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FATIMA – LESSONS FROM POLAND

This article by **Edward Kowalski** is dedicated to the memory of Hamish Fraser, a traditional Catholic convert from Communism, who suspected from the outset that events in Poland, around the Solidarity phenomenon, were not necessarily what we were led to believe they were. Translation by ASF & CB-P. This article first appeared in *Action Familiale et Scolaire*!, No. 216, August 2011

(Mr Kowalski was born in Poland, studied there and worked there until his defection to the German Federal Republic in the 1980s. He managed to emigrate to Canada before the 'fall of the Berlin Wall'. It was with the discovery of traditional Catholic doctrine, and more particularly, in the fight for the restoration of the Traditional Mass that he was brought to understand the real nature of the events through which he himself lived in his country of origin. Enlightened at the same time about life in the so-called free countries, he recognized in the politically correct and fixed thinking of the Westerner the same social dynamics which operated under the communist regime; a Gulag minor, for the moment at least.)

Poland twenty years on - Politics, Religion and Deception

Warning: The present article should not be construed as a condemnation of individuals. It is rather both an analysis and a reflection, and examines the evolution of Russia's errors and the way these were implemented in Poland for the period which preceded, and then led to 'liberation' from the communist yoke in 1989. We will also examine the decisive role which different people played, whether in the press and cinema, in the dissemination in the Christian (or formerly Christian) West of ideas which were not altogether accurate concerning the true nature of dissidence in the former countries of the Eastern Bloc.

I Introduction

I. The Christian sense of the history ²

Firstly, we must see that human history belongs to God. All that concerns the life of human beings on earth, including that of His Church, is either allowed or willed by God. That is why, whatever the difficulties we may encounter in living the Christian life in a given period, we must remind ourselves that if Providence allows certain misfortunes to occur in the present time, these occur so that His Divine Majesty may shine forth even brighter in the future. He continues to watch over the harvest. The believer therefore has to possess and cultivate this Christian sense of history, which Dom Prosper Guéranger explained so well. That is, we should not lose sight of man's heavenly fate and sink into cynicism or discouragement when faced by the renewed assaults of naturalism.

Then we must recognize that this Christian sense of history is generally opposed to world history as told by 'experts' or modern populists. Indeed, Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850), in particular, said that there are two histories: '*Official, mendacious history, and then that secret history, where the real causes of events can be found*'.

¹ Action Familiale et Scolaire, BP 80833 – 75828 Paris, Cedex 17, France

² Dom Prosper Guéranger, *Le sens chrétien de l'histoire*, [*The Christian Sense of History*], February 21st, March 21st, April 11th and April 25th, 1858.

We will therefore examine some of the ambiguities spread by the popular press regarding the recent history of Poland, and also some of the real causes of events which modern history has avoided or obfuscated more or less deliberately.

2. Fatima, 1917 - A turning point in the history of the XXth century

Why begin with Fatima, when the object of our article is Poland? And why continue to meditate upon *Russia's errors*, when communism has died, according to general opinion? Have severe persecution and arbitrary detention not become a thing of the past in Russia and in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc? Is there not now a certain religious freedom in the former USSR, and has not the Roman Catholic Church indeed regained her rights in Poland? Has not the State economy been replaced by that of the market? Why then do we want to dig up the painful past? Is there not anything more morbid than to want to keep raking over a period of history which we would all rather forget?

Now, the message of Fatima deals, first and above all, with the dangers of Russia's errors and, even Pope Benedict XVI considers that: *'We would be mistaken to think that Fatima's prophetic mission is complete.'*³

That is why, even before examining certain events in the recent history of Poland, we will briefly consider the nature of Russia's errors and how they have indeed spread all over the world.

3. Russia's Errors

3.1 Introduction to Russia's Errors

Let us note, first of all, that Our Lady warned about Russia's errors before describing the crimes which would follow suit: the annihilation of nations, the martyrdom of the good, and the sufferings of the Holy Father.

Indeed, if the crimes which ensued from these errors, particularly during the Stalinist era, had something spectacular and immediate about them in their violence and in their deliberate character (massacres, murders, deportations and summary executions, programmed famines, religious and ethnic persecution by the Soviet regime), the errors which are at the origin of these crimes, are not easily discerned by the liberal mind-set which has already prevailed for more than two centuries in the West. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall especially, the liberal cares even less about identifying the errors of communist Russia because the era of those insane crimes which derived from them seem well and truly past, and do not strike the imagination as they once did.⁴ In fact, two episodes in Poland's recent history, - at first, that violence and severe persecution directed against the Roman Catholic Church and believers until Stalin's death and, then, that of the progressive lifting of the communist yoke by a degree of relaxation⁵ from the end of 1950s - correspond in fact to the plan designed by the Party for the subjection of the Roman Catholic Church to the errors of the communism.⁶

³ Pope Benedict XVI in his homily, May 13th, 2010, to pilgrims in Fatima.
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100513_fatima_en.html/

⁴ Obviously, and unsurprisingly, mainstream media do not really cover the religious persecution which continues in countries like China [and North Korea] which would not disgrace Stalin himself. Our politicians are so conspicuously absent from any debate in favour of the underground Roman Catholic Church in China, for example.

⁵ After the death of the Stalinist Boleslaw Bierut in 1956, Wladyslaw Gomulka became first secretary of the Polish United Workers Party - PUWP (communist). Poland experienced a certain respite, nicknamed the 'The Gomulka Thaw' or 'the Polish way towards socialism'. But under the pressure of the Soviets, persecution resumed at the beginning of the 1960s. This was followed by the Gierek era from 1970 till 1980. Edward Gierek promoted economic reforms, supported by western loans. His good relations with Valérie Giscard d'Estaing and Helmut Schmidt seem to have been used as a guarantee. He was deposed by General Jaruzelski in 1980 and became the scapegoat for the poor economic situation of the country, the fruit, indubitably, of his frenzied borrowing policies.

⁶ From 1955, the West knew about that very plan: *'And in its place [Catholicism], they would like to introduce an impossible Christian-Marxist syncretism, the destroyer of any true spirituality'*, *Osservatore Romano* of July 5th, 1955

We therefore intend to remind our readers that Russia's errors are very much alive⁷, that they are fluid and flexible; that they can easily take on the mantle of truth in the eyes of those with poorly formed and poorly enlightened minds, and that they are spread with so much more ardour and zeal by persons in authority - political or ecclesiastical - as they no longer give rise to the striking and obnoxious injustices of Stalinism, except in the case of China [or North Korea] about which most remain silent.

Having said that, it is not our purpose to determine the responsibility of those who propagate Russia's errors because, in many cases, ignorance has prevailed... And there is no intention to condemn fellow countrymen who have suffered so much already. But today, even more than yesterday, it is necessary to know how to recognize and discern these errors so that the faithful can defend sound doctrine against the increasingly harmful assaults of the forces of evil, described by numerous authors⁸, including Mgr Louis-Gaston de Ségur. This great bishop reminded us about the Antichrist, in his work, *The Passion, Resurrection and final triumph of Jesus Christ in His Church*, advising us that, at first 'there would be seductions, and that many false doctors, many sowers of false doctrines would fill the world with errors and seduce a great number'. It is not surprising therefore that the faithful should continue to ask for the much talked-about consecration of Russia, however anachronistic it might appear to us, so as to obtain the triumph promised by Our Lady.

3.2 Reminder about Russia's errors

What are these errors in question? Let us summarize what others have written about Russia's errors and their application in different continents⁹:

Religious schism - Even though this error does not usually appear in the catalogue of Russia's errors, it is obvious that Russia's adherence to the religious schism of 1054 deprived her of necessary supernatural help to face the assaults, firstly of German Protestantism during the XVIIth century and, afterwards, of rationalism and German Marxism of the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries.

