

Civilisations at war in Europe

Maciej Giertych

Humanity can be divided according to race, religion, ethnicity, profession, level of education and other categories. Civilisation is a distinguishing feature that is of the highest importance. It pertains to the norms that people consider as obligatory in the organisation of communal life.

What I am going to present below is based on the teaching of Feliks Koneczny, a Polish historian and philosopher, who developed his own school of thinking on civilisational differences. He lived from 1862 to 1949. Until 1929, he was a professor of history but it is primarily during his retirement years that he produced his most important historiosophical works. Almost all of his writings were in Polish and until now, only *On the Plurality of Civilisations* (Polonica Publications: London 1962) has been published in English. This book has a lengthy introduction by Prof. Anton Hilckman from Mainz University, Germany, a former student of Koneczny, who explains Koneczny's scientific method. The book also contains a preface by Arnold Toynbee. It is Arnold Toynbee and Oswald Spengler that Koneczny should be compared with. He belongs to their class of thinkers. Toynbee and Spengler are well known to students of civilisations. Koneczny is not, yet it is Koneczny who developed a truly new approach to the issue of classifying civilisations and is deserving of universal acclaim.

Definitions

In order to understand what I shall present, some prior definitions are needed. Following Koneczny, I shall be using the term “civilisation” to mean the major division of humanity. The word “culture” will be reserved for smaller divisions within civilisations. These two words are often used interchangeably. Here, they will be used hierarchically. Thus, within the Latin civilisation, there are such cultures as British, Spanish, Polish and others. Within the Jewish one, we can find the Sephardic, the Hassidim, the Karaim and other cultures. This is nothing more than a convention that will be used here for the purposes at hand.

Civilisation is a product of the human spirit. It is defined by the norms of communal life that a given community accepts as proper for its functioning.

These norms are often transgressed because we have a fallen nature but nonetheless they do exist and it is the identification of these norms that is the purpose of the study of civilisations. Civilisation then, pertains to the norms according to which a society is organised. It is the method of organising communal life. Culture is a way of adapting this method to a specific community of people. In such a community, both a university professor and an illiterate person belong to the same civilisation and culture. The ability to use technical innovations such as cars, telephones and computers has nothing to do with civilisation in the sense used here.

For a method of communal life to be considered a civilisation, it has to function for several generations. Various experiments in organising communal life that did not survive the experimenter do not merit the claim to represent a new civilisation. In other words, a civilisation has to be historical.

Reality pertains to five categories;

truth	beauty	prosperity
goodness		health

Search for truth requires reason. Goodness is a quality of the will. These two categories are spiritual. Prosperity and health are material aims. The need for beauty is both material and spiritual. All human actions are related to at least one of these categories. Attitude towards these categories determines civilisational differences.

Inductive approach

Koneczny's approach is inductive. There are no *a priori* notions. Every claim has to be derived from observation, from evidence and not from preconceived ideas. Thus, Koneczny, for example, rejects the biological approach to civilisations used both by Spengler and Toynbee. The claim that civilisations arise, develop, grow, decline and die is not supported by evidence. Some do and others do not. For example, we know nothing about the origin of the Chinese civilisation nor do we observe any signs of its decline. It exists and we can study how it differs from others without making suggestions about the stage of development it has reached.

When studying civilisations, Koneczny looked for laws of history. He proposed some based entirely on documented observations. Here are a few examples:

- Inequality is a fact of life. Effort to catch up and overtake the richest, the wisest, the most virtuous, stimulates material, intellectual and spiritual development. Egalitarian notions hamper development.
- Civilisations differ so much that it is not possible to be civilised in two different ways. Everyone belongs to some civilisation but never to two or more. Someone may have a Jewish father and a Chinese mother but in terms of

civilisational affiliation, he will belong to either one or the other or altogether to a different one but he can never be civilised in both ways.

- Civilisations, by their very nature, must be at war with each other. This war has nothing to do with military activity or force. It is a war of ideas. It is a question of who educates whose children. Will they be brought up in the civilisation of the parents or will the parents allow that they be brought up in some other one.
- When a civilisation ceases to fight for its own identity, when it treats other civilisations as being of equal value, the lower one wins. “Lower” means the one that is less demanding.
- Civilisational mixtures can only be mechanical, never organic, and they soon perish because they are inconsistent. There are no historical examples of civilisational mixtures surviving for any length of time.

Organisation of communal life

In his analysis of the history of the world, Koneczny reached the conclusion that in matters of human thought and actions there are certain pairs of abstract notions that are mutually exclusive, such as creation and emanation, around which certain complexes of ideas form. Eight such pairs (see Table 1) concern the method of communal life organisation and therefore pertain to the topic of civilisations.

Table 1

Personalism	Collectivism
Emancipation of the family	Family not emancipated from clan
Induction (from observations)	Deduction (from <i>a priori</i> notions)
Historical consciousness	Negation of everything past
Unity in diversity, variety welcome	Uniformity demanded
Organic approach to problems	Mechanical approach to problems
Legal dualism (both private and public law)	Legal monism (either private or public law)
Self-government	Totalitarianism

Communal life can be organised either for the human person or for the society (collective). It is an essential element of a personalistic organisation that the family be emancipated from the clan. Solutions can be sought from experience, inductively, or from some theory that is adopted *a priori*. Taking experience into consideration requires knowledge of the past and respect for it. Those making *a priori* decisions are not interested in facts and demand uniformity. Relying on the experience of the past leads to the tolerance of diversity. Unity based on diversity produces an organism that is capable of self-repair, by corrections from below. Uniformity, commanded by *a priori* notions,

leads to a mechanism and a life regulated from above, which can only be corrected from above. Organisms form inductively, historically, from the natural development of relations. They create both private and public laws. Planned organisations can only create mechanisms, based on a single type of law, private or public, but not on both. This leads to totalitarianism, whereas local self-government stems from tolerance of diversity.

The Latin civilisation, from the stand point of which Koneczny begins his analyses and draws all of his assertions, belongs, in its entirety, to the first set of notions. All solutions derived from the second set are alien to it and spoil it.

List of civilisations

With this approach, the list of civilisations is short. So short in fact, that one can readily list them here. This is done in an order that attempts to be chronological but is not necessarily so because new evidence may change the order:

Chinese *
Egyptian
Brahmin*
Jewish*
Babylonian
Iranian
Syrian
Tibetan*
Punic
Sumerian
Aegean
Numidian*
Turanian*
Spartan
Athenian
Hellenic
Roman
Byzantine*
Latin*
Arab*

Incas
Aztec

The last two are difficult to place in the chronological sequence, so they are shown separately. One could perhaps argue that there are a few more, or that

some could be considered only cultures of other civilisations. Koneczny was aware that further studies will no doubt modify the list as scientific effort always does. But in any case, the list is short. Those civilisations shown with an asterisk exist today. The others have disappeared. We know about them only from historical evidence. Of the existing nine, the Turanian, Byzantine, Latin and Arab arose in historical times we can more or less define. The others were present in remote history – they appear ageless. All nine civilisations can be studied on the basis of existing communities. Koneczny studied the Latin, Jewish, Byzantine and Turanian civilisations in detail, since they exist in or near Poland. Thus, in the following text, I shall concentrate on these four, however I shall also try to collect the few words Koneczny wrote about the Arab civilisation, since it is of particular interest to Western Europe today.

Criteria for classifying civilisations

In the study of civilisations, criteria were often employed that have no relevance in identifying them according to the definitions used here. Other criteria have been completely ignored and yet they are of significant importance for the topic under discussion.

Race

I shall start with race, which is very often brought into the debate on civilisation, not only in Koneczny's days but also today. Race, however, has nothing to do with defining a civilisation. Race is a somatic characteristic; it is an aspect of the zoology of man. The physical differences between races may result in different abilities, well seen in the field of sport, possibly also in intellectual potential, though that is still a debatable issue, but it has nothing to do with the norms considered as proper for the life of a given community. As defined above, civilisation is the product of the human spirit.

An adopted child brought up in a family of a completely different race will normally grow up into a person endowed with the civilisation of the adoptive parents. Quite apart from this obvious observation, there are many examples of large communities of different race in the same civilisation or of people of the same race in different civilisations. White people, racially indistinguishable from each other, constitute a majority of the people belonging to Latin, Byzantine, Turanian and Jewish civilisations. In the Turanian civilisation, however, there are peoples of the white (Russians), Han (Chinese) and turkmenian (Turkey) race. Race does not define civilisation.

