyznawanych przez nie wartości. Nie panuje już terror znany z XX wieku (komunizm, faszyzm, nazizm), a demokracja, która go skutecznie zastąpiła, osiągnęła więcej, niż gdy stosowano przemoc fizyczną wobec obywateli. Z niewygodnymi poglądami w ponowoczesności walczy się przez ironię, śmiech lub dyskredytację wartości wyznawanych przez określoną grupę społeczną. W ten sposób odbywa się wykorzenienie jednostki, wyrwanie jej ze świata, z grupy społecznej, by ją uszczęśliwić. Stan ten miałby polegać na tym, że nowoczesna jednostka pozbyłaby się swojej partykularności na rzecz uniwersalności, chciałaby być człowiekiem, obywatelem świata, a nie mężczyzną czy kobietą. Ponowoczesność lansuje, tak jak niegdyś rewolucja francuska, ideał równości, który ma się spełnić w ideologii gender.

Tezą artykułu jest wpływ czynnika rewolucyjnego i ewolucyjnego na upadek wartości we współczesnym życiu publicznym. Większe jednak znaczenie można przypisać zmianom ewolucyjnym, pokoleniowym, które początkowo są niezauważane przez społeczeństwo, a gdy osiągną apogeum, okazują się dla niego zaskoczeniem. W tekście zostały przedstawione poglądy wybranych filozofów, m.in. Sokratesa, Arystotelesa, Augustyna, Tomasza z Akwinu, Nietzschego, J.H. Newmana, na temat kształtowania się filozofii wartości w ciągu wieków w Europie Zachodniej. Zostały także wspomniane zmiany ekonomiczne i obyczajowe, kryzys migracyjny i związane z nim zagrożenia dla wartości chrześcijańskich, leżących u podstaw cywilizacji europejskiej.

Wnioskiem artykułu jest stwierdzenie, że kryzys wartości nastąpił z powodu odejścia społeczeństw od korzeni Europy i na skutek zapomnienia o pełni człowieczeństwa.