Atheism - Total rejection¹⁰ of all that comes from God or leads to Him¹¹. From this principle ensue many other errors, notably the separation of Church and State (which has been implemented in all Western countries if not in theory at least in practice), the dominion of the temporal over the spiritual¹², the secularization of institutions, religious indifferentism, a scientific conception of the world.

Materialism - A principle according to which the spirit comes from matter, where only matter is important, only matter is redeeming, from whence comes the idea of a Communist earthly paradise which will supply all man's needs. From this principle comes environmentalism, which regards the earth as sacred, and, paradoxically, the idea of a global pagan spirituality, supported by political internationalism.

quoted in *Le communisme et l'Église catholique – Le livre rouge de la persécution*, [*Communism and the Roman Catholic Church - The Red Book of Persecution*], p. 266.

⁷ Indeed, from the 1980s, 'Marxism which inspired communism, was more alive than ever, and gave birth to a new political entity: socialist internationalism'. Le Saint Pie, no 175, p. 4.

⁸ Besides, Cardinal Newman wrote about persecution by the Antichrist: 'So that every generation of Christians should be on the watch-tower, looking out, -nay, the more and more, as time goes on', quoted in < <http://www.conventhill.com/endtimes/newman4.htm> >

⁹ What follows is taken from what <http://www.crc-resurrection.org/Contre-Reforme_catholique/Fatima/Apparition_Tuy.php> and from Le Saint Pie, no 175, June, 2009, p. 3.

¹⁰ The author here plays on the name of a Canadian movement 'Refus Global', (Total Rejection) a Quebecois artistic movement the manifesto of which was published in 1948; it was considered as a precursor of the 'Quiet Revolution' which followed in Quebec about fifteen years later.

¹¹ 'The errors of Russia - The Frankfurt School and its influence in the West', (Forum L'Arche de Marie, August, 2010).

¹² Jacques Chirac, 'No to a moral law which surpasses the civil law', in *Journal de Dimanche*, April 2nd, 1995.

Permanent Revolution - A necessity dictated by the Marxist dialectic according to which truth does not exist, everything being in constant flux. From this principle ensues the destruction of all the bases of society: destruction of the family by the legalization of divorce, abortion and contraception, the destruction of parental or legitimate moral authority, the legalization of unions against nature, the extension and imposition of religious indifference in all State schools?

Excessive Socialization of human activity – i.e. control and centralization by the State, and possibly by world government, of all human activity, in defiance of the principle of subsidiarity contained in the traditional social doctrine of the Church. It is in the field of political and economic life that socialist deception is strongest. During seventy years, we had presented to us a world divided into two, polarized between the Right (the free world) and the Left (communism). Suddenly, this polarization has disappeared to give way to a fundamentally new world, placed under the aegis of justice for all. If some might doubt it¹³, others, including Mikhail Gorbachev who is not the least among them, could not be more explicit regarding the socialist strategy:

*We are conducting all our reforms in accordance with the socialist choice. We are looking within socialism, rather than outside it, for the answers to all questions that arise...Those who hope that we shall move away from the socialist path will be greatly disappointed.*¹⁴

II Poland – A brief look at the historical context

I. Liberal movements and the formation of the first Communist Party

We cannot understand recent events in Poland without first going back to the past. From the end of the XVIIIth century, Poland proved to be a liberal nation. In May 1791, its parliament (*the Sejm*) adopted the second modern constitution in Europe, after Corsica. This constitution, which aimed at equality of all before the State, was considered as a social advance by all progressives. If the people were rooted in Catholic traditions, the Polish elite, were at the vanguard of the new, democratic, often occult movements, and would soon see in Napoleon the nation's great liberator. But following Napoleon's defeat and the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Poland was dismembered; Congress Poland was Russified¹⁵, having fallen under the control of the Tsar; it would not wait too long to become the object of socialist and communist agents' greed.

Poland, like all countries of Europe which experienced the People's Spring of 1848, was witness to a dress rehearsal of what was to come. In spite of the apparent failure of the revolution of 1848, the seeds of new revolutions were sown. They would bear fruit in due course.

2. A Socialist Knight

Under the leadership of Marshal Józef Pilsudski, who became a president of the Polish Socialist Party (*Polska Partia Socjalistyczna*) in 1895 and who would be later recognized for his nationalism, socialism quickly gained ground in Poland at the end of the XIXth century and at the beginning of the XXth century. During his first years as a socialist activist, Pilsudski belonged to the radical wing of the Socialist Party. He did not hesitate to take up, as did Stalin, terror ('the sword') and criminality to achieve his aim.

¹³. Having taken account of Anatoliy Golitsyn's works, *New Lies for Old* and *The Perestroika Deception*, in particular, the British Conservative MP, Christopher Gill, warned the House of Commons against a simplistic interpretation of the recent events (1991) concerning the USSR and the idea of a united Europe: *'It stretches credulity to its absolute bounds to think that overnight all those who were communists will suddenly adopt a new philosophy and belief, with the result that everything will be different. I use this opportunity to warn the House and the country that this is not the truth... Every time the House adopts one of these collective agreements, not least treaties agreed by the collective of the European Union, it contributes to the furtherance of the Russian strategy'*. House of Commons *Hansard*, for June 1995, column 370.

¹⁴. Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, Collins, London, 1987, p. 36

¹⁵. <http://www.wirtualnafrancja.com/histoire/polog-not-18.php>

But in Pilsudski, socialism and nationalism were easily confused, and it was his nationalism which, finally, triumphed. During the First World War, his intentions thus became clearer: if he wanted to get rid of the Russians (still Tsarist), he was not at all anxious to become the lackey of the Central Powers. In 1917, he therefore forbade his soldiers to take an oath of allegiance to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which led to him being imprisoned in Magdeburg. Pilsudski's detention seemed to revive the nationalist ardour of the Poles who considered him as their natural leader. Thanks to the Armistice of November, 1918, Pilsudski was freed by the Germans and sent to Warsaw by train, just like Lenin; and like the latter, Pilsudski arrived as a victor. He had taken the streetcar to socialism, but he had come off at Independence Station¹⁶.

Pilsudski might have 're-converted' to Catholicism in 1916, after a spell in Lutheranism because of his marriage (sic) to a divorcee, and after having been named commander-in-chief of the Polish armies by the Polish Regency Council at the end of the First World War, he had already had the opportunity to spread socialism's poison in Poland. It was his victory on the Vistula against the Russian Bolsheviks in 1920 which made him a national hero, and which brought him today the accolade of liberator and father of the nation.

With Poland independent, the Polish Communist Party¹⁷ was formed on December 16th, 1918 in the city of Lublin, which is situated approximately 180 km to the southeast of Warsaw. After the German invasion of 1939, the Communist Party established the temporary government of National Unity, in Lublin too, and was very active during the Second World War, supplying soldiers to the Red Army after the break of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. But Stalin, who was always suspicious, by no means relied on his Polish comrades and imposed his own version of communism by forcing the union of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party in a new party: the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), so as to bring an end to his Trotskyist opponents. Now, there remained, in this Stalinist hybrid creation, some remnant, of Trotskyists and representatives of other communist tendencies, which would give rise to repercussions in the future.

It was this temporary government of National Unity which was recognized by the Western powers at the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences of February and July, 1945 respectively. With good reason, populations of Eastern Europe considered this recognition by Western leaders as a final act of treason. On the other hand, and very fortunately, the Holy See would not recognize the government of National Unity.

