

JAROSŁAW MACAŁA  
Institute of Political Science  
University of Zielona Góra

## **Religion in the Polish Geopolitical Codes in the Period 1990-2017 on the Example of the Information of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland**

**Abstract:** In present geopolitics, mainly in western publications, religion is not an important factor. Particularly, that religion is hardly ever the only influencing on geopolitical processes factor, but it correlates with many different variables which are hard influences to examine and to measure. From here, there is a lot more scientific research over relationships between geopolitics and the culture. One of the key indicators of a country's position in global affairs and its foreign policy trends is the geopolitical code. Geopolitical code is defined as the operating code of a government's foreign policy that evaluates places beyond its boundaries. The religion played a minor role in Polish geopolitical codes, analyzed mainly in context of membership of Poland in the western civilization circle. Poles' Catholicism emphasized it. Religion, mainly Islam was treated as a threat in adapted from USA hegemonic geopolitical code of war on terror.

**Keywords:** religion and geopolitics, critical geopolitics, polish geopolitical codes, polish foreign policy

At the beginning of these deliberations it should be noted that the relationship between religion and geopolitics is a complex issue, difficult to analyse, which has not been studied thoroughly yet. It is also visible in Poland. The religious factor has been treated marginally for many years among the instruments used for the analysis of transformations on a global scale. A specific intellectual atmosphere in the West

favoured it, expressed by the secularization theory or even a quasi-religious faith that in the processes of modernization and progress, the role of religion in individual and social life is diminishing, so it will eventually disappear<sup>1</sup>.

The deficiency of the research instruments creates problems, e.g. in the scope of a small precision of basic notions: starting from geopolitics and ending with religion. It is also difficult to find a clear understanding of the terms referring to the changes in the contemporary world, and beginning with the prefix post-. It is worth mentioning the methodological problems, since the analysis of the link between religion and geopolitics requires interdisciplinary research, as religion as a rule is not a self-contained or independent factor. After all, religion as a social fact must be examined in connection with its cultural, political, economic or geopolitical context<sup>2</sup>.

In general, it seems to the researchers treating religion as a secondary phenomenon in geopolitics that both spheres, religion and geopolitics, belong to other and separate worlds: the sacred and the profane. After all, geopolitics, especially classical and neoclassical, on the basis of purely earthly, rational, material calculations analysed the process of creating, developing and collapse of the centres of power, mainly countries, in the specific territorial frames. The sphere of the ideas, culture or religion were insignificant, irrational phenomena, eluding analysis. That is why for many years in geopolitics they were treated separately, not perceiving any significant correlation between them. It also resulted from the theories of secularization and modernization, which are influential in Western science<sup>3</sup>.

In the last decades this viewpoint has been undergoing changes. A large number of scientists prove that it is difficult to ignore religions in political and geopolitical analyses, since they belong to basic and eternal components of human reasoning about the world, hence also about space, the State, the nation etc. Since religions generally have their territorial expression, as a rule they influence the value and meaning of space for a given community, they are shaping the identity and emotions connected with it. Thus they influence e.g. the symbols building the fellowship among the members of the community, the vision of the world, creating the basis for collective and national identification. It is in religion that you can often find state-building and nation-building factors. Religion also influences patterns of social behaviours, the motivation of activities in the public and political sphere, at least through its missionary message. It has its meanings for creating identity and cohesion

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\* Institute of Political Science University of Zielona Góra, email: jarekm@o2.pl

<sup>1</sup> B. S. Turner, *Religion and Modern Society: Citizenship, Secularisation and the State*, New York 2011, pp. 127-145.

<sup>2</sup> J. Macała, *Geopolityka religii jako szczególny sposób badania relacji między przestrzenią a polityką*, in: *Implementacja zasad religijnych w sferze politycznej*, R. Michalak (ed.), Zielona Góra 2016, pp. 188-189.

<sup>3</sup> J. Casanova, *Religie publiczne w nowoczesnym świecie*, translated by T. Kunz, Kraków 2005, p. 58, 68-69; J. Macała, *Geopolityka i religia we współczesnym świecie*, „Annales UMCS, Sectio K: Politologia”, 2015, No. 2, pp. 9-11.

of different centres of power, especially nowadays, when the world is ruled by globalizational uncertainty<sup>4</sup>.