There is, however, a biological aspect to civilisation. Civilisation is a very strong marriage barrier. People normally look for a spouse in the same civilisation as their own. They expect to share civilisational norms with the

spouse. As a result, the civilisational barrier becomes also a biological one. In biology, races, both animal and human, develop as a consequence of isolation. An isolated community will develop some biological characteristics due to accidental loss of some genes (a process referred to as “genetic drift”) and possibly also due to adaptation to some specific environmental conditions. The latter cause requires life in a different climate or some other external determinant of the living conditions. In any case, an isolated community will develop some biological characteristics that will distinguish it from others, provided that the isolation is maintained. Of course, we know very well from animal breeding that isolation is the primary condition for the maintenance of specific races. In human societies, inter-civilisational marriage does occasionally occur but it is a rare phenomenon and the less it occurs the more biological differences will develop between civilisations. However, it is not the race that makes a civilisation. It is civilisation that can make a race.

Language

Some researchers have suggested that language or language group in some measure defines civilisation. That is not so. Even within the Latin civilisation itself, there are languages of very different groups (Indo-European, Finno-Ugric, Celtic and Basque). On the other hand, not only Indo-European but even Slavonic languages function in at least three civilisations (Latin, Byzantine and Turanian).

The rate of development of a civilisation, however, may depend on the language it uses because it is an important tool for development. When the tool is of low efficiency the development may be slow and stagnation of the civilisation may result. People who use pictorial scripts for example, as distinct from phonetic ones, may have difficulty in recording abstract terms in writing and therefore in passing them on to later generations. Thus the Chinese civilisation is weak in the humanities because they require constant introduction of new abstract terms that are difficult to convey in pictorial form. The Arabic script has the advantage that it can be written down very fast, similarly as our stenographic records. The Hebrew script, which does not record vowels, is prone to yield ambiguities depending on what vowels are assumed to be missing. Thus it is more the way of writing that has an influence on civilisational development rather than the language itself. Languages do change, not necessarily always developing, but sometimes also declining in efficiency as tools. The current trend of reducing the number of grammatical forms in use may result in loss of precision.

Religion

This is an issue that has led astray many a student of civilisations, including Spengler himself. Confessional proximity does not necessarily imply civilisational closeness.

Of the existing civilisations two are decidedly sacral in nature, the Jewish and the Brahmin. The Arabic is semi-sacral. Koneczny was not sure about the Tibetan civilisation, because he had not enough knowledge about it to consider whether it is sacral semi-sacral or something else. The other existing ones are not sacral because in them religion does not determine all categories of reality (truth, goodness, prosperity, health, beauty).

Buddhism changes with the civilisation in which it functions. Catholicism attempts to modify the civilisation it enters. Is patient in this effort, working over many generations. It will try to sanctify whatever in the local culture is amenable to Christianity (inculturation) but will never yield on the essentials. Islam has very little theology and the authority of the Koran limits the freedom of some Islamic rulers while others will take it upon themselves to be the interpreters of the Koran.

Law

Approach to legal issues is an important determinant of civilisation. There are three basic fields of law: family law, property law and inheritance law. There are many legal issues that make civilisations differ.

The way of acquiring a wife (paying for her or expecting a dowry), monogamy, polygamy or polyandry, the rights or privileges of the wife in the husband's household, are all elements of family law that have civilisational consequences. It is not possible to have a society simultaneously polygamous and monogamous, both paying for a wife and expecting a dowry, giving privileges to a wife and acknowledging her rights. Koneczny claims that all societies are patriarchal and that he knows of no society existing now or in the past based on a matriarchal system. He is prepared to modify this view if evidence is produced to the contrary, but at the moment the issue of matriarchy has no bearing on the discussion of civilisations.

The hierarchy in the family, between generations, the issue of hierarchy in the clan and between clans, are all elements of family law very important for the discussion of civilisations.

Property can be communal, family, private or a combination of these. True private property is possible only in a monogamous system but monogamy does not automatically imply existence of private property. Wife and children may be considered property of the husband and father or endowed with their own property rights.

Law can be private, public or both. Private law develops in the family, in the growing family, in the extended family, in the clan and nation. Public law develops in a town or state, it organises life among unrelated inhabitants.

The way in which a property, a right or title is inherited is another important issue distinguishing civilisations. The caste system stems from this. Even a wife can be inherited (levirate).

Source of law

Even more important in defining civilisations is the source of law.

For those of us brought up in the Latin civilisation it is obvious that ethics is the source of law. We consider the written law as always imperfect. All the time we try to improve it. By improvement we mean bringing it in line with what we consider as just, as ethical. An issue must first be discussed from the point of view of its compliance with ethical norms and only then do we write it into law. In this discussion there is role for the society at large. This is where democracy stems from.

However there are civilisations in which it is not ethics but the interest of the state that decides what is written into law. In this approach the state has to be efficient and not ethical.

Again it is also possible that law has its origin in the will of the ruler. The Romans who observed this in the Orient have described the system as: “Quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem”. (What pleases the ruler has the force of law). In such a system the ruler is free of ethical constraints. He can be a good and ethical man, a blessing for his subjects. But he can also be evil and ruthless, a plague for all around. In either case the legal system is very simple and efficient

Finally revelation can be the source of law. This is so in the sacral civilisations. For the Jews it will be the Torah, the Mosaic Pentateuch. For the Brahmins it will be the books Wedda. Revelation cannot be changed, it can only be interpreted. The letter of the Law matters.

We say that a righteous person need not know the law to live in compliance with it. However this is only true in those civilisations where ethics is the source of law.

Attitude to ethics

Attitude to ethics is another source of civilisational differences. Is everything to be judged from the point of view of ethics or are some issues free of ethical constraints. Should politics be under ethical constraints? What about war? What about war on crime? Should the state be judged from the point of view of ethics? What about the ruler? Answers to these questions determine civilisation.

Should we consider the letter of the law or the intent of the law giver? This is another important civilisational difference.

Do we have one ethic applicable to all situations, or do we have situational ethics, ethics that change depending on where and with whom we deal? This is once again, an important civilisational difference.

Time

It is Koneczny's own discovery that attitude to time is an important issue distinguishing civilisations.

Some primitive people have no sense of time at all. Ability to measure time is an important development. Next, the idea of a calendar arises, usually dating from some important historical event at its beginning. Some civilisations have cycles, where time comes back, it returns. This allows thinking in terms of shorter periods. For the same purpose eras are adopted. Peoples often measure time from the last war or other catastrophe such as a major forest fire or flood.

Next in the development of human relation with time is control over it. This comes with agreement to meet a specific term, with the concept of specific time and date, with punctuality. It was trade that developed the importance of defining the time and place where the supplier and trader meet. A producer may sell his goods to the consumer either at his production site, if the consumer cares to come there, or on a market to which the producer brings his goods. He needs to know where and when the market operates, but generally he can be flexible about exact timing of his selling efforts. However when he commits his goods to an intermediary, a trader, punctuality becomes essential. Those unable to deliver on time lose the capacity to participate in trade. Thus trade promotes punctuality.

The next development is the treatment of time as a commodity, a good to work with, to utilize or waste. Organisation of life, of the amount of time allotted to study, work, rest and leisure, the fidelity to these allotments, recognition of the possibility of wasting time, the ability to prevent others from wasting one's time – these are all attributes of working with the time factor.

Finally, the notion of responsibility for the past and future appears. This is historical consciousness, feeling of pride or shame for the behaviour of our ancestors. This is also consciousness of responsibility for the future behaviour of our descendants. This requires thinking in time terms much longer than the duration of one's own life. This provides a motif for efforts in the interest of future generations.

Civilisations differ in their attitude to time and this can be used in attempts to classify them.

Examples of civilisations

When studying civilisations it is necessary to find what is permanent in them over generations. Arrangements that are temporary can be considered as

trials only and if they do not persist over several generations they do not define the civilisation. Civilisations often adopt propositions from other civilisations but usually they are found to be inconsistent with the norms governing one's own. Mixtures of civilisations inevitably fail.

When civilisations live close together, they are either separated by political boundaries or by some form of apartheid that prevents mixing. Without apartheid the key issue becomes: "who educates whose children". Most (though not all) civilisations want to civilise others. This means we try to make other people adopt norms we consider best. The civilisational norms adopted by the next generation will determine the success or failure of defending and expanding one's own civilisation. It has happened in the past that victors in a military conflict adopted the civilisation of the conquered people. This usually occurred when they intermarried with local women and allowed them to bring up their children. How these interrelations between civilisations work is well demonstrated by the example of Poland which a millennium ago adopted the Latin civilisation but throughout its history has been under pressure from the Byzantine and Turanian ones from the outside and from the Jewish one on the inside. Let me start with a description of the Latin civilisation, which Koneczny believed to be his own (as I do today). Since we consider it best, we would like everyone to adopt it.