3. Determining years of the post-war era (from 1944)

Coming to power in 1947, following elections marked by threats and arrests¹⁸, the Polish Communists realized from 1945 that Poland was markedly different from its neighbours: despite the Polish elite's marked, long time attraction for the ideas of the Enlightenment, the population was much more homogeneous on an ethnic and religious level. The difficulties which this posed for the application of the threefold political, economic and sociocultural revolution foreseen by the communist regime were numerous.

Attacks against the Roman Catholic Church at the beginning of the communist regime (between June and September, 1945) were similar enough to the measures taken already by the other democratic countries (sic), such as France: announcement of a new regime of state education (in June, 1945), denunciation of the concordat with the Holy See (in September, 1945), appointment of an apostate priest to the ministry of the Propaganda (in November, 1945), adoption of a new law on the marriage, making civil marriage

¹⁶. *Histoire de la Pologne communiste – autopsie d'une imposture*. [History of Communist Poland – autopsy of an imposture], Pierre Bühler, Éditions Khartala, 1997, p. 77.

¹⁷. The Polish Communist Party (*Komunistyczna Partia Polski – KPP*) was an inter-war party. It was founded by Rosa Luxemburg and Leo Jogiches and united the Social Democrat Party and the Polish Socialist Party-Left. Pilsudski was a member of the Polish Socialist Party until he fell out with it in 1906. Socialism and communism in Poland were conveyed by different organisations which, according to the circumstances, sometimes united themselves, sometimes were in opposition, according to the classical Trotskyist-Stalinist division.

¹⁸. *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.235.

compulsory and facilitating divorce (in November, 1945), announcement of the creation of a national Roman Catholic Church (the beginning of 1946).

The episcopate, led by the cardinal Hlond, and the Catholic press protested strongly against these measures as early as 1945; The Holy See reacted officially against the communist leaders in a *Letter to Polish Catholics* on January 17th, 1946.

But it was following the elections (sic) of January, 1947 that the attacks against the Church intensified, and were directed according to the usual procedure: elimination of the Church from public life, secularization of schools, and separation of the faithful from the hierarchy and the clergy¹⁹.

On September 8th, 1947, Cardinal Hlond, in another letter on behalf of the Episcopate, warned Poles against attacks by atheism²⁰. This letter became the excuse for a press campaign against the clergy and the episcopate starting in autumn, 1947, and then for a policy of religious persecution starting in 1948. Among the first priests or the prelates to be arrested, imprisoned or condemned to hard labour, were: Mgr. Karol Nimiera, Father Buchala, Father Léon Pawlina, Father Grzechnik, Mgr. Marchewski, Canon Poloski, Father Jarkiewicz, Father Boleslaw Stefański, Father Krzeminski, Mgr. Sigmund Kaczyński, and Father Raczyński. At the end of September, 1948, approximately 400 priests were imprisoned or held in concentration camps²¹.

Obviously, the program of sovietisation continued as Communists tried to neutralize the Episcopate by: a reform of elementary schools, 'the rehabilitation' of teachers who were obliged to undergo *ideological exams*²², the selection of university candidates on the basis of their participation in Party 'induction programmes', the establishment of day-nurseries for children of one to four years' old, the introduction of educational methods dictated by atheistic principles, the establishment of educational centres for children from four to seven years' old where the instructors were trained according to Marxist materialist principles²³, the progressive abolition of prayers in schools, the reduction in hours of religious education in elementary schools, the elimination of religious education at the higher levels, the replacement of religious holidays by Party demonstrations, the banning of meetings of religious associations in schools.

In 1949, the regime proceeded with new arrests of clergy and Catholic journalists. It obliged the Church to hand over all its baptismal records to the State, restricted the right to meet and forbade the public exercise of cult (pilgrimages, processions, solemn blessings of fields, recitations in front of the crib at Christmas, etc.). Censorship was such that even diocesan bulletins could not be published.

In January, 1950, the diocesan centres of the Catholic society, *Caritas*, a Church initiative for assisting the destitute, were all closed. Installed in their place were administrative departments made up of *patriotic priests* and progressive Catholics²⁴. These attacks against *Caritas* gave rise to new protests by the Polish Episcopate who, in a circular, invited the clergy to decline any office in the new governmental organization.

¹⁹. *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.239. We point out to the reader that this Procedure is consistent with that which is followed by Western democratic governments now in power.

²⁰. Extract from the letter quoted in part in *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.240: 'It is given to us to state the facts which are in flagrant contradiction with the dignity of Catholic morality. They are so numerous that we cannot stop ourselves thinking of an occult and intentional attack directed against God and the Church...'

²¹. *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution], Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, pp. 240-241

²². *Ibid.* p. 242.

²³. *Ibid.* p.243.

²⁴. *Ibid.* p.248. The *patriotic priests* played an important role in the propagation of progressive ideas from the middle of the 1950s, not only in Poland, but throughout the world. Read further 'Transmission belts of Communist Propaganda', p. 88.

Let us emphasize here that when the true Catholic press was finally abolished with a ban, in 1949, on the two main Catholic weeklies in the country, *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Tygodnik Warszawski*,²⁵ the communist regime had wasted no time in setting up progressive, pseudo-catholic newspapers, *Dziś i Jutro*, in 1945, *Słowo Powszechne*, in 1947, and *Pax*, in 1949²⁶ with the obvious intention of sowing confusion.

In March, 1950, the government adopted a law calling for the nationalization of ecclesiastical property. In April, 1950, the Episcopate agreed to sign a common declaration by the representatives of the Church and the communist government²⁷. This declaration was considered by the Catholic hierarchy as a *compromise* because it was seen as a guarantee, as poor as it was, against further violations of the freedom of the Church by the communist regime. Now, the Agreement did not produce the truce expected in the fight against the Church and, *a posteriori*, one can consider this agreement as the first breach in the resistance of the Polish clergy to the totalitarian regime. The text of the Agreement is very precise when it concerns the rights of the State, but always very vague when it concerns those of the Church.

Let us note, to demonstrate our point, the importance of article 11 of the Agreement, which stated that the Catholic University of Lublin²⁸ could continue to teach within the current parameters²⁹. However, it seemed that the theology faculties at Cracow and Warsaw were about to close; the only theology faculty which would remain would be Lublin³⁰.

In September, 1950, Cardinal Sapieha and the Cardinal-Primate Wyszyński, inaugurated in 1949, signed, on behalf of the Episcopate, a letter of protest against the Agreement.

Then, the communist government demanded a statement by the Episcopate in support of the Stockholm Appeal³¹. Some bishops did sign to avoid greater troubles; the others were pressurised to sign and eventually gave in.

In January, 1951, in the ex-German territories, by order of the regime, the apostolic administrators were expelled and replaced by five capitular vicars chosen by the totalitarian regime. To avoid schism, Mgr. Wyszyński delegated ecclesiastical jurisdiction to the five priests concerned.

The violence against the Church continued to intensify in 1952. The communist authorities decreed the closure and occupation of all the minor seminaries controlled by religious orders. The most outrageous and ridiculous charges were laid against the clergy: espionage, treason, theft, receiving, possession of money etc. The following bishops were arrested: Mgr. Adamski, of Katowice, Mgr. Baziak, Cracow, Mgr. Rospond, Lwow, and Mgr. Mazanek, Chancellor of the Curia.

²⁵. These newspapers were authorised again, then suspended, then resumed several times. See 'Transmission belts of Communist Propaganda' – Poland's Pseudo Catholic Press', p. 87

²⁶. *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution], Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.248, Note 36.

²⁷. For the complete text read: ²⁷ *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, (Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution) Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, pp.250-252.

