

SUMMARY

The current issue of the „Ethos” is devoted to the question of the authority - it asks about its essence and about the attitudes towards the authority (authorities) in modern society. The text **From the Editors** refers to these questions by an analysis of the essence of any authority, on the example of the relationship between a disciple and a master. This relationship, which can also be found in the teaching of the Gospel on the example of the relationship between the apostles and Christ - the Master, shows that any true authority involves friendship and free service to truth. The common responsibility of masters and disciples for this service has given rise to the authority of such institutions of public life as science, art, morality or religion.

As John Paul II emphasizes in the extract from the encyclical *Veritatis splendor* quoted on the opening pages, the genuine source of any authority springs from the authority of truth, whose brilliance fascinates man, and simultaneously binds him morally. For a Christian, the authority of truth ultimately turns out to be the authority of God Himself, who reveals the truth of Himself, and the truth of man, in Christ.

The main articles are grouped into three parts, which are complemented with the opinions obtained in a survey made by the „Ethos” about the question of the crisis of authorities in the modern society. The first part: **The Authority and Truth** opens with an article by Tadeusz Styczeń, SDS, presenting Karol Wojtyła as an ethicist who considers it the duty of the moral philosopher to reveal the dignity of the human person. Władysław Stróżewski analyzes the essential elements of the phenomenon of the authority, pointing to the ultimate rootedness of any true authority in the authority of truth. The article by Robert Spaemann is devoted to the question of philosophy conceived of as a continual search for truth. Andrzej Szostek, MIC, in turn presents the social dimensions of the authority of truth, emphasizing that the conviction of the existence of the objective truth is a necessary condition of any genuine pluralism in social life. The same question is considered, though from another standpoint, by Maciej Iłowiecki, who concentrates above all on the role of the media in creating social authorities.

The next part of the issue is entitled **The Power of the Authority**. It opens with an article by Anton Rauscher, SJ, who addresses the problem of the necessity of lay society to ensure and respect freedom of conscience - that is - man's moral self-consciousness, which makes him respond to the duty-generating power of the authority of truth. In turn, Fr Zdzisław Pawłowski analyzes - on the example of the biblical character of King Saul - the conflict between the authority of the God of Israel and the personal ambitions of the ruler. The next two articles in this part show two personalities who are authorities in the post-war Poland: Katarzyna Olbrycht describes John Paul II as the educational authority, while Janusz Zabłocki presents Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński as an authority, in the context of the history of the Catholic Church in the communist Poland. Alina Rynio writes about the significance of meetings with persons whose way of life reveals the world of values, and their hierarchy, to man.

The succeeding set of articles bears the title *The Epoch of Reevaluation or the Time of Doubt?* In the first article here, Krzysztof Murawski declares himself for the first part of the initial question, presenting the problems concerning authorities within the theory of sovereignty. While demonstrating the changes in the attitudes of young people towards authorities, Jan Góra, OP, warns against conformism, which is a result of the rejection of the traditional models of action, embodied by particular persons. Grażyna and Leszek Teusz see the causes of the crisis of the identity of contemporary man in his unwillingness to take the trouble to seek for the answers to the questions of the essence of man. Fr Zdzisław Chlewiński stresses that the contemporary crisis of the authority has also its positive aspects, as it leads to the rejection of false or overvalued authorities.

This set of texts is complemented by *The Survey of the „Ethos”*, in which some questions on the authority crisis posed by the editors were answered. Most of the authors express the conviction that today's epoch, which affirms pluralism, democracy and tolerance, has not made the human need for the authority weaken. This need is deeply rooted in the complexity of the entire domain of knowledge, and it also results from the growing axiological confusion, and from the lack of a moral stance of the contemporary world.

The concluding section of this part of the issue is entitled *Erosion of the Authorities*. It opens with Irena Sławińska's reflections on the elements constituting the teacher's authority, and on the attitudes that undermine this authority. The influence of the cultural changes, and of political events of the latest decades, upon authorities in different spheres of life is analyzed (on the example of the American society) by Joanna Petry Mroczkowska, and also by Jadwiga Mizińska. The history of the movement of priests cooperating with the communist regime has been presented by Krzysztof Stachewicz. The last article in this section, written by Andrzej Delorme, shows communism as a ruthless devastator of the natural environment.

In the standing column of the „Ethos”, entitled *Thinking about Fatherland*, Fr Alfred Wierzbicki presents his reflections on his „little” homeland: his family, the Lublin district, and on the „big” one: the Polish and European culture.

The section *Notes and Reviews* starts with a commentary by Małgorzata Kowalewska on Hannah Arendt's essay devoted to the history of the concept of authority. Piotr Skórzyński discusses the book in which Krzysztof Kąkolewski attempts to find out the truth about the so-called „Kielce pogrom”. Jan Jachymek presents a book devoted to the political activity of Wincenty Witos, the famous pre-war leader of the peasants' movement. The current issue of the „Ethos” introduces a new sub-section entitled „Proposals of the Ethos”, which will focus on the books published by the Institute of John Paul II, as well as on others which are considered as worth discussion. The present issue concentrates on some books concerning Karol Wojtyła and his philosophy.

The section *Reports* comprises a broad commentary (by Andrzej Zieliński) on the 5th World Congress of Christian Philosophy, which was held in Lublin between 20th and 25th August 1996; a report (by Patrycja Mikulska) on the celebration of conferring the title of Doctor Honoris Causa on Chiara Lubich, the foundress of the Focolari movement, in June 1996; a discussion of the scientific session devoted to St. Anselm which took place in Lublin between 24th and 26th September (by Agnieszka Kijewska); and the discussion of the issue of the „Ethos” concerning postmodernism, which was organized by Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin and the Editors of the „Ethos” (by Jadwiga Mizińska). The section *The Pontificate in the Eyes of the World* includes Joanna PietrzakThebault's commentary on John Paul II's pilgrimage to France in 1996.

The section *Through the Prism of the Ethos* presents the reflections of Jarosław Merecki, SDS, on the amendments made by Polish Parliament to the bill regarding abortion, which allow killing of an unborn child on the grounds of the so-called social conditions.

The present issue also comprises the *Calendar* of the eighteenth year of John Paul II's pontificate; the *Bibliography* of the Pope's addresses on personal paragons (by Maria Filipiak); and the *Notes on the Authors*.