The Latin civilisation

Poland has been a part of the Latin civilisation for over a thousand years. This civilisation developed on the basis of antique Rome but under the influence of the ethic of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church functions in many civilisations and in each of them it brings up the societies towards certain civilisational notions. Adoption of Catholicism does not immediately amount to the adoption of the Latin civilisation. Only in the case of sacral civilisations (e.g. Brahmin or Jewish) does conversion to Catholicism automatically mean that the convert has to abandon not only his previous religion but also the civilisation built on it. That is why it is so difficult. In other civilisations inculturation follows. Inculturation is the adoption into the Catholic faith of all that in the existing civilisation is adaptable and the rejection of only that which is inadaptable. Adoption of the Latin civilisation is not necessary. However Poland on rejecting paganism in A.D. 966 went head on into adopting the Latin civilisation. It quickly became a part of the West, an inheritor of Rome, both antique and Christian.

Each civilisation has its own method of developing spiritually, materially and intellectually. In the Latin civilisation this is done on the basis of ethics of the Catholic Church. The Decalogue is obligatory always and everywhere, in all fields of private and communal life, also in international relations. Thus even politics and wars are not free of ethical constraints. This is what makes us

different from the Byzantine and Turanian civilisations, from Germany and Russia respectively.

In the Latin civilisation, ethics is the source for laws. As a consequence, a development of morality ensues. The Decalogue gave prohibitions, defined sin and terrified with God's wrath. The Sermon on the Mount gave instructions, defined virtues, appealed to love God and neighbour. This amounted to an increase of demands and an elevation of the motivation to be good. The Decalogue was not abolished but there was a departure from the letter of the Law and a turning towards the intent of the Lawgiver. In the history of the Latin civilisation we have a constant growth of ethical demands and a continuous perfection of laws based on these growing demands. At an earlier time duels were the norm, considered as a form of God's judgement. Now they are considered sinful. Slavery was, at times, considered acceptable. Today, we shiver at the very thought of it. There used to be a moral obligation to avenge an injury inflicted on a relative (vendetta). Today applying private justice is considered immoral. Life continues to bring new problems and new definitions of norms from the point of view of ethics are needed (labour walkouts, test-tube babies, progressive taxation, seat-belts in cars). Not everything that is already defined by ethics needs to be written into law. But all new laws must encompass the ethical consideration. Each generation transfers something from ethics into law. However when something considered unethical, already forbidden by law, is decriminalized (abortion, divorce, homosexual practices), this we treat as a regression of law, as a civilisational decline. Only growth in legal demands is permissible. The standard is continually being raised by the saints. What is a heroic virtue in one generation, becomes the ethical norm in another, and finally becomes law.

In the Latin civilisation there is legal duality. We have simultaneously private and public laws. The first developed in families and the other in towns, i.e. in unrelated societies. Neither was dominated by the other. Private law functions in family traditions, in various clubs and organisations, in co-operatives, in political parties, in trade unions, in professional guilds, etc. The state does not (should not) interfere in these privately developed and adopted norms, statutes and regulations. On the other hand there are state laws which regulate the relations between peoples, ensuring internal and external security.

In the Latin civilisation the relation between rights and freedoms depends on the principle that the freedom of one ends where the right of another begins. The doctrine of Paweł Włodkowic¹ on the rights of the heathen grew out of this

¹ Paweł Włodkowic rector of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, was a Polish delegate to the Council of Constance (1414-18). Poland and the Teutonic Knights had a conflict at the time over the method of dealing with pagans. The Knights were waging wars against the heathen Lithuanians (including Latvians and the now extinct Prussians, an ethnic group related to the Latvians and Lithuanians) with the support of the German Emperor and visitor knights from all over Europe. When Poland and Lithuania fused (the Lithuanian prince Jagiełło married the Polish queen and became the king of the united Poland and Lithuania) and the Lithuanians adopted Christianity the *raison de être* of the Knights disappeared. They continued to war against the Lithuanians and the

thinking. It grew out of the principle of loving one's neighbour. It is on this principle that the union of Poland and Lithuania was established. Any union within the Latin civilisation has a chance of lasting only if it follows this principle.

In the Latin civilisation, religious tolerance is obligatory as well as the separation of civil and spiritual authorities. There is, however, no tolerance for evil. Ethical indifference, in education or health services for example, is unacceptable.

In the Latin civilisation, monogamy is obligatory. It is only with monogamy that private ownership is possible. Each marital union is a simultaneous creation of a new economic unit. The newlyweds cease to be part of the economic entity of their parents and become part of the new entity. With polygamy such changes do not take place. The ownership lies with the clan, the community or the patriarch. Christ by elevating marriage to the rank of a Sacrament, by insisting that it be monogamous and indissoluble, at the same time gives economic freedom to the new family

The strength of the Latin civilisation lies in its ability to self-organise, to self-repair, to act from below and to work organically. For this reason, local life is very important, local councils, local elections, co-operatives, own-initiative committees, credit unions and others. When this local life is rich it is possible to reduce the role of the government to a minimum. In the army, in communication infrastructure, in foreign affairs, central directorship, from the above downwards, is essential, but in other fields it is an obstacle.

When developing communal life from below inequalities result. They are a consequence of the differences in the way various communities handle their affairs, a consequence of differences in the effort put into solving problems. As a result of seeing these inequalities, there is a tendency to try and catch up with those more successful, who are richer, more educated and better as people. This drive to equalize with the leaders elevates materially, intellectually and spiritually. On the other hand egalitarianism, equality imposed from above, by the government, reduces people to a common denominator at a lower level. It wastes human effort and ingenuity. It reduces the will to improve oneself. Nobody likes to work for others, for those who do not wish to work. Thus acceptance of inequalities is a major feature of the Latin civilisation and a driving force for its development and progress.

The control over time is most developed in the Latin civilisation. Time is considered as something valuable which has to be treasured, efficiently used and saved. There exists a link across generations, a historical consciousness, and a common responsibility for the past and the future.

Poles supporting them, claiming that their Christianisation was deficient. At the Council Włodkowic in the name of Poland presented a view that also heathen have rights and that these should be respected; that Baptism must be an option and not a must enforced by military conquest. This view was adopted by the Council and it became the norm in the Catholic world. This terminated crusades and the idea of fighting heathen for the purpose of promoting Christianity. This is a good example of the way in which morality develops in the Latin civilisation.

Only in the Latin civilisation did nations as understood in Poland develop, namely as a natural, spiritual union, based on free will to be part of it. It creates common responsibilities and common rights. It is timeless.

The Polish understanding of a nation

In the Polish language the word “nation” has a very particular meaning, unknown in other languages. In the languages of Western Europe “nation” is equivalent to citizenship, to the passport held. It is also understood in the ethnographic sense, as of people using a certain language. However for us Poles the word “nation” contains both an intellectual and a sentimental content. It encompasses something more than language or citizenship. For several generations² we did not have a state, we did not have Polish citizenship, but we remained the Polish nation. Foreign citizenship was imposed upon us, but we did not accept a foreign nationality.

What binds us is a common legal consciousness, a common social structure, a common ethic, a common civilisation. We represent a separate culture within the Latin civilisation.

One could ask the question: Do Gipsies belong to the Polish nation? We use the same language, we belong to the same religion and we are citizens of the same country. However I am sure that most Poles, as well as most Polish Gipsies, will say that we do not. We govern our lives by different laws, we have a different social structure and we have a different attitude to ethics. For these reasons we include the Gipsies and they so include themselves, under the notion of an ethnic or a cultural minority.

When Roman Dmowski³ sent to the printers his “Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka” (Thoughts of a modern Pole) in 1904 he demanded that the word “Żyd” (Jew) be written with a capital letter. He was accused of anti-Semitism for this. At that time Jews were treated as a religious group and for this reason “żyd” (Jew) was written with a small letter as we do for all religious denominations in the Polish language. However for Dmowski Jews represented a separate nation. Today Jews themselves wish that in Polish they be written about with a capital letter (Żyd) feeling more a nation than a religion.

On the other hand no one would ever consider treating the Polish evangelicals as a separate nation. Even about the Ruthenians we spoke of as *gente Ruthenus natione Polonus* (of Ruthenian origin yet Polish nation). This refers to all those who accept the same legal notions, social structure and civilisation.

² In the years 1795-1918 we were partitioned between Russia, Prussia and Austro-Hungary, and the occupants tried to Russify or Germanize us.

³ Roman Dmowski (1864-1939), an important Polish politician, founder and leader of the national democratic movement, the main political representative of Polish interests during World War I and at the post war Paris Peace Conference.

One of the important features linking a nation together is the common historical consciousness, or historicism as Koneczny called it. This refers to the tradition of common public life (as distinct from dynastic and family memory), to the cult of the common past and to the common responsibility for the past and the future. According to Koneczny the national consciousness appeared in Poland during the reign of Władysław Łokietek⁴. It was then that the public desire to link up principalities with a common history and common language into a single state first appeared. In France this consciousness appeared with Joan of Arc. In England it appeared in the XVI c. in view of the danger from the Spanish Armada. Germans started to think of themselves as a nation when defending against Napoleon. In Italy this occurred as late as the second part of the XIX c. This national consciousness does not arise against anybody, but it may arise in defence against somebody. It must arise from a feeling of having something in common that is worth defending.