²⁸. This university was founded in July 1918 and placed under the patronage of The Sacred Heart of Jesus, and was known as The Catholic University of Lublin. In August 1944, at the end of the Second World War, when the Germans were still in Warsaw, representatives of the communist regime and of the Red Army 'inaugurated it', after the hiatus of war, and placed it under high surveillance. Cf. Transmission Belts for Communist Propaganda – KUL & ATK, p. 91.

²⁹. The theology faculty of the Catholic University of Lublin was the only Polish theology faculty to be authorised by the communist regime. The Academy of Catholic Theology (*Akademia Teologii Katolickiej*) was founded at Bielany in 1954 by the Communist authorities, under the direction of the Rev. Father Czuj, a man who had the absolute confidence of the regime, thereby escaping the authority of the Church. Placed under high surveillance by government agents, the Catholic University of Lublin saw the enlistment of five *patriotic priests* imposed by communist agents in 1954.

NCWC News Service 26th October 1954, quoted in ²⁹ *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.264. See 'Transmission Belts of Communist Propaganda – KUL & ATK', p.91.

³⁰. The closure of these theology faculties was confirmed on 17th October, 1954 in *L'Osservatore Romano*. ³⁰ *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.264, Note 30.

³¹. A communist inspired petition against nuclear armament.

In February, 1953, the communist authorities declared by decree that the Church had to submit to the State its proposals for ecclesiastical appointments (Articles 2, 3 and 4) and that persons who exercised any ecclesiastical responsibility had to take an oath to the Republic (article 5)³². The government implemented its decree by using a small group of progressive priests who came to replace the troublesome prelates, and who met in June, 1953 to examine possible developments of the Agreement between the Church and the People's Republic. In September, 1953, besides the prelates quoted in the previous paragraph, the following clerics were removed from their sees: Mgr. Kaczmarek, of Kielce, Mgr. Bednoz, coadjutor of Katowice, Mgr. Bienik, auxiliary at Katowice, Mgr. Bernacki of Gniezno, Mgr. Splett of Gdańsk, already condemned in 1946 for collaboration (sic) with the Germans.

In September, 1953, the authorities forbade Archbishop Wyszyński to exercise the functions arising from his ecclesiastical responsibilities. He was for all intents and purposes arrested. He was actually relegated to a 'comfortable convent', according to the authorities.

4. 1953

Year 1953 was undoubtedly the most painful for the Church in Poland. Since the end of the war, convents, schools, dioceses, charities, newspapers, and Catholic universities were decapitated, split up, sometimes with brutality, sometimes with refinement.

The authorities quickly removed priests and the most resolute and most influential prelates – we can count in the hundreds those who were imprisoned, held, exiled, and tortured. Some managed to escape in time, notably Father Michel Poradowski³³, who had a considerable influence on the development of post-war Chile.

At the political level, any opposition was eradicated. Besides the persecution of the Polish Church which we have just described, we must recall the disappearance, during the Second World War, of the intellectual elites in Cracow - which was the work of the Germans, and disappearance of the military elites at Katyn - which was the work of the Soviets.

Without their traditional intellectual and military elites, and now weakened by the dispersal of their pastors, Polish laymen lived in constant fear of roundups, denunciations, abuses, deportations, detentions and executions. There were countless numbers of political prisoners; scheming became widespread among the population, along with the corruption of social and political morality which it invariably draws in its wake.

If, following Stalin's death in 1953, all the countries of the Eastern Bloc, sometimes even in spite of themselves, let forth a sigh of relief, which was shared moreover by the countries of the so-called free world, the dissidence which manifested itself in Poland, at least following Stalin's death, was not necessarily the one that we could or would hope to believe would have occurred. If there certainly were some spontaneous movements of dissatisfaction against the existing communist regime, many of these popular demonstrations were aroused not by virulent anti-communists, but mostly by anti-Stalinist socialist-communists, in other words Trotskyists. Unlike the general population who were attached to Catholic traditional values, the Trotskyists knew the system inside out and had, to a certain extent and for some time, the necessary means to organize this dissident movement.

And this dissidence indeed was organized bit by bit around Polish politicians, intellectuals and left-wing artists who were not so much opposed to socialist and communist principles, as to the way these principles were applied by the Soviets and their Polish supporters. The communist government, opportunistic as it

³². The said decree was published in the Official Journal of the People's Republic of Poland, on 10th February 1953. The text of the decree is quoted in full in *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, pp. 260-61.

³³. http://www.michal.md4.pl/Poradowski_ks_Michal/a_michal.htm

was, used these dissidents, especially after the severe crackdown on the demonstrations in Poznan in 1956, to give the impression at home, as well as abroad, that there was a real opposition. The government therefore loosened the reins on the dissidents and allowed artistic circles to present some opposition to the regime, knowing all the time that *'it was not socialism which they [the artists and intellectuals] rejected, but the regime they knew, with its sterile conformity, leaden dogma, its moral conventions, its declared truths, its historical determinism, and its unquestioning compliance with the Soviet model'*³⁴. Indeed, none other than Tadeusz Mazowiecki, whom we shall find later in Solidarity, was from 1957 at *Wież*, at the head of a group of intellectuals, renegades from PAX, claiming to follow Mounier's personalism and attached to socialist ideals³⁵.

Stalin's death did not therefore prevent the Supreme Soviet from pursuing its strategy of expansion. In fact, the communist regime had a particular plan for Poland and especially the Polish Church: to make them play the role of catalysts and transmission belts for communism in the free world, in those circles where Russia's errors were still rejected. Moscow, indeed, wanted to see some form of reconciliation with communism in Poland not to strengthen its position in this nation, which was already a part of its sphere of influence recognized at Yalta and Potsdam, but so as to break up Catholic forces which, in the free world, still opposed communism³⁶.

III Transmission belts for communist propaganda in Poland and abroad

Let us recall the warning published by *Osservatore Romano* in its edition of July 3rd, 1955:

*They experiment in Poland with the possibility of "coexistence" between Catholicism and communism. And to attain this end, they have recourse to 'progressive' so-called Catholics, to whom they make available substantial means of internal and outside propaganda. [...] in Poland, persecution has taken a particularly insidious form: while taking care to retain appearances, it has tried to empty Catholicism of its actual content. And, in its place, they would like to insert an impossible Christian-Marxist syncretism, destructive of any true spirituality*³⁷.

It is therefore in the light of this clear warning published by the official Vatican newspaper that the following should be read, while keeping in mind that the persons who have played a part in this work and who are named below were not necessarily aware of the import of their actions.

I. Poland's Pseudo-Catholic Press

Before attacking the West, the communist regime obviously had to spread its propaganda, lies and half-truths, at first in Poland. In a typically and manifestly diabolic spirit, the communist authorities sought to sow confusion. The Catholic newspapers, which they wanted to control, were the favoured means they chose to reach this goal.

The communist government did not waste time and, from the end of the war, either it prohibited outright Catholic publishing houses, or it took over magazines and Catholic newspapers through a process of carrot and stick, the usual policy of attrition and subjection.

We indicated in footnote 24 that the government had alternately authorized and suspended the well-known Catholic weeklies *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Tygodnik Warszawski*, and that it had established its own newspapers, *Dziś i Jutro* and *Słowo Powszechne* as well as publishing *Pax Publishing House* in 1945, in 1947 and in 1949 respectively.

³⁴. *Histoire de la Pologne communiste – autopsie d'un imposture*, Pierre Bühler, Éditions Khartala, 1997, p.365.

³⁵. *Ibid*, p.364.

³⁶. *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, pp.266.

³⁷. Quoted in *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, pp.266, note 54.

