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Reception of John Paul II's Encyclical *Ut unum sint* in Cieszyn Silesia

Abstract: There are places where the ecumenical movement is born and grows out of the very essence of social and cultural reality. Cieszyn Silesia belongs to one of such places. Situated on the meeting point of various nationalities, cultures, and Churches, it constitutes a border region in a literal and symbolic sense. This region has become the home for the largest population of the Lutherans in Poland. The ecumenical movement which has been born and developed here is a necessary and inevitable consequence of such coexistence of Churches — the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran. Both Churches have become symbols of ecumenical life based on faith, tolerance, experience and respect. Nowadays all of these factors create a modern ecumenism.

Ecumenism in Cieszyn Silesia has a very long and rich history. The phenomenon of Churches' coexistence appeared almost five centuries ago. It means that the ecumenical movement had existed here long before the Catholic Church promulgated the encyclical *Ut unum sint*.

On the basis of the examples of the ecumenical relationships mentioned in the article, it can be said that the look of the “wise” today at its “yesterday” helps to build a better “tomorrow”. Therefore it can be said that on the basis of a well-lived present, firmly rooted in history, rises a favourable hope for the future of the Church.

Presenting the reception of John Paul's II *Ut unum sint* among the multi-denominational population of Cieszyn Silesia one could quote Reverend Professor Waław Hryniewicz, one of the most remarkable Polish ecumenists: “An authentic reception can be achieved only when the partners differ from each other because diversity enables the true relation of giving and taking.”

Keywords: ecumenism, Cieszyn Silesia, encyclical *Ut unum sint*, history, reception

In relation to Cieszyn Silesia, and particularly Cieszyn, which was from 1290 to 1918 the capital of Cieszyn Duchy, one can talk about a certain *genius loci* which means a place “endowed with a spirit”, where after 1517 the echoes of the Reformation arrived really soon. *Genius loci* applies to a place thought to be as one of the important elements in the search of existential space of people belonging to various Christian and religious communities. Both history and the present day show us a lot of evidence how important it is to understand the spirit of the place well. It inspires us with ecumenical activities on three planes — spiritual, cultural, and academic. A good example is the “September Bible”, which can be found in Cieszyn. It is the first publication of the New Testament translated by Reverend Martin Luther published in Wittenberg in September of 1522. Though the edition of the work was three thousand copies, which was really high in those days, in the Polish collections there are only few copies. In the central catalogue of old prints in the National Library in Warsaw you can find, besides the print which is in the possession of the Cieszyn Library, only three copies of this work — two in Toruń (in the Main Library of Nicolaus Copernicus University and Municipal Library), and one in the University Library in Wrocław.

1. Methodological approach

Since the Second Vatican Council, the ecumenical movement has gained a permanent position in the activities of the Roman Catholic Church. The Council expressed the desire of the Church to begin ecumenical actions for the unity of Christians. The Church encourages “all the Catholic faithful to recognize the signs of the times and to take an active and intelligent part in the work of ecumenism”¹ (DE 4). John XXII and his successors, since the beginning of their ministry, focused on ecumenism as the priority of their pontificates, and John Paul II said in his encyclical *Ut unum sint* that “[t]he Catholic Church embraces with hope the commitment to ecumenism as a duty of the Christian conscience enlightened by faith and guided by love” (UUS 8).² In that way the pursuit of the unity of Christians becomes the programme of the Church.

Alexander Schmemmann, one of the contemporary Orthodox theologians, in his dissertations on Eucharist said that “in the heart of Christianity

¹ *Dekret o ekumenizmie „Unitatis redintegratio”* (hereafter: DE). In: *Sobór Watykański II. Konstytucje. Dekrety. Deklaracje*. Eds. S. JAWORSKI. Poznań 1968.

² JAN PAWEŁ II: *Encyklika „Ut unum sint”* (hereafter: UUS).

there is the memory of one Man, of one moment, of one night when in the darkness of that night the words were said: 'This do in remembrance of me'.³ Paraphrasing it, one may advance a thesis that in the heart of Christianity there is the memory of Good Thursday, of the Upper Room when Jesus, before saying the words "This do in remembrance of me", said: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are" (J 17, 11), which are His testament for us. Therefore, unity is a gift from Jesus and at the same time a task for Christians. Ecumenism, in that meaning, is Jesus' order which the Christians should fulfill; it is "the duty of the Christian conscience" and "the way of the Church" (UUS 8).