In forming a nation a great role is played by literature. The English came together around Shakespeare and the Italians around Dante – interestingly enough, 500 years after he died. The love of one's language is a constant feature of a nation. One can know many languages, but each man has only a single language which is his own, his mother tongue. It happens that the knowledge of one's own language is poor, as is common among various émigrés, especially in later generations, but the sole fact of having a language that is cherished as one's own, not in a utilitarian sense but emotionally, indicates one's belonging to a particular nation.

The notion of a nation is also connected with the love of a particular place on earth, of some region which is treated as one's own, as the fatherland.

A nation is a great family, a fatherland, a common patrimony. However a nation will not form while a clan system persists. The nuclear family must be free, must be emancipated from the clan. There must be a respect for private property. People should feel free. They should function organically, from below and not in a mechanistic arrangement regulated entirely from above. Only then can a nation form as the fruit of a common will and consciousness that is free and under no compulsion to come together.

Thus a nation is not an anthropological or biological consequence of using a certain language or occupying a certain place. It is a product of human will. It is a product of the work of many generations. It forms as a merger because its members want to merge. It is nation that makes a state. A state never makes a nation. Thus all these post-colonial countries, all these Nigerias, Tanzanias, Rwandas and Angolas will never produce a nation. Never has anything such as a Yugoslav or Soviet nation formed. There will also never be a European nation.

⁴ Władysław Łokietek (1260-1333). Poland was split up into many fiefdoms ruled by related members of the Piast dynasty. Łokietek organized them to fight together against the growing nuisance of the Teutonic Knights; a German Order that settled in what is now northern Poland.

However new nations do form, as for example the USA, composed primarily of immigrants from Europe. Those immigrants on entering North America usually consider themselves members of their nations of origin, sometimes for several generations. But the recognition of the freedoms, tolerance, rule of law and way of life as something valuable and worth defending and exporting leads to national consciousness. This comes only after acceptance of the language, history and laws as one's own. This process is possible only in the Latin civilisation. It often happens in all Latin civilisation countries that immigrants integrate and accept the nationality of the adopted state as their own.

It is not possible to form a nation artificially. A nation forms from the consciousness of a civic freedom, of a common will that develops from below towards a common organisation in conformity with a specific tradition.

Koneczny defines a nation as a civilisational association that is personalistic, has a common fatherland and a mother tongue.

Everyone is born in some specific social, ethnic, religious and civilisational situation. One inherits certain values. Should one inherit a nation, a national consciousness, then there will be a tendency to enrich it, to increase its value. One will try to leave behind more than one has received. This is because national consciousness transgresses generations. There is no nation without a history, without a need to preserve and enrich the heritage for future generations. This need is referred to as patriotism.

Patriotism is the tendency to enrich a nation through one's work and intellectual efforts and one's readiness to make sacrifices in defence of the national legacy. So defined, patriotism is never a danger to neighbouring nations. Neighbouring patriotisms imply eternal peace. When one tries to enrich oneself at the cost of others, at the cost of neighbours, at the cost of subjugated or disenfranchised peoples, then it is not patriotism but its pathology. This is a pathological understanding of national consciousness. Similarly love of one's family and care for its needs does not create problems for neighbours. On the other hand nepotism, family egoism, the stealing from neighbours is a contradiction of family virtues.

Our Polish patriotism has never been a danger to our neighbours. We recognize their rights in spite of the fact that they have often violated ours. They have been violating our rights because they have no national consciousness or it is immature.

The Polish understanding of the notion of a nation is a value worth preserving. It is something very concrete, very positive and very noble that we would like to propose to all peoples of the world, as an idea worth exporting. It is something very, very different from nationalism understood as hatred of what is foreign. Our glorification of national virtues is often misunderstood in the West, through faulty translations, as nationalism. It is nothing of the sort.

Koneczny considered the Latin civilisation as the highest because it is most demanding on its members. When it is not defended, when no efforts are made to promote it, lower civilisations will take over, lower meaning ones that are less demanding. Attempts at combining civilisations, at synthesizing them, lead to an uncivilised state and eventually to the victory of the lowest one. For a demanding civilisation to survive it must be consciously defended and promoted. An effort must be made to make others accept its values. It requires an evangelical zeal.

He also considered that the idea of a nation was most strongly developed among the Polish people and he proposed that we Poles should spread its understanding to others.

The Turanian civilisation

The Turanian civilisation was created by the Mongols of Genghis Khan. Its primary feature is a military organisation adapted to a mobile war. It is best described by such words as camp, movement, space. For this reason family ties are very weak in this civilisation.

This civilisation has no public law. There is only private law and it is derived from the commands of the ruler. The state is the ruler's farmyard and his will is the law of the land. The society has no rights at all. It is not allowed to organise itself – it is the responsibility of the state to do so. Thus all organisations are steered from above and any initiative from below is squelched. The power is absolute and the ideal ruler is a ruthless despot. Everyone is in the position of a slave or servant with respect to his superior. Citizens do not exist at all. In the West a citizen lives also in his state. A Turanian lives exclusively in his state. All matters are state matters and there are no issues he can call entirely his own. All property is that of the ruler and one can only be a lease holder of some property. However the lease may be terminated at any time, at the will of the ruler. He has the right to dispossess anybody he wishes.

The whole organisation of life is military in nature, based on orders from above and thus it is maximally centralized. Bureaucracy serves the ruler and not the people. It acts in the name of the ruler and it is to him that it is responsible and never to the people that it deals with. Thus, all life is very mechanical much like in an army. It has no organic elements.

Since social organisation is geared towards war-making, it develops only when the state wins, when it has a military power and successes. When military successes are lacking, when there are no new acquisitions, the state weakens or even disintegrates. Thus the major social effort is directed towards building a military capability.

In the Turanian civilisation, nations in the European sense do not form. There are only conglomerates of peoples, clans and races. They are all bound by the winning star of a successful leader. Temüjin, the first Genghis Khan,

organised people of various races, ethnic origin and creeds into a successful army and led it to conquer the world. Wherever he set his foot, he organised life in a military manner leaving his lieutenants as the local rulers. Eventually, many emancipated themselves from the Mongol supremacy and continued as the new absolute rulers acting in the same manner. Frequently, the people organised in this manner pick up their name from some military ruler, the Seljuqs, the Nogais, the Osmons and others. A significant role is played in this civilisation by romanticism and the legends surrounding the memory of a successful ruler.

When a strong ruler is lacking, “troubled times” come. There is disorientation and weakening. Nobody knows what to do. The emergence of a new strong dictator indicates an end to the “troubled times”, a return to normality.

In the Turanian civilisation, an attitude towards religion is almost non-existent. As a rule it is completely immaterial for the ruler what people believe, as long as the clergy do not interfere in the way the ruler rules, as long as the religion does not interfere in the matters of state and there is no criticism of the ruler on any issue. There is no ethic that would be binding on the ruler, so he should not be judged from the point of view of ethics.

Today, we see the Turanian civilisation most clearly in Russia. There, one-man rule is the norm. It matters not whether this is a khan, a tsar, a first secretary or a president. He is most loved and accepted if his rule is free of any constraints. And he has to be a winner. The Turanian people do not accept a loser as a ruler. So he has to prove that his domain and influence constantly grow. He is never criticised, nor contested. We should not expect Russia suddenly to accept a democratic system, because the people do not expect it. If asked to vote they will vote as the ruler will tell them to do. And of course any opposition will be squelched. A good example of the Russian way of thinking is the famous statement by tsar Nicolas II after the Baltic fleet was totally drowned in the famous battle of Cushima in the 1904 war with Japan. When following western press there were outcries that it was a mistake to send the Baltic fleet round the globe to Japanese waters, the tsar said: “What do these scum want and why do they interfere? It was my fleet!” Thirteen years later the tsar had to abdicate and was later killed by the Bolsheviks – yet today he is considered a saint and martyr in Russia. He is loved in spite of all his inadequacies. The Bolsheviks soon returned to the same despotic mode of rule and even Stalin is remembered with nostalgia by many. The rules of Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin were “troubled times”. State property became private property of the oligarchs. But now we have Putin. A tsar returned. He dispossessed all of the oligarchs and Russia is back to normality - Turanian normality. To remain on the throne, the ruler must have successes. Today, they may constitute influence over countries buying Russian oil and gas. There will be growing attempts at regaining dominion over lands that Russia lost under Gorbachev and Yeltsin.