In 1953, *Tygodnik Powszechny* was permanently prohibited for having refused to publish Stalin's obituary. Between 1953 and 1956, the PAX association (pro-communist) took over its management; the people, who were not fooled, gave it the nickname 'Tygodnik Paxowski' (*Pax Weekly*). And, in 1956, *Dziś i Jutro*, having been placed on the Index, merged with *Tygodnik Powszechny* to form *Kierunki*.³⁸ This allowed the communist authorities, for a while at least, to divert it from the wrath of the Index and Catholics read *Kierunki* with a clear conscience, believing it to be a Catholic publication. Let us point out here that, to avoid suspicion, the writers of pseudo-Catholic publications had to skilfully mix truth and error, to present their mélange of heterodox ideas and principles under the appearance of truth; Any blatant anti-Catholic doctrine would have immediately turned off Catholic readers.

If the premises of *Tygodnik Powszechny* remained empty for a while, the publication was re-established in December, 1956, under the autonomous management (sic) of a former chief editor, Jerzy Turowicz, a personal friend of Karol Wojtyła, who managed to avoid repression.

Today, *Tygodnik Powszechny* is a liberal, oecumenical Catholic weekly, 'open' about its democratic values and a proponent of interreligious dialogue. After the election of John-Paul II, *Tygodnik Powszechny* was the main vehicle for the Polish pope's thinking in his home country.

2. PAX and the Patriotic Priests

At the same time as direct attacks were led against the Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopate, the communist regime was engaged in secret schemes which aimed at destroying the Church from within, with the help of Catholic organizations manipulated by *Bezpieka* (national security), in the first rank of which appeared PAX³⁹ and the *patriotic priests*⁴⁰. The 'Catholic', pro-communist, PAX association (*Stowarzyszenie PAX*) was founded in 1947 with the view of undermining the support of the population for the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Poland and, naturally, to cause confusion.

The authorities therefore set up a network of progressive laymen, sympathetic to the communist cause, to turn away, from the clergy, the urban youth and intelligentsia, the circles where [the PAX association] enjoyed a certain influence. It is true that the organization, whose links with the authorities remained unknown to many, was flourishing⁴¹. In April, 1952, the authorities went so far as to grant it official registration⁴², as if this group needed it! But no detail was left to chance in this type of arrangement when it was a question of deceiving the faithful.

The first leader of PAX, Bolesław Piasecki, was a 'fascist' at first in the 1930s; he converted (sic) to communist ideals during the Second World War and cooperated at once with the communist regime. In 1945, he thus began to organize a circle of progressive Catholic laymen whom he grouped together around the publication *Dziś i Jutro*, which was put on the Index by the Vatican, as we have just seen, in 1956. It was from this group that PAX would arise.

The PAX association, funded by the communist authorities, had the exclusive monopoly of 'Catholic' publications in Poland. As we saw previously, it was at this time PAX took over *Caritas*, the Church's welfare service, and had its leaders removed. PAX would thereafter use the name *Caritas* as its shop window and would strengthen the stage setting to deceive the faithful; it would go as far as to set up an organ of false opposition to the communist regime there.

³⁸. *La Croix*, 17th May 1956, quoted in *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, pp.27, note 2, and <http://tygodnik2003-2007.onet.pl/1547,1379972,dzial.html>

³⁹. See *The Pax Document*, published in *Approches* No.7, March 1967.

⁴⁰. *Histoire de la Pologne communiste – Autopsie d'un imposture*, Pierre Bühler, Éditions Khartala, 1997, p.283.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

Now, PAX well and truly supported by the political power, helped create the organization of *patriotic priests*, discreetly made propaganda for government measures and provided support for the authorities' pacifist campaign⁴³. The Church forbade Catholics to participate in PAX's activities.

In September, 1949, PAX therefore began to set up an association of clerics willing to collaborate with it, around an initial nucleus of priests who had survived the military camps in Germany. This group took the name of '*patriotic priests*', a title which lets us guess its aim -to create a rift between a lower clergy, credited with patriotic feelings, and a reactionary hierarchy⁴⁴. The government wanted to turn to its advantage the hatred that these priests felt for the Nazi regime under which they had suffered greatly; and when this tactic did not work, it resorted to blackmail and threats. In 1954, a tenth of the priests in office belonged to PAX. Among them, five were professors at the Catholic University of Lublin in the same year⁴⁵. The authorities expected these *patriotic priests* not only to exercise constant pressure on the episcopate, but to become advisers and 'representatives' of the Church, in the people's councils, or to provide ecclesiastical backing for propaganda petitions launched by those in power⁴⁶.

Among the known members or former members of PAX, was Tadeusz Mazowiecki⁴⁷, who became the first non-communist *Prime Minister* at the express request of Lech Walesa, and who left PAX in 1957 because it was undemocratic!

The PAX association is today known under the name of *Civitas Christiana*. Its website contains no mention of its history or any reference to PAX, but *Civitas Christiana* continues regularly to award the *literary price Włodzimirz-Pietrzak*, created at the time of PAX. *Civitas Christiana* was the object, in 1997, of a decree of the Polish episcopate recognizing it as a Catholic association.

3. KUL and ATK

In 1954 the communist regime struck a blow against theology faculties. The authorities at first closed the theology faculties at the universities of Cracow, Warsaw and Poznań⁴⁸ and permitted theological studies at the Catholic University of Lublin (*Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski - KUL*) only. The comrades who were always keeping an eye on things introduced people close to the communist regime into the KUL staff⁴⁹ and, as we have just shown, imposed five *patriotic priests* upon the faculty. Prelates who voiced their opposition were subjected to repression and put in prison.

It is appropriate, at this point, to wonder what those professors at the theology faculty at KUL were authorized, or not, to teach from 1954 on. And it is not difficult to imagine that, knowing the major importance of education in formation, or more aptly put – in the deformation of minds, the communists devised and imposed educational programs of Catholic theology (sic) which, while taking care to save appearances, had been precisely designed to empty Catholicism of its actual content⁵⁰.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.284

⁴⁵ NCWC News Service of 26th October 1954, quoted in *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.264. Additional research in the archives of the Catholic University of Lublin has confirmed the listing of 5 new professors for the year 1954, professors who were not named in said archives. The *Księga Jubileuszowa na 50-lecie KUL*, published in 1968 by the official publishing house of the regime (PKWN) for the 50th anniversary of its foundation, mentioned the hiring of two new professors for the year 1953-54 and three new professors for the year 1954-55, thus five in total for the calendar year 1954, which overlaps the two years of the university calendar.

⁴⁶ *Histoire de la Pologne communiste – Autopsie d'un imposture*, Pierre Bühler, Éditions Khartala, 1997, p.284.

⁴⁷ The case of Tadeusz Mazowiecki is examined later in '*Intellectuals and Politicians*'. p. 97.

⁴⁸ *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.264.

⁴⁹ 1956: *L'Octobre polonais*, under the direction of Arnaud Léonard, French School, Warsaw, 2006, p.3

⁵⁰ *Osservatore Romano*, 3rd July 1955, quoted in *Le communisme et l'Église catholique, le livre rouge de la persécution*, [Communism and the Catholic Church – The Red Book of Persecution] Albert Galter, Fleurus, 1956, p.266.

In 1990, the Polish government adopted a piece of legislation regarding the administration of post-secondary education institutions. This law provided for the return of the Catholic educational institutions to the Church, with the exception of KUL, which thus escaped management by the episcopate. We can only wonder why... Whatever it may be, in the spring of 2007, KUL awarded the Idzi-Radziszewski prize to Archbishop Wielgus, despite his confession, [he had resigned following claims of alleged co-operation with the communist authorities] for his exceptional contribution to the Christian humanist spirit⁵¹ Today, KUL is called *KUL Jana Pawła II* (KUL John-Paul II).