The aforementioned assessment, together with the analysis of broader social and civilizational processes, also in the Western world, justify a clear increase in the significance of culture and religion in geopolitical studies, especially visible after the end of the Cold War. Cultural space, until recently underestimated, in the light of new civilizational challenges takes on a particular importance. This space comprises e.g. the needs and attitudes of people in the sphere of intellectual, moral values and as a result of forming attitudes towards people, job and the environment, including the awareness of needs, the reality of the processes of human activity and a broad understanding of the civilizational processes in the dimension of various spatial arrangements (from local to global).

Hence the largest amount of contemporary studies concerns the influence of culture, including religion, on geopolitics within geocivilizational perspective, which provides the assessment that basic world contradictions are cultural, that is civilizational, in nature. However, this way of analysis does not attach any special or independent significance to religion, more important aspects of it are civilizational divisions (intertwining ethnic, national, religious and material factors), influencing the possibilities to use a geographical environment. Rarely is religion treated as an independent factor, or at least dominating, classified as religious geopolitics (*geopolitique des religions*) in contemporary geopolitical studies<sup>5</sup>.

From this aspect the research is significant for the analysis of the foreign policy of the Third Polish Republic – the country, which faced great challenges: it had to sovereignly define its place in Europe and thoroughly restructure external relations, but also find a new place for religion in public life after decades of communism. In the external dimension it required developing a new network of geopolitical codes, the choice of which is always more or less limited, while it is influenced not only by location, but also history, culture, identity, religion (in the case of Poland undoubtedly Catholicism) as well as representations, views, myths, stereotypes, prejudices, emotions connected with them. These kinds of reflections and their practical implementation are as a rule the work of the political elites. However, the elites had to show consideration for social feeling and emotions, stereotypes, representations connected with it. Such a perspective of this issue has not been researched extensively so far in Poland.

It seems relevant to refer to some geopolitical ideas of the political elites of the Third Polish Republic expressed in the Information on the foreign policy of Poland delivered compulsorily every year by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Sejm. It is

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<sup>4</sup> D.E. Danacica, *The Religious Phenomenon and Contemporary Geopolitics*, [http://www.cesnur.org/2005/pa\\_danacica.htm](http://www.cesnur.org/2005/pa_danacica.htm) [retrieved on: 30.01.2017]; B. de Carvalho, *The Confessional State in International Politics: Tudor England, Religion, and the Eclipse of Dynasticism*, „Diplomacy & Statecraft”, 2014, No. 3, pp. 407-408.

<sup>5</sup> J. Macała, *Geopolityka religii...*, op. cit., p. 191, 193-197.

the most important official document on the foreign policy of the Polish State in a given year, compliant with the provisions of law. In essence they constitute a basic source database for this text, illustrating the conceptions of our political elites of the role of religion in the contemporary foreign policy. The basic theses refer to this, assuming that: 1) the role of religion in Polish geopolitical codes is minor, unappreciated, surprising in a country dominated by Catholics, as a rule reduced to the civilizational issue of the affiliation of Poland to the Western world, 2) it shows a substantial imitative similarity to the thinking of laicized Western political elites, also with regard to the sense of cultural superiority over the rest of the world, 3) within the geopolitical code of the war on terrorism, religion – mainly Islam, is treated as a threat to the Western world. In the analysis of the geopolitical codes from the title, I will refer to their comprehension and systematics as defined by Colin Flint, yet simplifying it considerably, as this issue is too wide and difficult to present it in such a short outline.

### Critical Geopolitics

As opposed to classical or neoclassical geopolitics, the role of culture in critical geopolitics is visible more plainly, which is also dependent on the research method based on the analysis of the discourse. The above-mentioned direction is indicated in Colin Flint's assessment: "Geopolitics is, then, a cultural, as well as a political phenomenon and usually a national one. Culture normalizes the continuous prosecution of geopolitics across the globe"<sup>6</sup>. Among academic researchers from this school, which as a matter of fact is difficult to situate accurately in sciences, there is the conviction about a constant connection between geopolitics and culture, as well as between religion, treated as one of its ideological components<sup>7</sup>. Revealing the cultural context of the emergence of geopolitical theories, and first of all a system of values and views of those who deal with international relations or geopolitics is essential for the critical geopolitics. The primacy of an individual perception of reality is clearly visible. Geopolitical theories are not a scientific analysis of the relationship between politics and space, but they constitute pluralistic conversions, representations, pictures, created and propagated by a specific person or a group of persons, most often from the circles of those in power. Geopolitics is a way of seeing the world (in this case – space) by the elites, first of all, but not only, of a given country or nation<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> C. Flint, *Wstęp do geopolityki*, translated by J. Halbersztat, Warszawa 2008, p. 97; the English version: C. Flint, *Introduction to Geopolitics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Routledge Taylor and Francis, London – New York 2016, p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> G. O' Thuathail, J. Agnew, *Geopolitics and Discourse. Practical Geopolitical Reasoning in American Foreign Policy*, in: *The Geopolitics Reader*, S. Dalby, P. Rouledge, G. O'Thuathail (ed.), London – New York 1998, pp. 79-80.

