

Summary

Karol Wojtyła, or John Paul II, has been in focus of worldwide interest since the very moment of his election. There are three levels of the reception of his pontificate: individual experience, the social and political level, as well as philosophical and theological analysis of the doctrine. It is the last level that the present work is dealing with.

The work has been inspired by John Paul II's words of May 20, 1979, to a group of Polish emigrant pilgrims „Church is a great family of peoples and nations, each of which, in due course, has brought into the community its own witness and marked its share in the universal unity with its own gift." John Paul II, with his service and teaching, has brought in the Polish experience and the Polish witness.

The present work is situated within the range of contemporary philosophy. The subject of the analysis is the Polish values and Polish inspirations in the teaching of John Paul II. This national heritage overlaps in the papal service with the universal message of Roman Catholicism. Therefore, the key problem is an attempt to show the position of the Polish thought, particular as it is, in the universalism of the papal kerygma. The aim of the work is an analysis and characteristics of the Polish experience and values in the teaching of John Paul II.

In the work, two realities have been explored: first, the Polish thought born in the millenary experience, and second, the phenomenon of Christianity, lasting for twenty centuries. These two sources have shaped the mind of Karol Wojtyła, who as Pope John Paul II develops and increases the heritage.

Hence, firstly, the universalism of the Roman Catholic and the Polish thought are not antagonized realities; secondly, the Polish thought brings some experience which could enrich the Christian thought; thirdly, Christianity grounds and adds strength to the Polish thought.

The national and Christian traditions, although differing in their essence, both serve Man. The service to Man is a point of encounter of nation, state and Church. The coexistence of those communities is useful to Man. The work is based on primary sources, i.e. the texts of John Paul II's teaching. It takes into account a wide philosophical context, both European and Polish, in order to show the position and function of the national problems in the papal teaching, as well as the ideological sources.

The work consists of four chapters. The first chapter is a biographical and analytical one. It highlights the thought of Karol Wojtyła on the basis of his literary, scholarly, journalistic and pastoral production, showing consecutively his literary, mystical, phenomenological, and personalistic interests.

The second chapter deals with John Paul II's concepts of basic existential issues of human being and man's work, and analyzes such values as truth and freedom.

The third chapter shows human existence from the point of view of the communities of nation, Church and the European continent.

The final, fourth chapter, is dealing with one problem, i.e. culture. Culture has been very strongly emphasized by the Roman Catholic Church since Vaticanum-2. John Paul II perceives the unusual importance of culture in the process of evangelization and gives a great deal of his attention and concern to culture and people who make it.

The present work does not exhaust the subject. The teaching of Pope John Paul II is so unusually rich and at the same time so deep, that it will long be an object of philosophical afterthought.