

SUMMARY

The whole double issue of „Ethos” is devoted to the situation of Poland after a communism fall and after regaining the independence and sovereignty. Referring to the novel *Early Spring* by Stefan Żeromski – written in a similar historical situation – the editorial staff combines the issue’s profile with the second Polish „early spring” motto. The idea of early spring includes an alternative: either the country will develop towards spring or a crisis will follow and winter will return – what means political, economical, cultural and moral collapse.

The role of morality is stressed by the editors in *From the Editors* note. A victory of „Solidarność” over the communist regime was possible due to Poles’ faithfulness to basic values which the nation carried throughout the history. Freedom was regained by faithfulness in truth. The authors write: „One thing we can never forget. Getting our outside freedom back provokes to a deeper rooting in an inner freedom and to combining freedom with truth”. This regard of moral truth must also be on the ground of a new state structure created now in Poland. The most significant example of these transformations is defending society members’ lives by the state, including life of unborn children. A country, which wants to be a land of all people creating a community, should protect, by law, each person’s life. This is a problem of each democratic country.

„This Europe – says *From the Editors* note – worth of its name, will be safe only when its weakest inhabitant will not fear democratically passed laws”. A problem of „an examination in regained freedom” is also touched by a fragment of John Paul’s II homily given during the 4th pilgrimage to the fatherland.

The contents of the issue concentrates around four groups of problems connected with the main areas of Polish social life after a 1989 turning point. These problems are: the most essential social and national values, political system, economy and culture.

The first group of articles refers to moral and spiritual dimension of a social life. A. Szostek MIC and A. Rodziński analyse a problem of truth related to pluralism in a pluralistic society. J. Salij OP polemizes with two extreme opinions present in today’s Polish culture: on one hand it is the opinion postulating a combination of a national culture with an European one; on the other hand – an attitude confirming Polish cultural autarky. The article by T. Strzembosz is devoted to the national ideological values; the author’s writing, despite a critique of some social and political life’s elements of today’s Poland, includes a call for a respect of an ideological and moral nation’s tradition. The article by C. Casini, an Italian parliamentarist, shows the role of unborn children’s life value and the role of its protection for a moral constitution of an European democracy. The writings by P. Nitecki, rev. T. Piwowarski and a talk with an outstanding German theologian, R. Spaemann, refer to the role of the Church and the religious values in a society life as well as to such topics like now taking place transformation of religious conscience and the challenges which face the Church in Poland and all over the world.

The second block of articles enters a sphere of today’s Poland political values. Despite historical writings by G. Herling-Grudziński, P. Kryczka and T. Przeciszewski one can find the articles about up-to-date problems. Cz. Bielecki formulates the conditions of an effective and socially accepted governing in Poland’s present situation. M. Książkowski outlines the social and political system project and P. Krasucki – the project of the necessary reforms of health care system. The whole is completed by a view of Z. Brzeziński and J. Nowak-Jeziorański – experts and politicians – on Polish matters.

The third section comprises writings about the economy and the attitudes towards the economic reality. Rev. J. Kondziela and A. Nowak OFM, look at the problems from a general perspective: first of them – from the point of view of the catholic social science, second – taking under consideration the franciscanian idea of poverty. The influence of a social science on the political and social transformations in former-communist countries is researched by B. Skrzydlewski OP. Going further, J. Auleytner and J. Michałowski make the diagnoses of the current economical situation of Poland and predict conditions and possibilities of a real development.

The section devoted to the second Polish „early spring” refers to the culture of community life, especially to the social communication means which role in creating a social conscience and their ethos level are worked on by M. Iłowiecki, a chairman of the Polish Press Society and by K. Klauza, a vice-chairman of the Catholic Press Society. More general are articles by rev. Z. Chlewiński who deals with the ingratiating mechanisms (the manipulative forming of an interested person’s good picture which is perceived by others) and by J. Puzynina and D. Zdunkiewicz, who try to define an aksjological condition of Poles today’s colloquial speech.

Then, led by W. Chudy, follow two interviews with the democratic opposition activists under the communist regime. The first interlocutor is J. Krupski – a co-originator of the magazine and the publishing house, called „Spotkania”, an agitator of centre – and right-wing party. The other one is A. Gwiazda – a co-originator of the free labour union and a propagator of an alternative form of governing in Poland.

A report from rev. M. Brzozowski’s (1933-1991) funeral goes in line with the Polish „early spring” because of the deceased, who had always been affirmative about the independance and justice persuits. The 1979 homily of rev. M. Brzozowski, which is published in this issue, expresses a thought that the faithfulness to the highest values lies on the ground of people’s community. Bishop P. Hempterek’s homily is also published as well as the last words outspoken by the representatives of different groups over a grave.

The second part of the issue is filled up with the regular sections. These are: *Thinking about Fatherland*, where Z. Żakiewicz writes about Polish Borderline, without which one can not understand the Polish character, *Notes and Reviews* and *Reports*. The reviews by M. Porowski (of a book on a criminal law reform) and by J. Mazurkiewicz (of an outstanding *Abortion Versus Politics* book by M. Schooyans) as well as rev. J. Krukowski’s report on the existing relations between the Church and the democratic country seminar, having taken place at Catholic University of Lublin, refer to the idea of the „early spring”. The review by T. Szkolut uncovers the transformations in Russian philosophical culture. Other writings concentrate on a reconciliation in a broad meaning: both, between the nations (E. Grzesiuk reviews Christa Peikert-Flaspöhler’s poetry) and the religions (a report on the meeting and the ecumenical symposium by E. Adamiak and rev. Z. Glaeser).

In *The Pontificate in the Eyes of the World* section C. Ritter reminds the 4th John Paul’s II visit to Poland through the statements and opinions of Polish press and compares them with the comments published during the former pilgrimages while E. Sakowicz shows the theological aspects of Pope’s pilgrimages to Africa.

In *Bibliography* section (M. Filipiak) those of John Paul’s II speeches and homilies are quoted, in which the Pope reminds conditions necessary to respect human dignity in a political and social system. The issue is closed by the biographic *Notes About Authors* (M. Chuda).

Translated by Grażyna Kania