<sup>8</sup> J. Potulski, *Wprowadzenie do geopolityki*, Gdańsk 2010, p. 260.

Geopolitical representations formed in such a way are organisational in nature by providing instruments of the depiction of space, clearly in favour of a certain vision of the world or the way of analysing reality, that is of a specific ideology. Thus it legitimizes a specific international order, justifies its hierarchization, structure, it influences the ability for modification. In this way, we can notice to whom and why such knowledge is useful, since adopting a given set of ideas, visions of the world, is connected with the phenomenon of hegemony and dominance of certain social forces, elites, by using the country ruled by them as well as its institutions<sup>9</sup>.

## Geopolitical Codes

At the beginning of the 1950s in Anglo-Saxon geopolitical studies appeared a term "operational codes", which was to analyse a unique understanding of the world, influencing the decisions made by leaders and elites of superpowers competing in the "Cold War". Undoubtedly, it made an impact on the birth of the school of geopolitical codes. For the first time the expression from the title was used in its contemporary sense in 1982 by a well-known American researcher of the history of international relations, John L. Gaddis, as a model for operationalization of the basics of interest in the world in the categories of an alliance and hostility of the American political elites in the period of rivalry for the primacy over the USSR<sup>10</sup>. This notion caught on, although it still remains ambiguous and difficult to interpret. However, numerous historians, political scientists, specialists in international relations, political geographers studied geopolitical codes of individual countries, although they often used a broader and different understanding than that proposed by Gaddis.

Taking into consideration the specification of geopolitical codes, which was created by the outstanding geographer Colin Flint (together with Peter Taylor) seems to be essential for our research needs. In his opinion, understanding the geopolitical code makes it possible to explain many activities in the international arena through the analysis of the applicable discourse. Hence the way of illustrating reality by the ruling elite in discursive practices as well as the ability to impose its ideological interpretation on the public opinion on the scale of one country, but also towards other states. It concerns both superpowers as well as in large measure also weaker countries, on whom the world or regional hegemonic leader is able to impose its own geopolitical code. The explanation of this process, according to Flint, will be easier after the application of the understanding of the geopolitical code proposed by him and Peter Taylor, that is the way "in which a country orientates itself towards the world"<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> M. Kuus, *Critical Geopolitics*, pp. 4-6, [http://www.isacomps.com/info/samples/criticalgeopolitics\\_sample.pdf](http://www.isacomps.com/info/samples/criticalgeopolitics_sample.pdf) [retrieved on: 9.10.2015].

<sup>10</sup> G. Dijkink, *Geopolitical codes and popular representations*, „GeoJournal”, 1998, vol. 46, p. 293.

<sup>11</sup> C. Flint, *Wstęp do geopolityki*, op. cit., p. 72.

Hence every country has its own original geopolitical code based on 5 main assumptions:

- 1) who our current and potential allies are;
- 2) who our current and potential enemies are;
- 3) how we can maintain our allies and nurture potential allies;
- 4) how we can counter our current enemies and emerging threats;
- 5) how we justify the four calculations above to our public, and to the global community<sup>12</sup>.

For Flint it is beyond question that geopolitical codes are dynamic, they determine a certain scope of possibilities of running foreign affairs of a country, they depend on: power, territory, location, possibilities, aspirations, interests and influences of given nations as well as rather more on the specificity of identity, consolidation and scope of their culture, where religion also plays its role. Hence three main levels: local, regional and global. In principle the local level of codes of a given state organism is restricted to its influence on neighbouring countries, the regional level includes countries which aspire to influencing not only the immediate neighbours. The authorities then seek a map of such geopolitical codes, which will make it possible. Finally, some countries are able to run global politics, when the authorities impose codes allowing them to influence the world order. These codes are respected by other countries to a smaller or larger extent<sup>13</sup>.