Poland met with the Turanian civilisation in its Mongolian primary model already in the XIII c. This, however, was only a transitional contact. They came, they conquered us and they soon left. They only left some folkloristic memories such as the interrupted bugle-call from the Kraków Marian church tower and the Lajkonik⁵. Later on however, we met with the Turanian civilisation more seriously and in fact, with four different cultures of it, the Tartar, the Turkish, the Cossack and the Muscovite. Each of these has influenced us in a different manner, in some instances quite successfully. Quite apart from the military contacts, which as a rule, protect against such influences, there was a time in Poland when we were very attracted by the Turkish model. Turkey, with its strength was impressive, also with the affluence of the Ottoman court. Particularly in the XIX c. when we did not exist as a state, Turkey did not recognise the partition of Poland and received many of our émigrés. Many Poles found lucrative employment in Turkey reaching quite high positions. It was then that Turkishness was in vogue. It was fashionable to dress in a Turkish manner and to blame our political demise on the lack of a strong military organisation in pre-partition Poland.

The Cossack influence was also once quite strong, especially during the XVII c. The love of the steppes, of constant movement, of freedom from community life, proved interesting to many an adventurer who wanted to organise his own military group, his own mini-statehood sitting constantly on horseback. This was possible in the largely uninhabited eastern plains of what is now Ukraine. There was a lot of romanticism involved in this care free, brigand type of life, yet basically, representing nothing more than banditry. However, the occasional engagement in militarily conflict with similar bands of Tartars, Cossacks, or Turks added a sense of patriotism to this activity.

Much more serious was the influence of the Muscovite culture. This gave rise to what is known in Poland as “sarmatism”, an attitude of some magnates on our eastern borders that was characterised by absolute self rule over their estates and total irresponsibility towards the state as a whole. These magnates, depending on the size and wealth of their estates, often treated themselves as independent princes. They had their own military forces, their own laws and often even an independent foreign policy, as was the case with several magnates from the Radziwiłł or Pac families. These magnates, if they wanted, could be a blessing to all around and often they were. However, they could also be their scourge, because they felt and in fact were above any law. That was because of the strength of their estates and the weakness of the state.

In more recent times, in the first half of the XXth c., the political camp of Marshal Piłsudski was very much influenced by the Turanian way of thinking. We speak of his political camp rather than of a party. Other political movements

⁵ Lajkonik, a figure of an Asiatic warrior with a model of a horse attached to his belly that once a year (Sunday after Corpus Christi) goes through the streets of Kraków hitting children on their heads with a make-believe truncheon.

referred to themselves on the basis of the ideology they adopted as socialists, national democrats, Christian democrats etc. The followers of the Marshal referred to themselves as Piłsudskites. They were linked by a military organisation, functioning on the basis of orders given from the Marshal or in his name. Individual thinking was discouraged. The leader knew better. The Piłsudskites considered themselves above the law. They organised a *coup d'état* in May of 1926 and until 1939 ruled ignoring all laws. They manhandled, killed, or imprisoned political opponents. At the same time, they cherished a kind of military romanticism, great mobility, self-sacrifice, patriotism and demonstrated religious indifference.

During Soviet times (1944-1989), we were very resistant to civilisational influences from the East. Almost instinctively, we rejected all that came from there. However, the legend of Marshal Piłsudski grew and an admiration for his style of ruling. Many people today dream of a strong arm rule as they are tired of the political uncertainty accompanying democracy, elections and party politics. This is a very great danger to our identity, for several reasons. First of all, this is a political philosophy that discourages thinking. It leaves thinking to the superiors. Such an attitude is necessary in an army, where responsibility is clearly hierarchical and there is no time for philosophising. In everyday life, we need to habitually use our reason to judge. Everything that kills thinking reduces us civilisationally.

Moreover, the fashion for Turanian thinking results in a constant search for a strong leader, the pointless anointing of almost anybody as the God given saviour and giving him total responsibility for everything. Soon, there is disappointment that he did not rise to the expectations and that he did not know what to do. In our Latin civilisation, the ruler must have the support of thinking, creative citizens and not only disciplined executors of his will. Good leaders are hard to come by. It is much more common that we have to rely on a team and we must be able to work together, the creativity of each member advancing the common cause.

Finally, Turanian thinking kills all organic effort from below. Many believe that something useful can only be done from above, from the central government. And thus they fight for the privilege of ruling. However, it is the specificity of our own civilisation that it is capable of correcting itself from below. It encourages everyone to do whatever is possible to improve life in the nearest proximity. Good ideas turned into functioning improvements will spread of their own by copying. This never happens in the Turanian civilisation. All improvements need to have approval from above and only then can they be introduced.

Turanian rulers remembered as great are those who introduced such improvements and those who expanded the realm, no matter how ruthless and inhumane they were in executing these successes.

The Byzantine civilisation

The Byzantine civilisation developed in contrast to the Roman West. The basic difference was in the attitude to religion. In the Latin civilisation, the Catholic Church has achieved a total doctrinal independence from the state. Moreover, it has achieved a right to criticize the state or the ruler for acting in an unethical manner. In Poland, this became most obvious in the 1079 conflict between St. Stanisław, then the bishop of Kraków and the king, Bolesław Śmiały. The bishop criticised the king. The king killed the bishop. As a result of this, the king had to lose his crown. Not because he lost an election or a battle but because he lost morally. He had to exile himself. This incident established the norms in the Polish Church-state relations. In Poland, it is improper for the state to criticise the Church. On the other hand, the Church is not only entitled to but is expected to criticise the state when issues of moral significance so require.

In Byzantium, the situation was decidedly different. The emperor had executive powers also over the Church. He treated the Church as one of the elements of his power, much like he treated the judiciary or the army. The emperor dictated religion to his subjects. Constantine the Great made Christianity the state religion. He decreed so from the throne. He called synods and councils. He decided what the subject for discussion would be. As a consequence, the state became above ethics. Its main purpose was to be efficient and not necessarily ethical. In the Byzantine civilisation, the realm of politics is not limited by ethics. It is free of it and therefore it is often barbaric. As an example, one can mention the blinding, in 1018, of the conquered Bulgarian soldiers by emperor Basil Bulgaroktonos (the Bulgar-Slayer) and sending them home on foot with only one one-eyed soldier per 100 to lead the way.

The German Holy Roman Empire took up, together with the imperial name, this very mode of communal life organisation⁶. As a result, when in Poland the king who killed a bishop had to lose his throne, at the same time the German Emperor fought with the pope for supremacy (Caesaropapism). At one time he would go to Canossa in repentance and at another would impose his will on the pope. Since that time and until today, there is a civilisational struggle in Germany between the Latin and the Byzantine civilisations. In the East of Germany, Byzantine influences always dominated. In the West, particularly in the Rhineland, there was more Latin influence. The return of the capital from Bonn to Berlin is likely to be civilisationally, an unwelcome development.

⁶ Emperor Otto II (967-983) married Theophanu (972), the niece of Byzantine emperor John I Tzimisces (969-976) and the sister of emperor Basil Bulgaroktonos (the Bulgar-Slayer) (976-1025). While his father Otto I was still alive, Otto II was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by Pope John XIII who also presided at the wedding with Theophanu. This established a link between the Byzantine imperial title and built up the imperial ambitions of the German rulers. At that time, Byzantium was very rich and an object of envy by the more primitive western rulers. Theophanu brought with her to Germany a splendid court that established a certain style of functioning for the Holy Roman Emperors. This is the origin of the Byzantine influence in Germany that persists until this day.

When the Teutonic Knights were Christianising with the sword, our Paweł Włodkowic spoke up for the rights of the heathen (see footnote no. 1). When religious wars ravaged Germany, in Poland, we had a state without witch-hunts and stakes. When they had the barbaric principle of *cuius regio eius religio* (whose rule, his religion) and citizens frequently had to change denominations, we had religious tolerance and many exiles from the German religious wars found refuge in Poland.

Even Catholic Austria was Catholic only by the will of the ruler. The emperor had a habit of interfering in Church matters, even on such issues as the liturgy. He would use a veto right to the election of a pope that he did not like (last time in 1903). This habit is often referred to as Josephinism, after the emperor Joseph II who was very much involved in imposing his will on the Church. Catholicism did not prevent Maria Theresa from participating in the obviously unethical partitioning of Poland together with Russia and Prussia in 1772 and 1795.

Germans have a habit of calling those rulers “great” who were successful, such as Friedrich der Grosse and Bismarck in spite of the fact that they were unethical in their political actions. Hitler was considered great while he was winning. However not now, since he lost. His unethical methods did not pay, they proved unsuccessful.