Besides, when the communist regime banned the theology faculties of the universities of Warsaw, Cracow and Poznań, and put that of the KUL under high surveillance, it set up, as we saw in footnote 28, its own Academy of Catholic Theology [*Akademia Teologii Katolickiej - ATK*], in Bielany, a suburb of Warsaw. In 1954, the authorities appointed as its first vice-chancellor, a reliable man, [as far as the regime was concerned] Fr. Czuj. Brother Roger Schutz, the leading light of Taizé, received, in 1986, that is three years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, an honorary diploma of the ATK and, in 1989, the Catholic University of Louvain granted Br Schutz the same diploma for his contribution to peace⁵². Successful convergence of two world-views? Or a single vision conveyed by two modes of transmission seemingly opposite to one another? There lies the \$54billion question. Today, ATK is known as Cardinal-Stefan-Wyszynski university

4. *Solidarnosc*

From the foundation of Solidarity in August, 1980, Western media presented this union as **the** movement of opposition par excellence of the Polish people against the communist government. It is true that it was *Solidarnosc* that mostly galvanized the Polish population and captivated the whole world. But what was not always explicit in the systematically liberal press was that Solidarity was not in fact a revolt of the 'right' against the 'left', but a war of factions within the left, between the 'conservatives', the Stalinist hard liners, and the 'reformers', Trotskyists or socialist-communists, imbued firstly, and above all, with the spirit of the Enlightenment and human rights, principles which the West had wholly adopted, lock, stock and barrel for many, many years anyway. If some voices were raised against Solidarity at the outset, and this from opponents to the communist regime, as was the case with Andrzej Gwiazda, it was not because the union led by Lech Walesa was not far enough to the right, but because Solidarity was apparently too elitist.⁵³

It thus turns out that many of the opposing members within Solidarity, such as Bronisław Geremek, Lech Kaczyński and Tadeusz Mazowiecki,⁵⁴ had as their primary concern not so much the abandonment of socialist principles to the profit, let us say, of Polish Catholicity, as the shelving of the heavy-handed techniques designed by Stalinists for the application of these principles, and obtaining reforms desired after so many years of hardship. There were perhaps some newspapers in West which knew, or which today know, how to make this important distinction for the benefit of their readers. But those newspapers were rather few and far between⁵⁵. The main concern, yesterday as today, in the East as in the West, was that democracy be safe.

Some will object to us that it would have been impossible for anyone, whoever it was, during the 1980s, to promote the social Kingship of the Christ, to defend Polish Catholics, without danger of being imprisoned and, especially and more immediately, of antagonizing the group of Catholics (de)formed by more than two decades of communist rehabilitation, and reinforced in it by the non-negligible effects of the new doctrines of Vatican II that were to neutralize the traditional doctrine of the Church. Indeed, it would have been

⁵¹ In April 2008, Stefan Szacilowski, theatre producer, wrote a letter to the Rector of the KUL, Stanislaw Wilk, to protest against the presentation of this prize to Bishop Wielgus, and returned, under separate cover, the diploma which the university had conferred upon him (Szacilowski).

See: <http://dziennikwschodni.pl/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080425/LUBLIN/980828419>

⁵² *Les protestants*, Jean-Marie Mayeur and Yves-Marie Hilaire, edited by André Encrevé, Éditions Beauchesne, 1993, p. 454

⁵³ Andrzej Gwiazda, <http://andrzejgwiazda.pl> In different interviews, he mentioned the *first* Solidarity – that of Anna Walentynowicz with which he was associated, and the *second* Solidarity – which had been hijacked by an elite little concerned, according to him, for the true good of the nation.

⁵⁴ See further on in *'Intellectuals and politicians'*, p. 96

⁵⁵ See further on in *Cinema*, p. 100, an exception being that of Lisa DiCaprio. Specifically, because she wrote for a specialised magazine, and not for the popular press.

impossible. In the first place, the regime in power would have been categorically opposed to it. Secondly, who, almost twenty years after Vatican II, except Mgr. Lefebvre and traditionalists, would have come from the West to aid Poland, who would have wanted first and foremost to be Catholic, or who would have wanted to restore Christian order within Poland's borders? Nevertheless, those behind Solidarity well and truly wanted the movement to take on a Catholic aura by immediately associating it with priests, notably Father, and the future Bishop, Orszulik⁵⁶, while there were Polish clerics who, according to Bronisław Geremek, wanted to put an end to the Solidarity experiment⁵⁷. Why?

Between 1980 and 1989, at a time when there was much pushing and pulling from both sides, when not only Poland held its breath, but the whole world, we witnessed both crackdowns, such as the imposition of martial law of December, 1981 and the ban on Solidarity, and episodes of leniency on the part of the regime. Be that as it may, it seems likely that the steps of this continual coming and going had, in the opinion of Bronisław Geremek, who seemed to have been delighted by it, been dictated by Moscow⁵⁸.

5. The meetings of *Magdalenka* and the Round Table

When the order came from Moscow to soften its position regarding Solidarity, the Polish communist regime, supervised by General Jaruzelski, had no choice but to obey. The 'Round Table' suggested by the Kremlin therefore had to be established.

It was the visit of Gorbachev to Poland, in July, 1988, that freed things up. According to Bronisław Geremek⁵⁹, it is wholly thanks to Gorbachev that the peaceful revolution of 1989 could come about. Without him, it would have been impossible⁶⁰.

On August 31st, 1988, a first meeting took place between Lech Wałęsa and the Minister of the Interior, Kiszczak. The first meetings at *Magdalenka*, a resort situated in suburbs of Warsaw, were held on September 16th, 1988. On December 31st, 1988, the Xth Plenary session, assembly of the PUWP, voted for the re-legalisation of Solidarity. At the same time, Lech Wałęsa paid a visit to France, at the invitation of President François Mitterand.

In brief, it was the Soviets who, by opening the columns of *New Times* in February, 1989 to Lech Wałęsa, an unprecedented event in the Soviet press, encouraged the first secretary of the PUWP (Jaruzelski), who was also the General in charge of martial law, to soften his position towards the opposition and to set up the Round Table as quickly as possible⁶¹.

The Round Table negotiations therefore officially opened on February 6th, 1989 at the Koniecpolski Palace, the current presidential palace, in Warsaw. They took place in three different committees: trade-union, economy and political affairs. Both parties presented their candidates. Among the subjects broached were: the legalization of associations and parties, the liberalization of the press and censorship, elections to both

⁵⁶ Fr Alojzy Orzulik was consecrated Bishop by Cardinal Glemp on 8th December 1989.

⁵⁷ Bronisław Geremek recalls: 'During the years from the imposition of martial law to the beginning of the Round Table talks (see later 'The *Magdalenka* and Round Table meetings') there was among the Polish elite, but equally within the Polish Church, a leading opinion that the Solidarity chapter must close. The Pope (John Paul II) did not want it closed.' *La rupture-La Pologne du communisme à la démocratie*, Bronisław Geremek, Seuil, Paris, 1991, p.161. This remark coming from Geremek is astonishing, because if Solidarity was the ideal solution for the Church, as we had been led to believe, why was the 'leading opinion' in the Polish Church opposed to the Polish union? In this passage Bronisław Geremek does not indicate if he includes, in this 'leading opinion', the patriotic priests and communists who were against a weakening of the communist stranglehold on the population, or whether he included those ecclesiastics who, many well-informed, were wary of Solidarity members who had socialist tendencies or who were outright socialists...

⁵⁸ See further – *Intellectuals and Politicians*, p. 96.

⁵⁹ See further – *Intellectuals and Politicians*, p. 96.