## **Geopolitical Codes of the Third Polish Republic**

The geopolitical imaginations of the Polish elites in geographical and cultural sense were limited to the Old Continent. Hence their interpretation of the world as well as the scope of geopolitical codes most often had a local character, at most regional. As a rule they were determined by the location of Poland in Europe – borderland, symbolically between the East and the West, different from civilization point of view and the resulting geopolitical challenges, but also our culture, history, identity, economy, or finally political calculations of individual governments and political environments. All these factors have influenced and still influence the foreign policy of the Third Polish Republic, although they have different scale and distinct intensity.

I would particularly like to focus on the cultural or identity determinants, on which either way all politics is based, including foreign policy. The first Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Third Polish Republic, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, placed these determinants high since he made the foreign policy of Poland conditional not only on the national interest and *raison d'état* or international law, but also saw their

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<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, pp. 74-75.

realization based on “observing moral imperatives”, in this case implicitly Christian<sup>14</sup>. This thread was discussed more thoroughly by Władysław Bartoszewski, rightfully convincing that all order is more lasting and better understood if it is founded on solid grounds: “Fidelity to basic values and rules, which should organize world order is essential. Only the world shaped upon these principles will provide all countries with real safety”<sup>15</sup>. The firmness of the statements draws attention here: without providing axiological foundations no order or international system is stable.

## The Return to the West

The basic geopolitical direction in the discourse of the Polish elites was signed for years by the misused metaphor of the return to Europe, the return to the world of the West. Hence referring to identity discourse. The fundamental and highly emphasized in this discourse measure of the civilization affiliation of Poland was the adoption of Latin Christianity as the foundation of Western civilization. Therefore, Bronisław Geremek referred to the closeness to and familiarity with the West for the Polish people: “Poland has a strong sense of European identity. It is the result of our historical fate and our contemporary experiences”<sup>16</sup>. In the discourse it was illustrated by the metaphor of pride that our country is not the “inferior Europe”, but it has belonged to the West for centuries, to the centre of the world, while the communist period was rather an anomaly. Since Poland after 1989 returned to its civilizational roots, it is then that it wanted to look for allies, close to its values and making an impression with their freedom, wealth and stability<sup>17</sup>.

The alliance with the West was justified in many ways, emphasizing the affiliation and competency of Poland as the subject of the Western civilization, and not the poor relative from the East: common cultural heritage, especially Christian, common history and/or liberal and democratic values of European culture. The West, that is North America, mainly the USA and Europe, were presented for the public deliberately in

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<sup>14</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *Informacja o polityce zagranicznej rządu w 1990 r.* [Information on the Foreign Policy of the Government in 1990 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>15</sup> W. Bartoszewski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o głównych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 1995 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Main Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 1995 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>16</sup> B. Geremek, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 2000 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Basic Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 2000 (the text is in the author's collections)]. In turn Radosław Sikorski in 2008 said that together with the Baptism of Poland the country “became a joint-heir to antique tradition and Christian identity” as well as was introduced “into the political bloodstream of the Latin world”. R. Sikorski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych na temat polityki zagranicznej RP w 2008 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on Poland's Foreign Policy in 2008 (the text is in the author's collections)]. C.f. also R. Kuźniar, *Droga do wolności. Polityka zagraniczna III Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 2008, pp. 43-44.

<sup>17</sup> A. Horolets, *Obrazy Europy w polskim dyskursie publicznym*, Kraków 2006, p. 20.

a close way, but exaggerated as an imagined, strong and lasting union of civilizational values and basic interests, which of course did not exclude immediate conflicts or disputes<sup>18</sup>. Its foundation was the “union of the values of a democratic world”, inclusive towards Poland, based on the heritage of the European civilization, especially Latin. It is therefore characteristic that the heads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs adopted a secular discourse of Western liberal and left-wing elites, limited by the political correctness, as they aspired to them, where democracy was not only a political system but even a civilization, substituting Christian identification<sup>19</sup>. As a result, in the language discourse referring even directly to religion, first of all, Christianity, might be noticed very rarely. The exceptions were statements from the last years, such as Witold Waszczykowski’s that the values integrating the West are “above all, Roman law, Greek philosophy and Christian ethics, rationalism, the common good as well as respecting human rights. The protection of these values and the tenets of our civilization will be the sense of our diplomacy”<sup>20</sup>.

### Strategic Ally

In the discourse of ensuring safety and independence of Poland, emphasizing allied relations with the USA was vital, as it was the only superpower following 1991, which was a commonly socially accepted symbol of freedom, power, safety and prosperity. In addition, it aroused positive emotions in Poland, which resulted from the conviction of the majority of citizens about common values and civilizational roots, connecting us with America. Finally, from the common acceptance for the American leadership in the world, including cultural dominance.

