

Which laws and customs would be favorable to her, and which would be adverse? Would there be more of the former or the latter? Above, all, would she be able to overcome hostile elements and exploit friendly ones every moment, with every heartbeat, with every passing thought? Would she be able to consolidate every vibrant fiber of her being into wise, persevering, steady strength that would ward off poverty, preserve her dignity in the face of humiliation, and shield her from fruitless pain, despair, and starvation?

Martha's soul was fixed on these questions. Memories that were both delightful and agonizing, memories of a woman who had once been a carefree, radiant girl walking lightly through the fresh grass and colorful flowers of her family's rural home, then spent joyful days, free of worry and sadness, at her beloved husband's side, and now stood in a widow's gown near a small window in this attic with her pale forehead lowered onto her tightly clasped hands—through all this day these memories had been swarming around her like phantoms ready to leave her torn and bleeding. Now they flew away before the stern, mysterious, but tangible reality of the present. This reality absorbed her thoughts, but did not seem to frighten her. Did she draw courage from the maternal love that filled her heart? Did she have the pride that despises fear? Or was she ignorant of the world and herself?

She was not afraid. When she lifted her face, there were traces of tears shed profusely for several days, and there was a look of sorrow and longing, but there was no fear or doubt.

### *Visions*

## **The West and the Rest**

### **A brief account**

#### **Jacek Koronacki**

**T**he West as a social entity that accepts its intellectual Christian heritage does not exist anymore.

The West as a sociopolitical entity based on the ideology of liberal democracy is a specter; see Alain Besançon's analysis of Russia and its lack of any ontological foundation (just like evil which is the absence of good) It was founded on

philosophical negation of the West, which in the meantime has become a specter itself. Liberal democracy is void of any ontological foundation, and hence cannot provide legitimacy to a societal organization, whether to a state or to its laws. By the same token, the term “the democratic state of law” is an oxymoron. Those who claim that liberal democracy can refer to, or find its foundation in, a Christian order (or any other order, for that matter) are “good-natured idiots” – regardless of whether the claim has its origin in their goodwill or alleged cleverness in fooling the liberal system. Interestingly and importantly, their IQs may be the highest: decades ago, such were those eminent and honest scientists and philosophers who, like Professor Andrzej Grzegorzczak or Rev. Józef Tischner in Poland, encouraged dialogue with Marxism and communism. Today, they include some Catholic researchers who urge democracy to Christianize itself, i.e., make democracy accept Christianity as its founding principle.

It is the task of the elite and of the university to be the medium that transmits a sense of order, but the elite and the university have opted for a revolutionary way to change society, starting with the Enlightenment and the ensuing progressivism. And so they died, along with their belief in Enlightenment and progress. On its deathbed, whether by a deliberate decision or through naiveté, the elite accepted the philosophy of the end of history. In this way they brought death to themselves and to the university.

Western Catholicism has no place to develop and grow. This is why Pope Benedict XVI resigned. While he does not have to explain the situation to the knowledgeable Remnant, he has no common ground with the contemporary West at large. The West does not understand his language any more.

This is not the end of the world: Catholicism will survive, but it will be a new Catholicism, a “pre-Western” one, the one of non-Western peoples, mostly pagan until their recent conversion. Pope Francis is the first pope of that new Catholicism. It is not unlikely that the new Catholicism will be professed almost all over the world in a matter of a hundred or a few hundred years.

Politically, we are at a turning point. It is a time of changing and uncertain alliances; local wars, whether hot, cold, or hybrid; rebuilding the Middle East and the Arab world; flooding Europe

with Muslims; uncertainty about Russia, who could fall, but could instead move further West; rivalry for the heartland between the United States and China (and Russia). Major powers are vying for dominance in the Arctic and in space; China has begun challenging U.S. dominance over the South China Sea. Needless to say, the emergence of China as a superpower has tremendously changed and complicated the global economic and geopolitical picture. The so-called war on terror is slowly heading for the dustbin of history, and rightly so – Muslim terrorism was never a serious threat to any state; the ISIL/ISIS/Daesh phenomenon is an element of the global geopolitical game.<sup>1</sup>

The Western Remnant has to conclude that among those who run the global game no side or faction is seriously committed to the defense of Christianity. The Christian West has died, and those who are in charge of the Western side of the game have completely different goals. These goals seem diverse and sometimes in competition with one another, depending on the domain of activity (e.g., business and finance vs. politics). Simply put, more often than not those in power in the West are hostile to Christianity.

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<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it is all too obvious that the problem is too complex to be encompassed by a single human being. The enormous literature on the subject does not help very much since virtually no well-informed source can claim objectivity—they serve or side up with different political bodies and different interest groups. It is not always clear even to a watchful observer whose interest is being promoted. Sources independent of governments and interest groups are seldom truly knowledgeable and possess their own personal biases. As a result, even in the case of the simplest conflicts it takes months or even years to start getting the full picture. To take just two examples, this was the case with the Smolensk air catastrophe of 2010 and the Maidan Square massacre on February 20, 2014. In the latter case, Hugh Prysor-Jones, a respected and by then an independent journalist who retired from BBC in 1999 and died by suicide in August 2015 published an interesting commentary in the April 2014 issue of *Chronicles*, but we had to wait much longer for more-detailed documentaries. A more-thorough report by Ivan Katchanovski of the University of Ottawa appeared in fall 2015, but the case remains unresolved.

This sketched-out demise of the West is compounded by a prophesied posthuman or transhuman technofuture. *Logos* is being replaced by *techne*—we are told that what is technologically feasible is good. In the foreseeable future, breakthroughs in biotechnology and information technology may bring not only genetically engineered babies but also humans with greatly enhanced capabilities achieved, for instance, through neuroprosthetic devices in their brains. Hopefully Peter Augustine Lawler and Marc D. Guerra are right when they claim that *the best way to “feel good” will always necessarily require human beings to be good or to act well. The much-prophesied time “after virtue,” heralded by various liberationist ideologies from Marxism to transhumanism, will never come. Human beings as human beings are destined to live in a world where virtue will always be needed and will always be recognized as such.*

None of the above should have any impact on the Western Remnant’s duty to stand behind the Truth and proclaim the Truth. In this way, the Remnant will influence what will be built on the ruins of the West.

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