⁶⁰ *La rupture-La Pologne du communisme à la démocratie*, Bronisław Geremek, Seuil, Paris, 1991, p.16 (Hereafter referred to as *Geremek-La rupture*)

⁶¹ *Geremek-La rupture* p.7

Chambers, a free-market economy and the role of the president⁶². When there was an impasse at the Palace, representatives from both sides returned to discuss it in Magdalenka. The final result of all these discussions was the relatively free elections of June 4th, 1989.

But as proof that, for some dissidents at least, it was not principles which were up for debate, let us point out that in 1995, the Poles elected a majority Communist Parliament, led by Aleksander Kwaśniewski. The latter remained in power for ten years. That the communists were once again in power did not raise any problem, for the dissident (sic) Geremek, because the situation this time arose not from coercion and fraud, but came about through democratic and honest confrontation⁶³.

6. Intellectuals and politicians

The movement for political emancipation, let us recall, was always made in the direction of socialist and democratic values. If, at the beginning of the communist persecution, the Church had demanded its rights and had repeated sound doctrine concerning its relations with the State, the tone would change completely after Vatican II; the Church would henceforth appeal to the Declaration of Human Rights of the UNO, to the dignity of the human person, to the principle of freedom of conscience and religion, etc. to defend Catholics⁶⁴.

Tadeusz Mazowiecki was chosen Prime Minister by Lech Wałęsa on August 17th, 1989, after the first free elections of June 4th, 1989, which followed the famous negotiations at Magdalenka and the Round Table in 1988 and 1989, and of which he was, moreover, one of the driving forces. Descended from Polish nobility, Tadeusz Mazowiecki was a socialist and a member of PAX between 1949 and 1957⁶⁵. It was during this period that he was associated with repressive measures taken against the clergy, among whom was the bishop of Kielce, Mgr. Kaczmarek. But Mazowiecki left PAX because this body lacked democratic principles! He remained very active, however, and, in 1957, founded a club of Catholic intellectuals and the monthly magazine *Więź*. But as we have already indicated elsewhere, it was not because he opposed the pro-Communist Association PAX that he rebelled against socialism. For him, only democracy mattered.

Between 1961 and 1972, he sat in the Parliament (*Sejm*) for the ZNAK⁶⁶ party, supposedly Catholic - but it is difficult to imagine to what extent the Soviets would have accepted a party that was really Catholic in a Polish Parliament that they wanted to be communist... What is easy to imagine, however, is that the communist authorities allowed the existence of this party because, in the first place, they had nothing to fear from Mazowiecki who shared with them a common view on essentials (socialist ideals); and that, secondly, it was another powerful means to strengthen the illusion of there being a freely expressed difference of opinion and a possible cohabitation between Marxism and Catholicism, especially since some priests publicly supported this party. Be that as it may, Mazowiecki was considered an opponent and was jailed.

But it was not by accident that Tadeusz Mazowiecki declared, in his first speech as Prime Minister, that he wanted to draw a thick line (*gruba linia*) between communist and post-communist Poland. His detractors would blame him rather for wanting to draw a thick stroke (*gruba kreska*) on the dark past of some of his close co-workers in the recently elected government of which he was prime minister. After a conflict with Wałęsa, he lost the presidential elections of 1990 to the latter.

Tadeusz Mazowiecki is now a member of the Club of Madrid, which brings together former heads of government, notably Mikhaël Gorbatchev, and whose mandate is the promotion of democratic values in the world.

⁶² *Geremek-La rupture* p.10.

⁶³ *Histoire de la Pologne communiste – Autopsie d'un imposture*, Pierre Bühler, Éditions Khartala, 1997, p.19.

⁶⁴ *Histoire de la Pologne communiste – Autopsie d'un imposture*, Pierre Bühler, Éditions Khartala, 1997, p.485.

⁶⁵ Or 1955; the year he left PAX varies according to the source.

⁶⁶ It was the ZNAK publishing house which in 1962 would publish the second edition of the book *Love and Responsibility* by Karol Wojtyła. The first edition was published by the KUL press in 1960.

Bronisław Geremek, was born Benjamin Lewertow, in 1932 in Warsaw. His Jewish father was a fur merchant. His mother became a widow, and in a second marriage married Stefan Geremek. From that time, Bronisław received a Catholic education. He was taught by the Marist Brothers in rural areas. Through his studies in Warsaw he became concerned about social questions seeking a remedy to human misfortune⁶⁷. In 1950, he became a member of the Polish Communist Party (PUWP). He carried out post-graduate studies in Paris between 1956 and 1958. He returned to Poland, but would go back to Paris as a lecturer at the Sorbonne between 1960 and 1965. At the Sorbonne he organized the Polish Cultural Centre. As member of the Party, he had no difficulty in obtaining a passport and all the necessary permits to travel abroad. We may suppose correctly that his role as an organizer of the Polish Cultural centre at the Sorbonne helped him in promoting the communist experience in Poland with French sympathizers.

His life is essentially divided in two parts: that of his membership in the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) and that after his resignation from the PUWP. As a member of the Party, he believed firmly that communism was the dawn of the world⁶⁸. But, with the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops in 1968, he became disenchanted, because this invasion removed any hope of revisionism in favour of socialism with a human face⁶⁹. He later claimed to have left the Party for the same reasons as those for which he joined it⁷⁰, that is, the implementation of socialist and democratic ideals. And if he felt a duty to oppose totalitarianism⁷¹, he did not however abandon for that reason his socialist principles. In short, he left the Communist Party in 1968 because there was no longer any hope of internal revisionism or socialism with a human face⁷².

He became therefore a member of the 'opposition'. In 1980, he became an adviser to Solidarity and, in 1989, he took on the role of negotiator in the Round Table negotiations between Solidarity and the communist power. He founded the Democratic Union in 1990. This body would then become The Freedom Union. He sat as a member of parliament in the Sejm until 2001. An ardent supporter of the European Union, he was elected to the European Parliament in 2004 under the banner of the Freedom Union and became a member of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. In April, 2007, in the wake of the Wielgus affair and the well-known Lustration law⁷³, he refused to declare if he had collaborated or not with the secret police service during the communist era. He died in a car accident in July, 2008.

Leszek Kołakowski

Leszek Kołakowski, (1927-2009) was a Polish philosopher and historian of ideas. His intellectual abilities have never been in doubt. He was at first a communist and a convinced anti-Catholic⁷⁴. But, noticing the damage done by Stalinism, he became a revisionist Marxist in 1966. This new position cost him his chair of philosophy at the University of Warsaw in 1968. However, McGill University in Montreal opened its doors to him that same year. Then, after Montreal, he held posts at Berkeley and, finally, Oxford. If he is praised for his opposition to Stalinism, he, like others, continued for some time to profess socialist ideals until the day he began to examine the benefits of religion! He too was an adviser to Solidarity.

7. Cinema

⁶⁷ *Histoire de la Pologne communiste – Autopsie d'un imposture*, Pierre Bühler, Éditions Khartala, 1997, p.105.

⁶⁸ *Ditto*.

⁶⁹ *Ditto*.

⁷⁰ *Ditto*, p.104

⁷¹ *Ditto*, p.105

⁷² *Ditto*, p.18.

⁷³ In January 2007, the new Archbishop of Warsaw, Stanislaw Wielgus, confessed to having collaborated with the communist secret police in Poland. In May 2007, the Polish Constitutional Court invalidated most of the provisions of the Law of Lustration, proposed by the Kaczynski brothers, the President and Prime Minister at that time, which required Polish intellectuals to declare whether they had collaborated with the secret police during the communist era. Most Poles concerned had awaited this decision of the Constitutional Court before sending back the form to the Institute of National Remembrance which held the archives of the former secret police.