This obvious pro-Americanism made it easier to accept American global geopolitical codes, in order to keep an ally and support global order beneficial to it. The elites justified their clientelism towards the Americans with benefits for the country, using a favourable hyperbole in the internal dimension that Washington “considers us to be crucial partners and meets Polish regional concepts halfway”, while “close ties with the United States of America are one of the strongest assets

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<sup>18</sup> W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Rządu na temat polityki zagranicznej w 2003 r.* [Government Information on the Polish Foreign Policy in 2003 (the text is in the author’s collections)].

<sup>19</sup> Otherwise the democratic model seems to be of little use for geopolitical analyses as well as international relations due to the nature of the international system, its hierarchization, decentralization, lack of clear superior authorities, shortage of democratic legitimization. That does not mean that attempts are not made to create models of democracy on a global scale: M. Marczevska-Rytko, *Religia i polityka w globalizującym się świecie*, Lublin 2010, pp. 45-47.

<sup>20</sup> W. Waszczykowski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2016 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Tasks of Polish Foreign Policy in 2016 (the text is in the author’s collections)].

our foreign policy has"<sup>21</sup>. Although the other side supported some aspirations of Warsaw, but running global policy, it saw the relations with Poland on a different scale, treating it as a secondary satellite, causing little trouble. In the discourse of the Information of the heads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the period of the government of President George Bush Jr., the most important spheres of foreign policy of Poland were linked and made dependent on the American policy. Uncritically accepted American identification of the threats of the world, which resulted from imposing a hegemonic code of global war on terrorism, also had cultural basis, including religious one. It is most often presented as the confrontation of the world of the West with Islam<sup>22</sup>.

### **The Pillar of Safety**

NATO, as the most powerful military alliance in the world and an anchor of the Western freedom and democracy in Europe, was to be the main guardian of safety of Poland, in the representations of the Polish political elites. Its strength "stems from unity and solidarity as well as loyalty to the rules that join our civilization"<sup>23</sup>. It was an explicit suggestion that NATO is not only the most powerful military world order, but also culturally limited to the Western world in its broad understanding and defending its advantage and interests on a global scale.

### **Commonwealth of Values – the Accession to the European Union**

The majority of the political elites supported the accession of Poland to the EU. This choice was presented in the discourse as civilizational, with no other alternatives for the future and development of Poland. For the issue of geopolitical codes the threads concerning geo-civilizational approach seem to be strongly visible. In the Information of the heads of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in the EU Poland was quite often presented as a community of civilizational values, more often referring to freedom, democracy than to the values deriving from Christianity, which could be regarded as an indication of adjusting to Western political correctness. Also other dimensions of integration were emphasized, namely that Poland enters the commonwealth

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<sup>21</sup> W. Bartoszewski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 2001 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Basic Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 2001 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>22</sup> C. Flint, *Wstęp do geopolityki*, op. cit., pp. 87-90; G. Corm, *Religia i polityka w XXI wieku*, translated by E. Cylwik, Warszawa, 2007, pp. 168-169.

<sup>23</sup> W. Waszczykowski, *Informacja na temat priorytetów polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2017 r.*, [Information on the Polish Foreign Policy Priorities in 2017 (the text is in the author's collections)].

strengthened by a “catalogue of common values”, shared by our state and society, and not only to a political or economic project<sup>24</sup>. The observation that it would be “impossible to imagine the functioning of the Union if it did not originate from the system of civilizational values” seemed to be significant against this backdrop<sup>25</sup>.

Few statements referred to religious background of European integration, for instance, reminding that the founding fathers of the Union are conservatists and Christian democrats, for whom religious values determined the need to cooperate and integrate<sup>26</sup>. *Inter alia*, it gave rise to the discussion on the demands of Poland, in accordance with the expectations of the Vatican, when in the debates on the identity of the UE it insisted that “Christian traditions should be taken into account in the preamble of the [EU] constitution” or in a slightly later narrative “the basic treaty of the European Union should refer to Christian values”, which ultimately did not happen<sup>27</sup>. This problem did not only have an internal meaning, but it also played a significant role in the process of discussion on the subject of the borders of European integration.