Byzantinism does not like variability, inconsistency, or unevenness. While in Rome and now in the Latin civilisation, unity of purpose unites but methods and forms may be very different, in Byzantium and now in Germany, a state imposed uniformity is the norm. Henceforth, the generally esteemed cleanliness and functionality in Germany is established. This comes from the universal readiness to follow state orders. *Befehl ist Befehl!* A command is a command! And this is generally accepted by all. On the other hand, within the Latin civilisation, we are individualists. We prefer to do things in our own way.

Drill and obedience has also a negative side to it. It mechanizes communal life. It stifles grass root, organic activity and introduces, from above, a centralized and bureaucratic uniformity (witness the mode of functioning of the overregulated European Union, basically steered by the Germans). This transfers responsibility for actions to those who commanded the orders. It even justifies crimes.

It is well known that all German war criminals have been defending themselves on the ground that they have been only obeying orders and that they were told to act as they did. For them, the responsibility did not fall on them but on the government. In the extreme interpretation, only Hitler was guilty. In postwar Germany, a law came into force that forbids the extradition of Germans. As a result, most war crimes were judged in Germany, according to their standards and not in the countries where they were committed.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that even in communist Poland, it was unimaginable for the murderers of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko to defend themselves

on the ground that they were only carrying out orders of the secret services they served in. Everyone is personally responsible in front of a court of law. Criminal orders should not be obeyed. It is as simple as that.

Associated with this issue is the typical for Byzantine thinking superiority of form over content. Since it is not the aim that is common but the form in which something is done, it tends to dominate, however, at the same time it becomes empty of content. In the Latin civilisation, the aim is of primary importance and the form is of little significance. We adapt it to our own understanding of what in the given moment would be most proper. As a result, we constantly search for improvements, frequently making mistakes along the way. The Byzantine Germans have perfected the mode of decreeing forms from above. It was plain to see that in Germany, both capitalism (BRD) and communism (DDR) functioned efficiently. Fascism also functioned efficiently.

We tend to be impressed by German efficiency. We often envy them. We dream of having such law and order, such functionality and such affluence as they have. However, all of this is paid for by the Byzantine readiness to submit to the state in all matters. Our strength lies in diversity, in the readiness to criticize the government and we should defend these values against the German intention of regulating everything from above – today from Brussels, rather than from Berlin. The overregulation so prevalent in the European Union is obviously of Byzantine and not of Latin origin.

Furthermore, there is a growing tendency in the European Union and also in many countries traditionally of Latin civilisation, to accept the Byzantine readiness to conduct politics without ethics. As distinct from the Turanian civilisation, the politician or ruler should himself be ethical in his private life and he is judged from that perspective. However, he is free to conduct policies unlimited by ethical concerns. This concerns not only those who practice politics in an immoral way but also those who believe that politics is an immoral field and therefore, stay away from it, concerning themselves exclusively with their own affairs. This attitude amounts to leaving politics only in the hands of those who are unconcerned about ethics. It is also a Byzantine attitude. The attitude proper for the Latin civilisation is to get involved, act ethically and demand from others that they also act ethically, both in internal and in international politics. The fact that opponents are not restricting themselves by ethics is of no relevance here. The police must also act ethically while dealing with criminals.

We all sin but everyone should desire to act ethically, responsibly and in conformity with what one believes to be proper. Abandoning this desire in the field of politics is the main danger that lies for the Latin civilisation in its contact with the Byzantine one.

The Jewish civilisation

The Jewish civilisation is one of the oldest on earth. Its durability is not connected with the possession of some state or with the knowledge of any specific language. In some sense, a memory and now solidarity with the Israeli state plays some role, as well as the Hebrew language generally unknown to the majority of the Jewish people (even though they are all literate at least since the 1st century). Until quite recently, it was a dead language and only since the establishment of the modern Israel was it resuscitated as a living language in that state. However, neither the language nor the state is of any great importance in defining this civilisation. Jews often move from one country to another and at the same time, usually very readily, change the language used at home to adapt to the community at large.

In the Polish language, we speak of the “Jewish nation” – however this is a completely different phenomenon than a nation in the Latin civilisation. For us a nation means a common past of a flourishing or downtrodden statehood, a common language and literature in this language, as well as a specified place on earth considered as the fatherland. In other European languages, the phenomenon of Jewish togetherness is referred to by some other name than *nation*, usually as a people (the Jewish people, le peuple juif, Judentum), and this is well justified. They are indeed a people but the cementing element has nothing in common with the national solidarity of European nations.

The cementing factor lies in a sacral civilisation and in particular, a sacral consciousness of having a special mission given to them by God. They are conscious of being the elect, the “chosen people”. This mission, of course, was to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah, Who was to be born among them and to preserve the revealed truth until His coming. They have fulfilled this function. Many of them have recognised Him when He came and brought the Good News, the Gospel, to other peoples. What was a mission of one people, became the mission of the Church.

What we consider as the Jewish people today refers to a tragic community, a people that has not recognised the time of its visitation. It is those who did not recognise Jesus Christ as the awaited Messiah. Those Jews who followed Christ merged within the Christian universality. Those who rejected Him became wanderers throughout the world, among believers of other religions, jealously nurturing their chosenness, this messianic consciousness, which gives a defining mark to their civilisation.

It is a civilisation of programmed separateness, of programmed differentiation from the surrounding communities. In Judaism there is no specified theology that one could get to know and accept as a convert. One can only get married into Judaism, that is biologically become part of it. Jews do not seek converts. By their own will, they prefer to live a separate life, in apartheid from the surrounding communities. They form their own communes (kahals), they govern themselves by their own rules and they take care to maintain also a spatial separateness. They form the ghettos themselves, as districts in which they

live together, comparable to the Chinatowns in the USA. It was only Hitler's Germany that created the concept of forced separation, of a closed ghetto from which Jews were not allowed to leave.

Jews are not pioneers. They do not go conquering the wild world or overpowering the hazards of nature. They settle among other civilisations, preferably among the rich. They tend to migrate from poorer to richer lands. They do so always as a group, immediately forming their own separate community.

Jews do not represent any specific race. It is a great misunderstanding to consider anti-Semitism as racism. The Jews of Poland are racially indistinguishable from the Poles. The Jews of North Africa are racially close to the Arabs. Ethiopian Jews are close to the Ethiopians. And so it goes the world over. However, the fact that they stick to their own community, their own civilisation, their own separateness, results in biological differences developing. It is not the race that forms the Jewish civilisation but the civilisation can cause a biological separateness. This is never a total separateness because intermarriage occurs frequently but where Jewish communities live for several generations it is sufficient to develop some distinction from the surrounding society. All of this is a consequence of the communal consciousness of being the chosen people.

The memory of being chosen by God, of having a special relationship with God, of having a promise directly from God available only to the biological descendants of one people, results in monotheism degenerating into monolatry. The belief in a one and only God changes into a belief in one God, one's own God, a tribal God. The Prophets have successfully eradicated polytheistic tendencies among the Old Testament Jews. However, monolatry was only dealt with by Jesus Christ who addressed His message to all people and not only to the chosen. In reality, monolatry is a form of polytheism because it accepts the possibility that other people have other gods.

Messianism did occur as an idea among other peoples, suddenly reaching the conclusion that they have a special God given role to play. But this seldom lasted for many generations. Jews by nurturing their chosenness have created a whole civilisation based on fidelity to the Law revealed to them by God. By Law they mean the Torah, the Pentateuch of Moses, which of course is also for us a Holy book. However, we read it differently. The Jews see in it the Law, which is immutable and which has to be obeyed. Every letter of it is binding at all times. Jesus Christ has taught us that it is not the letter that is important but the will of the Lawgiver. He did not change the Law but gave it substance. He accused the Pharisees that they serve the Lord with their lips but not with their hearts. He called for the saving of a lamb or ox that fell into a well on a Sabbath (Mt 12:11; Lk 14:5), because the Sabbath is for man and not man for the Sabbath (Mk 2:27).

We often tend to laugh at Jewish habits and denigrate them. However, when a pious Jew travels on Saturday on a train sitting on a rubber water bottle he is doing so to remain faithful to his religion, because he is not allowed to travel on a Sabbath except when on water. For him, this is showing obedience to the letter of the Law, a moral imperative. For us, this would amount to hypocrisy, a breach of the intent of the Lawgiver. With the growing complexity of life and a development of the understanding of the intent of the Lawgiver, we adapt rules to what we consider as ethical. For us, the law is derived from ethics. For Jews, the opposite is true. Ethics is derived from the Law.