⁷⁴ <http://www.osaarchiwum.org/files/holdings/300/8/3/text/38-3-121.shtml>

In an interview with the Polish film-maker Andrzej Wajda, which appeared in *La Croix* of February 17th, 2010, the journalist Alain Guillemoles points out, and rightly so it seems to us, that more than thirty years later, it remains difficult to understand how it was possible to make a film as subversive as *The Man of Marble*, in 1976, while it was funded by the regime which it denounced⁷⁵. If *Katyn*, made in 2007, is a real tribute to the Polish officers massacred by the Soviets during the Second World War, one may legitimately wonder what were the real values conveyed in the films *The Man of Marble* (1976) and *Man of Iron* (1981). It is enough to return to the content of these film productions to understand that, besides the liberal notion of freedom, it is essentially socialist values which are presented in them. And if, as Andrzej Wajda himself states in the same interview: the pressure of the regime was not the same from 1945 until 1989, when there were stratagems among people in authority, and it was necessary to play by the rules if you wanted to make films dealing with politics, the result remained the same: opponents of the regime would have participated, perhaps sometimes against their will, as Mr Wajda seems to say, in the dissemination of socialist ideas. It is not thus surprising that the Polish communist government allowed (sic) the production of films such as *Man of Marble* and *Man of Iron*.

Moreover, according to Lisa DiCaprio, an American left-leaning film critic, 'the search for the truth, its dissemination among the Polish people, and its preservation in the face of official state repression, constitute the main themes of *Man of Marble* and *Man of Iron*'. Wajda, in these films, wanted to expose the betrayal of the working class by the Party of the working class. In other words, Wajda simply wanted to portray the sins of the Party against socialist ideals; he denounced the fact that the Party of the workers wanted to condemn, as bandits and anti-socialists, workers who complained about their living conditions. These fine nuances did not exactly escape certain leftists of Western countries who understood, in spite of the distortion of the capitalist media (sic), that Solidarity did not aim at restoring private property; the union led by Lech Wałęsa simply looked for the real control of the production by the working class⁷⁶. In other words, the leaders of Solidarity⁷⁷ simply tried to improve socialism in their country. Let us indicate in passing the lightning speed with which the film *Man of Iron* was approved by the Polish Ministry of Culture, shot, edited, produced, distributed, then presented to the jury of the Cannes Film Festival in 1981, and finally crowned by the *Palme d'Or*.

Cinema being the most important of arts⁷⁸ especially for propaganda purposes, it is not surprising that any powers, whether they be, governments, parties, private companies, or public companies, use it systematically for their own interests. The communist governments certainly were no exception to this rule and knew how to use even dissidents to their advantage.

Conclusion

Russia will spread its errors, declared Our Lady in 1917... And nevertheless, the errors in question already existed, well before Fatima, in the Enlightenment, the Reformation, the Liberalism of the XIXth century. Why then such a solemn warning?

Probably because communist persecution would have no equal in the history of the humanity on account of its brutality, its hatred of the Church, its perversity and its refinement in the cruelty of its methods. And also because this persecution has brought about the spiritual misfortune of so many souls, even souls of good will... souls who have experienced war fatigue and have been without any means to defend themselves, souls who had been abandoned by the liberal and democratic West, souls who had to compromise with an enemy regime sometimes simply 'to survive', sometimes to enjoy a better life.

⁷⁵ Andrzej Wajda, l'homme d'image in *La Croix*, 17th Feb. 2010.

<http://www.la-croix.com/Culture-Loisirs/Culture/Actualite/Andrzej-Wajda-l-homme-d-images- NG -2010-02-17-547021>

⁷⁶ Man of Marble, Man of Iron – Polish Film and Politics, by Lisa DiCaprio, in Jump Cut, No.27, July 1982, pp.7-12.

<http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC27folder/ManMarbleIron.html>

⁷⁷ One must distinguish leaders of the Solidarity movement who for certain knew what they were doing, from those in good faith who believed, perhaps a little naively, in a return to public life centred on Catholicity. That being said, it is undeniable, that the notion of Catholicity has progressed rapidly in Poland these past few years particularly in the traditionalist movement.

⁷⁸ A statement attributed to Lenin.

The outcome? It is often with smug satisfaction that the West is delighted at the fall of the Berlin Wall. Finally, the countries of the former Eastern Bloc are following our example and are joining us in our material comfort and democratic ideals. But the problem is that material comfort is now less and less sure with the world monetary and financial crises, and democratic ideals are oddly tarnished in some countries, and not least in Europe and in North America, where the Church is trampled underfoot, deprived of its authority, powerless before the naturalist and socialist tide, and this even within its very bosom.

To be sure, the socialist convergence of the western world and Eastern Europe is well and truly realized, and 'the impossible syncretism of the Marxism and the Christianity'⁷⁹, however absurd it might be, is an unmistakable reality. With some regional differences, things are broadly the same in the East, as in the West, in the North, as in the South: neutrality of the State (thus, separation of Church and State), human rights and democracy, freedom of religion, rampant pluralism, and socialist objectives. These have spread everywhere with a religious type zeal. A new universal religion, which dethrones the True universal Religion, has come about with the peace of those who kill the soul without killing the body, and who will kill the body after having killed the soul. They have already killed the unborn's body having first killed the mother's soul with the protection and blessing of the State.

In a commentary on the Revelation of Tuy, the Abbé de Nantes, reminds us that atheism has spread as never before, everywhere. Imposed by means of the media rather than by the sword; atheism can even hide itself under religious appearances, but the apostasy which ravages the Christian world is a witness to the fact that practical atheism is no less effective nor totalitarian than that produced by Bolshevism. The hideous conditions under which tens of millions of victims of communism died serve to remind us of the sufferings of those poor souls who will go to Hell, victims of this soft apostasy.

In view of all of the above, and of the experience undergone by formerly Catholic countries existing today, in particular, in view of the secularization of all their institutions and the godless laws which so-called democratic governments enforce religiously, we have no choice but to conclude that the whole world has been infected by Russia's errors, and that no country, certainly no Western country, has escaped this socialist pandemic. What then could Poland, worried about its Catholicity, possibly do in similar circumstances without the support of other Catholic countries, without the support of firm Catholic doctrine on the social and political level, a doctrine which would not be tainted by democratism?

All the more reason therefore to make us ask more insistently than ever for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. All the more reason to pray for the restoration of Christian order and to exercise constant vigilance, because:

*'..Within the next generation I believe that the world's leaders will discover that infant conditioning and narco-hypnosis are more efficient, as instruments of government, than clubs and prisons, and that the lust for power can be just as completely satisfied by suggesting people into loving their servitude as by flogging them and kicking them into obedience. In other words, I feel that the nightmare of Nineteen Eighty-Four is destined to modulate into the nightmare of a world having more resemblance to that which I imagined in Brave New World.'*⁸⁰

And without yielding to discouragement, let us recall the words of Father Arminjon who said, in his lectures of 1881, that 'what gives us the hope of a new glorious era for the Church, is precisely the boldness and the unceasing continuing fury of our enemies. Nowadays, we see Christianity attacked everywhere: in the arts, in the sciences, in the Church and in the State, in Europe as in Asia, in the old and in the new world. It is a certain sign that it will triumph throughout everywhere.'⁸¹

Edward Kowalski

⁷⁹ A plan exposed, as we have already seen, in *L'Osservatore Romano* 3rd July 1955. See notes 5, 36 and 48.

⁸⁰ *Aldous Huxley in a letter to George Orwell, in October 21st, 1949*

⁸¹ *Fin du monde présent – mystères de la vie future, Fr Arminjon, ESR 2007 (1st Edition 1881), Cadillac.*