## Germany – the Union of Interests

When the Polish elites adopted a strategic Euro-Atlantic policy, they realized that the metaphorically shortest way to Europe leads through Germany, although it was profoundly mistrusted by a part of society and considerable segments of the elites. Hence in the discourse present in the Information of the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the first half of the 1990s this detachment from Germany and the fear from it was discouraged, while the positive programme, reconciliation was advised, building such relations that Germany would become a desired “solicitor” of our integration with the West, which supposed the dependency between the solicitor and the client<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> W. Bartoszewski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 2001 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Basic Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 2001 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>25</sup> R. Sikorski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2010 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Basic Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 2010 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>26</sup> R. Sikorski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych na temat polityki zagranicznej RP w 2008 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland in 2008 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>27</sup> W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Rządu na temat polityki zagranicznej w 2004 r.* [Government Information on the Foreign Policy in 2004 (the text is in the author's collections)]; A. Fotyga, *Informacja na temat polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2007 r.*, [Information on the Polish Foreign Policy in 2007 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>28</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *Informacja rządu o polityce zagranicznej Polski w 1993 r.* [Government Information on the Foreign Policy in 1993 (the text is in the author's collections)].

The influence of religion on the Polish and German relations might be noticed in K. Skubiszewski's message that reaching an agreement leads only through the desired reconciliation of both nations "first of all significant in moral categories", in the "sphere of the spirit as well as common culture and civilization". Courage, in turn, should serve as a model and a "deeply Christian" attitude of Polish bishops towards the Germans expressed in the famous letter from 1965<sup>29</sup>. This thread was developed by W. Bartoszewski when speaking of the "far-sightedness" of the Polish bishops as well as emphasizing a major role to reconcile the "environments of Catholic intellectuals", from whom he came<sup>30</sup>. On this basis our elites convinced the compatriots that you might benefit and keep a valuable ally, create a "union of interests", which should "turn into friendship", ending the historic prejudices and feuds between both nations in order to create model relationships with our Western neighbour<sup>31</sup>.

### A Special Role of the Vatican

One of the religious geopolitical actors often enumerated as an ally in the Polish geopolitical codes was the Catholic Church. It has a global scope, coherent doctrine, hierarchized structure and a clear managerial centre in the person of the Pope and the Holy See<sup>32</sup>. In principle the significant geopolitical role of the Vatican was appreciated in the Information of the heads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the period of the pontificate of John Paul II, whose presence, moral position and influences in the world had a significant meaning for legitimizing the new geopolitical direction of Poland.

Undoubtedly, the Pope was an authority for the vast majority of the Polish people. The personification of this geopolitical code was obvious, as Andrzej Olechowski confirmed: "The Holy Father is the most benevolent head of a foreign country towards us"<sup>33</sup>. In the discourse a significant and highly overrated geopolitical role of the Vatican

<sup>29</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *Informacja o polityce zagranicznej rządu w 1990 r.* [*Information on the Foreign Policy of the Government in 1990* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>30</sup> W. Bartoszewski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o głównych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 1995 r.* [*Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Main Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 1995* (the text is in the author's collections)]; R. Sikorski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych na temat polityki zagranicznej RP w 2008 r.* [*Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland in 2008* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>31</sup> W. Bartoszewski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o głównych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 1995 r.* [*Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Main Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 1995* (the text is in the author's collections)]; R. Zięba, *Główne kierunki polityki zagranicznej Polski po zimnej wojnie*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 57, 63, 70-76.

<sup>32</sup> J. Agnew, *Deus Vult: The Geopolitics of the Catholic Church*, „Geopolitics”, 2010, No. 1, p. 39.

<sup>33</sup> A. Olechowski, *Expose Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych w Sejmie w 1994 r.* [*Exposé of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Sejm in 1994* (the text is in the author's collections)]. B. Geremek, *Expose ministra spraw*

was rather a matter of the internal reception of the authority of the Polish Pope. Therefore, W. Cimoszewicz declared: "our role is to keep the nature of relations with the Holy See our priority in the entirety of the tasks of the Polish politics"<sup>34</sup>. Since its significance referred to religion, to the "moral authority of the Pope and the peace mission that the Holy See plays in the international community". This justified "our cooperation in efforts regarding the matter of international morality, peace and safety"<sup>35</sup>. The elites wanted to use the importance and social popularity of John Paul II to legitimize their civilizational and political choices. These words of W. Cimoszewicz are connected with the issue: "the lasting favour of the Holy See for our accession to the European Union has a profound significance for our foreign policy"<sup>36</sup>. Hence the aforementioned head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs thanked for publicly expressed support from the Pope for the most meaningful civilizational choice of Poland: "We are grateful to the Holy Father for supporting our aspiration towards the European Union"<sup>37</sup>.