For them, of course, life also requires changes in their habits. For the sake of convenience, they introduce interpretations of the Law, explanations for various circumstances, so as to maintain the letter of the Law but in fact, to find a way of living reasonably. All the learnedness of Judaism (Talmud, Kabala, rabbinic writings) consists of these interpretations of the Law, comments to the interpretations, comments to the comments etc. - a constant casuistry multiplying exceptions to immutable rules. This development is driven by convenience. Outside of Judaism, all this learnedness is valueless. However, the mode in which it develops is often copied and constitutes a spiritual threat. We must change rules when we decide that this is demanded by our understanding of what is and what is not ethical and not because we find them difficult to follow. In the Latin civilisation each generation transfers something from ethics into written laws. The multiplication of laws constantly restricts our freedom. The Jews are restricted only by the Torah and all of the later developed interpretations reduce the obligatory scope of these restrictions. Regrettably also among us, in conflict with our own civilisation, laws appear which make permissible that what is not considered ethical and what was already forbidden by written laws (abortions, divorces, homosexual acts, satanic cults, etc.). In this way, the link between ethics and law gets lost. Convenience rather than ethics becomes the source of laws.

In our civilisation, a righteous person living honestly will not get in conflict with the law, even not knowing it. On the other hand, living in agreement with the letter of the law but dishonestly, derives from the pharisaic attachment to rules but not to ethics. The exploitation of rules, of imprecisely written laws, of gaps in them, of their multitude and inconsistencies, activities on the verge of legality, tax evasion techniques, all formally within the law but unethical, derive from the rabbinical casuistry, from the mentality of deriving ethics from the written law. Yet, such a swindler, acting within the law, has in fact no moral respect for any law. He cannot be compared to the Sabbath traveller sitting on a water bottle, who is also using a convenient interpretation of the Law, but he is doing this in order to fulfil the Law and therefore in full respect for it.

Since many rules of the Mosaic Law were untenable in the Diaspora (such as the ban on learning the Greek language), interpretations were introduced on

the strength of which the fullness of Mosaic Law is obligatory only in the Promised Land, but not outside of it. The Diaspora became a form of escape from the Law. Since ethics is derived from the rules, two ethics developed, one for Palestine and one outside of it. Further multiplication of ethics followed, for various occasions, on various days, towards Jews and non-Jews (gentiles). In this way, situation ethics developed, which for us is something completely alien. We recognise only a total ethic, the same ethic for all occasions. But are we always faithful to this understanding? For example, do we not sometimes treat differently the stealing from a neighbour as compared to the stealing of state property or the lies told to friends as opposed to those told to enemies? Such situational ethics derives from the Jewish civilisation and we should avoid it.

Within the Jewish civilisation, built on the Torah, five different religions developed, depending on the recognised books for the interpretation of the Law. Koneczny summarises these religions in the following manner (Table 2):

Table 2.

		<u>Examples</u>	
with Torah	without Talmud	without Kabala (1)	Sadducees, Karaites
		with Kabala (2)	Sabbatites, Frankites
	with Talmud	without Kabala (3)	Lithuanian Jews
		with old Kabala (4)	Sephardim
		with Kabala + pypul (5)	Hassidim, Ashkenazim

Five religions, but they lack any theological differences that would lead to divisions. Regardless of the tradition pertaining to books that interpret the Torah, all Jews form a single family united by the Messianic consciousness of being the chosen people. A Jew may become an atheist, he may convert to another religion, even become a cardinal, but he will always be regarded by other Jews as a member of the Jewish community.

We are often impressed by Jewish solidarity, by the way in which they always support each other, by their faithfulness to the Jewish community. We observe that they participate in various battles, being present on both sides. However, after the defeat of one side, the Jews on the winning side make sure that the Jews among the losers do not suffer. After the next conflict, the result may be opposite and the same solidarity will follow. This is a mode of survival they have developed living among the gentiles. We do not have such solidarity. In fact, we accuse ourselves of quarrelsomeness and jealousies. We envy the Jews for their fidelity to each other over and above any conflicts. However, this difference has also a second side to it. We believe that we must support truth, goodness, justice and not a fellow countryman, just because he is a fellow

countryman. We must combat evil, lies, whatever we consider, even mistakenly, as improper. That is our understanding of righteousness. We should remain ourselves rather than support what does not deserve supporting.

Both our position and the Jewish position make sense, but only within the context of our respective civilisations. This clearly demonstrates that no middle ground is possible on issues differentiating civilisations.

The Arab civilisation

It is often believed that Arabs are by nature nomads. Many of them were and they appear to have developed from herdsmen rather than from tillers, chasing or following their animals in search of pastures. However, turning to agriculture or establishing towns started millennia ago so the nomadic lifestyle is hardly an identifying feature of this civilisation.

Treating Islam as the defining feature of the civilisation is also a mistake. The mosques are not houses of God, they have no sacrificial altars. These are only prayer halls. There is also no clergy, the imams being only prayer-leaders. Mahomet himself was an imam, as were all the caliphs. An imam is someone who can read and interpret the Koran. And since the Koran cannot be translated, the imam must know Arabic, at least, sufficiently to read it if not to understand it. In each mosque near the pulpit, there is an ornamental niche which indicates the direction of Mecca towards which all those praying should face. The sources of belief are the Koran and the tradition called the Sunnah. The Sunnah is composed of comments and notes on the Koran by oldest commentators. The Sunnites are orthodox, while the Shiites reject tradition and do not recognize the first three caliphs. The Shiites live in Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mongolia and in the oases of Algeria. The Arab world is Sunnite as is also Turkey. Both branches preach five basic duties: prayer, alms, pilgrimages, fasts and participation in holy wars. There are some customs derived from Judaism such as the ban on pork and sacral slaughter of animals. Jesus is considered a Prophet and Mary a Virgin but they believe that treating Jesus as the Son of God is deemed a polytheistic idea. It was Mahomet who imposed the monotheistic idea on the Arabs. He is also responsible for introducing the ban on intoxicating drinks and games of hazard but he gave no restrictions on polygamy or slavery. Islam is a simple religion with little popular understanding. Few Muslims know the Koran. It is full of regulations about hygiene and contains an exact family and property law, entering even into minor details. It also contains an ethical system. The woman is not man's equal and does not pray with the man in the mosque. Only the husband may divorce his wife. The veil and sack dress are not demanded by the Koran so it is practiced in some Islamic communities but not in others. The attitude to fine arts is assessed precisely but generally only negatively. Since representations of living beings are banned, Arab art is directed towards exquisite ornamentations (arabesques).

The Koran, thus, touches on categories of health, prosperity, beauty and goodness. In the category of truth, it is little concerned with the supernatural (there is practically no theology) and not at all with the natural. Family and property law constitute the whole of jurisprudence. However Koran's shortcomings from the point of view of civilisation go deeper. All its injunctions are concerned with family life alone, at most with the clan and it knows only private law. There is no law of government in the Koran, so how could government be based on the Koran? Government is left to the will and pleasure of the authority, so that the arbitrary will of the ruler becomes an indispensable part of the law. This inevitably leads to the arbitrary will of every official. In fact the Koran is stretched to meet the needs of the State. Military service is in the name of holy war. Taxation comes under the duty of alms giving. As a result, care for the needy becomes entirely a state responsibility. Of Moslem government, it is said that it is patched with the Koran and lined with self-will, and accordingly unable to do without terror. Government consists of applying a magnified private law into public affairs. A separate public law could not develop until a break was made with the principle that Koran is the source of law. Two schools developed, one for which only what is contained in the Koran and the Sunnah is worthy and the other claiming that everything that is not condemned in the Koran is allowed. Based on these two trends various sects developed and stretched even to polytheistic ones (in Pakistan). Some, as for example, the Shiite Assassins were fanatically cruel, functioned in the Turanian world and were eventually dealt with by the Mongols in a very typically Turanian manner – they were physically liquidated together with their families by mass executions performed by an obedient military force. Everywhere, Islam adapted according to the character of the local society. Islam is present in many civilisations. Not everything Arab belongs to the whole of Islam and not all that is Moslem to the Arab civilisation. One must distinguish those who received the Koran from the Arabs and those who received it from the Turanians, Turks, or Iranians. These are completely different worlds as far as civilisation is concerned. Arab scholars consider the Turks as something worse than the *giaours* (heathen), as barbarians of Islam. There is also Islam in other civilisations, in the Brahmin (with the caste system maintained), in the Chinese (Dzungaria - with polygamy modified to wife + concubines) and others. Islam does not define the Arab civilisation.

Islam did not create a sacral civilisation in the sense that Judaism and Brahmanism did. The Arab civilisation is only semi-sacral. Fully sacral are only the most extreme of the Shiite sects, among the Mozabites of the oases of Algerian Sahara. Ethnically these are not Arabs but Berbers. They are bound to their holy cities, to which they must return, because their women are not permitted to leave them. The women's faces are covered most closely. Not only drinking but also smoking of tobacco is forbidden. The supreme appellate

authority is a college of men learned in the Koran which exists in each town. Apart from this exception nowhere did Islam create its own civilisation.

In Islamic lands, a separate civilisation arose, only where the interpretation that everything is permissible that is not forbidden in the Koran was adopted. In those areas, Islam quickened civilisation into abundant growth, as it were, over and above, or besides the Koran. This is how the Arabic civilisation arose, called after the Arabic language in which the Koran is written, but not after the ethnic element with which it was in no way linked. It is not Arabs that spread Islam. But their language, thanks to the Koran, became the language of a brilliant civilisation of intellectual splendour extending considerably beyond the frame of the Koran. In this way, already in the 8th c., a separate philosophy of law emerged (Abu-Hanif, d. 772). The whole of Arab civilisation enjoys non-sacral law as well as the authority of the Koran. Law can exist outside the Koran, provided it is not in conflict with it. The source of law is learning. Learning is treasured and schools of superior kind were always part of this civilisation. The scholarliness of the Arab civilisation rescued Aristotle for posterity (later taken over by the Latin philosophers). Arab mathematics (algebra) is particularly famous, based on the Arab numerals the whole world has now adopted (imagine long divisions or multiplications using Roman numerals!). Public law is derived from the private, with the complication that it must somehow be deduced from the Koran which contains only private law. From the private law, a social system developed. Much of public life is despotic, the state intervening at any time in any social matter. In smaller communities, the sheik decides everything and the same authority served the ruler of the great historic Arab states. Yet, it is always so that the ruler is subject to the supreme authority of the Koran (not so in the Islamic parts of the Turanian civilisation, where the law is derived from the Koran but its interpretation is a prerogative of the ruler alone). In relation to time, the Arab civilisation knows the era, but has no historical awareness.

The contact with the Latin world following the invasion of Spain and parts of France by the Moors (Mauritanians) led to the development of the most advanced culture of the Arab civilisation (Cordovan). The architectural treasures of Cordoba, Seville and Grenada are witness to the glory of that culture. In the Cordovan culture emerging from its clan organisation, an emancipation of the family was achieved, due to adopting monogamy. As a result, spiritual forces started to organise separately, outside of state organisation. Wherever this occurs, a new opportunity is born for public life, for the development of an opposition, a legal opposition, morally permissible, not constituting anything improper and being a manifestation of the emancipation of spiritual forces from physical ones. The Cordovan culture proves that such emancipation is possible in the Arab civilisation.

Today, in dealing with Islamic terrorism, it is important to distinguish Islamic fanaticism born within the Turanian civilisation and akin to that of the Assassins, from the religious fidelity to the Koran present within the Arab civilisation.

Concluding remarks

The issues that differentiate civilisations are mutually exclusive. Integration, middle ground and the ‘melting pot’ are not possible. Civilisations will compete with each other and in a single society only one will eventually win. The war between civilisations takes place primarily in the schools. Who will have the greatest influence on the mentality of the next generation? Who will educate whose children?

One might add that the problem with immigrants boils down to answering this basic question.

Who will give a civilisation to the children? Will it be the parents or someone else? Since the French Revolution, we have observed a gradual taking over of education by the state in Europe. We continually witness the reduction of parental influence on education and at the same time its gradual laicisation. The extent of education grows and the influence of the Church and parents declines.

This is not an insignificant development. We risk the situation that some civilisationally alien politicians will decide about the education of our children and parents will hardly notice that their children are gradually drifting away from their civilisation.

We should ask ourselves the following questions: Do we have one or many civilisations fed into our educational system? Who decides about the educational programs? Who decides about the educational trends promoted in schools, on TV and on the internet? Who has the greatest influence on the education of children – the parents, the school, the Church, TV or the internet?

The educational system must be consistent. It must hold onto the principles of one civilisation. In most of Europe, this should be the Latin civilisation. The education in school should be an extension of the education served at home and the two should be complementary and compatible.

In 1925, my grandfather forbade my mother the reading of a book given as a standard text in her school (the Noble prize winning book, *Chłopi* (Peasants) by Władysław Reymont) because he considered that it had immodest content. The school respected this decision. The whole class read the book and my mother did not. In fact, she never read it even when she was older because her father considered it immodest. Which European school today would respect such a request made by a parent? We should demand that such habits return.

Authors of educational programs are frequently guided by some ideological option. Unfortunately increasingly frequently it is laic and deliberately demoralising. We constantly hear about the need to serve children “sex-education” in classrooms. Children are being indoctrinated in the topic of contraceptives and sexual gymnastics. The choice of readings is often with a preference for socialist and atheistic authors while Catholic ones are being eliminated. In the teaching of history, there is a lot of falsehood, downplaying of the role of Christianity and patriotism in the building of Europe, and a glorification of revolutions and internationalism. In teaching biology, the unproven theory of evolution is promoted to diminish the role of the Creator.

It is true, that there are teachers who even in the most difficult of times put aside the official textbooks and try and convey to children the truth as best they can. The majority of teachers, however, just repeat what is in the textbooks without any additional critical commentary. They do not want to risk reprimands or simply do not notice the laic nature of the served indoctrination.

An even stronger influence on children is exerted by TV, watched from early childhood, several hours a day. And what sort of role models are to be found in the TV programs? Normality is dull, so most of the time, abnormal situations are portrayed. Unfortunately, much of the TV watching takes place when the parents are not home.

A similar bad influence is exerted by popular music. This is listened to with the help of walkmans and no one knows what the child is listening to. Modern music often contains erotic or satanic content.

When children have problems, who do they go to with them? Do parents have time to listen to them and advise them in time?

There is only one solution. For home to be the main educator, the mother must be there. I know that I am risking the wrath of many women who might read this. But let us not fool ourselves. In the civilisations where a mode of family life is so organised that mothers are at home all the time, the civilisation is perpetuated. In places, where the mother is absent most of the day, the children risk being educated in a set of values alien to the parents. A home without a mother is an empty home. Children run away from such homes and seek advice elsewhere.

It is absurd that we now have an economic necessity to have two incomes in a family. This is not a choice, but a necessity. The social system must be reorganised to make it possible to live on a single income and to have a living home with a mother always ready to control children and be available to them.

Immigrant families generally are capable of surviving on a single income and the mothers are at home. As a result, the influence of the schools on the children is minimal. It is counterbalanced by the influence of the home. Banning of headscarves will not solve the problem. Children of various civilisations interact in schools and influence each other. With the influence of the home

declining in the western society and with the teaching programs outside parental control, we face the risk of civilisational changes in the next generation.

Our civilisation has to be actively defended. Even at the risk of poverty, we must insist on having control over our children. We must also insist on having control over educational programs. We must demand that TV programs promote noble causes and upright role models. We must also demand that behaviour proper for our civilisation be lauded and improper scorned. We must insist that immoral music be banned. We must insist that the behaviour of the society at large be appropriate and that when it is not proper, it be penalized. We must try and influence the education of those who live amongst us but do not have sufficient support from their families. We must also try and influence those among us who are from other civilisations. We should be educationally on the offensive.

Otherwise, our civilisation will lose.

On a different level the situation is more optimistic. Quite apart from all the evils colonialism entailed, it is a fact that the European colonialists tried to graft their own civilisation on the subjected peoples. One of the main routes of achieving this was to invite brighter individuals to come and study in the European country. Elites were formed to think in a European manner. When decolonisation came, it was primarily the European educated indigenous people who took over responsibility for running the freshly emancipated countries. Much of this form of influence continues with students from former colonies enjoying the privileges of a European education. The USA is doing the same inviting many students from third world countries to study there.

Education is one route of promoting one's civilisation. There are others. The colonialists often left some legal system and a form of civil organisation, a representative political system, method of organising the police, the army, the medical service, the forest service etc. They also left a Christian ethic and some Christian Church structure, gradually becoming ethnically local. Not everything works as well as it should, but the European standard is usually something to aim for.

Currently, quite apart from the colonial legacy, in dealing with third world countries, the Europeans (including those from USA, Canada, Australia etc.) demand certain norms of behaviour as a condition for the relations. Usually what is demanded is some level of democracy, of respect for human rights, of combating corruption, of economic responsibility. By formulating these demands we are educating others to our way of thinking.

Obviously, not everything promoted in the third world by the West is worthy. Unfortunately we also tend to export our own evils, such as wars or supplies for wars, socialism and other materialistic ideologies, population control, sexual promiscuity, family instability, hedonistic life-styles. Members of other civilisations wishing to protect themselves from these evils resist also

the positive influences of the West. We would be much more effective in promoting the Latin civilisation if we would take care to protect it at home.

Index

Definitions

Inductive approach

Organisation of communal life

List of civilisations

Criteria for classifying civilisations

Race

Language

Religion

Law

Source of law

Attitude to ethics

Time

Examples of civilisations

The Latin civilisation

The Polish understanding of a nation

The Byzantine civilisation

The Jewish civilisation

The Turanian civilisation

The Arab civilisation

Concluding remarks