### We Do Not Want a New Satelization

When analysing the discourse of the Information of the heads of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the foreign policy, we might come to the conclusion that Poland was and still is under identified threat from Russia, although it has never been said outright. This antagonistic geopolitical code of our elites was accepted by the majority of the Polish people and was based not only on the difficult mutual history and the resulting prejudices, myths, etc., but also civilizational differences based *inter alia* on religion, which is obvious for the average Polish person. Hence the scale and justification of mutual animosity was relatively clear and simple<sup>38</sup>. The discursive dramatization of the cultural strangeness of Russia as well as the threats of its expansion justified and legitimized in the public eye the civilizational and strategic turn to the West in the 1990s, so that we could seek allies guaranteeing the independence and security of Poland there.

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zagranicznych w Sejmie w 1999 r. [*Exposé of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Sejm in 1999* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>34</sup> W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Rządu na temat polityki zagranicznej w 2004 r.* [*Government Information on the Foreign Policy in 2004* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>35</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *Polityka zagraniczna Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w roku 1991* [*The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland in 1991* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>36</sup> W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 2002 r.* [*Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Main Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 2002* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>37</sup> W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Rządu na temat polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2003 r.* [*Government Information on the Foreign Policy in 2003* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>38</sup> A. Curanović, *Geopolityka religii w stosunkach polsko-rosyjskich*, in: *Geopolityka w stosunkach polsko-rosyjskich*, S. Bieleń, A. Skrzypek (ed.), Warszawa 2012, pp. 126-127; C. Flint, *Wstęp do geopolityki*, op. cit., p. 74.

The Polish elites, citing John Paul II as an authority, spoke of two cultural and religious lungs of Europe: the Eastern and the Western. The Western lung was Latin, while the Eastern one was limited to the "East Slavonic Orthodox faith". However, they were regarded, contrary to the viewpoint of the Polish Pope, as unequal identities and religions. Hence for the majority of the elites in the West, this relationship in the Information of the heads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appeared as a desired takeover of the cultural values of the West – valued much more highly – by the East. In other words, our elites had a low opinion of the civilizational identity of Russia. It would be better if it resigned from it for its own good. Then Russia and its external policy would undergo a beneficial change for us. "Because it lies in the Polish vital interest that a modern Russian state is shaped to the East of our borders, not seeking inspiration in the imperial heritage, but building its new identity of a democratic country, reliable and cooperative, and especially a good neighbour"<sup>39</sup>. Hence the change in the Polish-Russian relations was becoming a function of internal transformations of Russia, in imitation of the West.

In other words, instead of two relatively equal lungs, enriching the European identity, the majority of society shared the viewpoint of the civilizational superiority of the West over the East. This assessment was visible for instance in R. Sikorski's words: "if (...) it would like to and was able to adopt the *acquis communautaire* and institutional achievements of our Union, the horizon of the European world would move not only beyond the Dnieper, but right to the borders of China and Korea. (...) Such an extended West, with Russia's resources, the Union's economic power as well as the military power of the United States of America, would have the opportunity to retain influence in the world of rising non-European powers"<sup>40</sup>. In short, the Polish elites would practically be the advocates of the Westernization of the world.

The plains of inter-religious dialogue in the context of those two lungs concerned directly the hopes of R. Sikorski from 2013 that on the Polish and German pattern, the cooperation of the Orthodox Church with the Catholic Church will pave the way to improve the relationships between both countries and societies, reduce the high deficit of mutual trust: "We believe that Patriarch Kirill I's visit to our country last year as well as the common message of the Catholic Church in Poland and the Russian Orthodox Church will contribute to a reconciliation between our nations"<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>39</sup> S. Meller, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2006 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Tasks of Polish Foreign Policy in 2006 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>40</sup> R. Sikorski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2013 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Tasks of Polish Foreign Policy in 2013 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*; A. Curanović, *Geopolityka religii*, op. cit., pp. 142-143.

## War on Terrorism

Religion in the Polish geopolitical codes appears in the context of subordinating the external policy of our country to the American global geopolitical code of war on terrorism<sup>42</sup>, along with adopting an emotional discourse of fight, conflict etc. characteristic of this rhetorical figure. The aim was to cause fear, anxiety, demonize terrorists to justify the necessity to counter them at all costs. Hence the discourse of the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, R. Sikorski who stated that "terrorism is an especially dangerous form of crime as it is ideologized and fanatised. Terrorism has no religion and no nationality. It is the negation of laws and moral norms existing in all cultures". Terrorists are fanatics who reject dialogue and compromise, and they only accept the language of violence, which in fact copied the American viewpoint<sup>43</sup>, highly associating terrorist threat with Islam. In turn, W. Cimoszewicz calmed society in this respect, rejecting the concept of "the clashes of civilization" and convinced: "We are far from equating fundamentalism and terrorism with the entirety of cultures and religious denominations dominating in the sphere of the South, especially with Islam"<sup>44</sup>. However, this reasonable assessment was contradicted by the words complementing so to speak a cultural hostility towards terrorism that it is "in fact a deliberate and planned attack on the civilization of the democratic West, so also on us"<sup>45</sup>. This emotional statement, using elements of conspiracy combined the conviction of the civilizational superiority, benefaction and the need for universal power of the West over the world with a calculated threat against this power. The rhetorical separation between "us" and "them", the "good" and the "evil" was clear and simple.

The Manichaeian narrative of "war on terrorism" has clearly dominated the reports of the head of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs and copied American patterns. Even if the complicated foundation of terrorism was indicated, it was not necessarily connected with religion. Stefan Meller spoke of it, convincing that social frustration and anger among the societies of the South were often the consequence of poverty, mismanagement as well as political pressure, turning against the "wealthy of this world, that is the affluent countries of the West, as if providing patronage for the

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<sup>42</sup> C. Flint, *Wstęp do geopolityki*, op. cit., p. 75; W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 2002 r.* [*Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Main Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 2002* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>43</sup> R. Sikorski, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych dotycząca zadań polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2009 r.* [*Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Tasks of Polish Foreign Policy in 2009* (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>44</sup> W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski w 2002 r.* [*Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Main Directions of Poland's Foreign Policy in 2002* (the text is in the author's collections)].

W. Cimoszewicz, *Informacja Rządu na temat polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2003 r.* [*Government Information on Polish Foreign Policy in 2003* (the text is in the author's collections)].

corrupt and repressive regimes. In this disorientation and anger, the recognizable point of reference for societies, especially the Muslim ones, becomes religion, which alongside interpretative abuse sometimes turns into ideological call for the global revenge over the world of the rich and the faithless<sup>46</sup>.

The belief of Stefen Meller that the conflict can be prevented by modernization and secularization in imitation of the West, which are treated as a universal value, is quite characteristic for the discourse of our civilizational circle. Hence the Manichaeic diagnosis, based on false, but typical pattern of thinking among the elites in our civilization in terms of fight for the democratic, liberal and open Western world with the backward, authoritarian and oppressive world of Islam. Religion is treated as the basis for backwardness and aggression, hence the necessity for secularization and depriving its influence on public life. It was expressed by saying that in the region of the "broader Middle East" we are dealing with the cold, whereas in Iraq, hot "civil war between forces striving for modernity as well as normality and the forces pulling to the darkness of traditionalism and closure"<sup>47</sup>.

## Conclusion

Undoubtedly, in practice the scope of our geopolitical codes was limited to Europe as well as our closest neighbours, giving them local and regional character, in any case corresponding to our interests and possibilities. In general it is quite clearly visible that following 1989 the geopolitical codes of Poland have changed enormously: the enemies of the period of the Polish People's Republic became allies, while the forced ally became an enemy. It seems that for the majority of the analysed Information of the heads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs religion is not a significant factor, but treated rather as a part of the broader civilizational basis – similarly to the geopolitical codes of the majority of Western countries, maybe with the exception of the USA. This context is especially visible in the Polish path to the West, presented as a return to its own civilizational roots. The West, mainly the European Union, is identified at the same time as a commonwealth of values, and not the political or economic project. However, the commonwealth of values is treated as a universal and the best in the world, which justified the support for the need of the Westernization of the globe. References to religion are rather rare, maybe apart from the special status of the relationship with the Vatican in the period of the pontificate of John Paul II. This, in turn, is thought-provoking in society commonly

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<sup>46</sup> S. Meller, *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2006 r.* [Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Tasks of Polish Foreign Policy in 2006 (the text is in the author's collections)].

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem.

considered to be Catholic. The second sphere of the presence of religion in the Polish geopolitical codes is the code of war on terrorism, quite often illustrated as a clash of the civilization of the West with Islam treated as a religion of violence, backwardness and hatred. Hence for the sake of this world it would be better if it took on the finest, Western model of modernization as well as secularization.