According to the Sacred Council, the term ecumenical movement indicates the initiatives and activities undertaken, according to the various needs of the Church and as opportunities offer, to promote Christian unity (DE 4). On the other hand, reception, which is an indigenous ecclesiastical phenomenon, is indispensable for ecumenism and unity. It is "an expression of spiritual exchange between individuals and entire communities."⁴ The process of reception takes place in Churches and Christian communities and they accept in the great sense of togetherness of faith the theological formulations, various traditions and Church structures. The ecumenical reception, recognizing the right of other denominations to their own identity, gets out significant values from them which enrich all Christians. The engagement of Churches in the ecumenical movement is "the first form of mutual reception and a silent acceptance of ecclesiality of other communities."⁵ Reception, recognizing the rights of other Churches, is the basis for rapprochement and ecumenical agreement between Christians on the way to unity. Therefore the task of ecumenical reception is to lead again "to the integration of many denominational traditions and elicit from them essential and lasting values which would be able to enrich all other Christians."⁶

³ A. SCHMEMANN: *Velkij post*. Pariž 1981, p. 119.

⁴ The issue of reception as an ecumenical task for Churches and Church communities was widely discussed by Rev. Hryniewicz in: *Hermeneutyka w dialogu*. Opole 1998, pp. 125—192.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 152.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 159.

2. The post-conciliar reception of *Ut unum sint* — John Paul II's encyclical in Cieszyn Silesia

Ecumenism in Cieszyn Silesia has a very long and rich history. It means that it had come into being even before the encyclical by John Paul II, *Ut unum sint* (1995). For the people living here for ages, Cieszyn Silesia was always the centre of two confessions: Roman Catholic and Lutheran, which at the same time became the symbol of ecumenical life, namely, faith and tolerance, survival and respect. The people also retained their own traditions and culture. Nowadays all these factors shape the modern picture of ecumenism. It also happens that the members of the Catholic Church get married to the Lutherans and that way marriages of mixed denominations appear. The faithful not only get married to each other but they work and participate in the religious, cultural, social and political life together. The phenomenon of the coexistence of the various confessions appeared here almost five centuries ago, when the Protestant influences reached Cieszyn Silesia. Thanks to mutual kindness and understanding, especially in the 19th century, there was a boom in education, which was ecumenical. Children of different confessions attended schools run by the Catholic and Evangelical Churches and the same concerned secondary and high schools — everyone, regardless the confession, could find their place there. In Cieszyn Silesia numerous ecumenical actions on spiritual, doctrinal, practical and folk field were being held. Living a moment in a positive meaning, based on history, a hope of light for Church rises.

2.1. Spiritual ecumenism

According to the Decree on ecumenism, the transformation of heart and sanctity of life connected with prayers for the unity of Christians constitute the soul of the ecumenical movement (cf. DE 8). The ecumenical prayer, as a form of spiritual ecumenism, is an effective means of asking for grace of unity and a sign of bounds linking the baptized according to the words of Jesus: “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18, 20).⁷ The importance of prayer for the unity of Christians was stressed by John Paul II in his encyclical *Ut unum sint*: “Along the ecumenical path to unity, pride of place certainly belongs to *common prayer*, the prayerful union of those

⁷ Cf. DE 8.

who gather together around Christ himself. If Christians, despite their divisions, can grow ever more united in common prayer around Christ, they will grow in the awareness of how little divides them in comparison to what unites them. If they meet more often and more regularly before Christ in prayer, they will be able to gain the courage to face all the painful human reality of their divisions, and they will find themselves together once more in that community of the Church which Christ constantly builds up in the Holy Spirit, in spite of all weaknesses and human limitations” (UUS 22).

In Cieszyn Silesia, in Poland and in the entire Roman Catholic Church the ecumenical prayer started together with the fulfillment of the Second Vatican Council resolutions and a significant place belongs to the Week of Prayers for the Unity of Christians celebrated from 18th to 25th January each year.

In the discussed area, besides Catholics and Lutherans, there are also members of the Orthodox, Polish Catholic Churches and the Seventh-Day Adventists participating in the prayers in this special week. In many places in Cieszyn Silesia, especially where there are Evangelical parishes and people of both denominations live, the ecumenical services for the unity of Christians are celebrated every day. The word of God is preached by Roman Catholic and Evangelical clergy, and the performances of choirs enrich the services.

During one of the ecumenical services, Rev. Jan Gross, the chairman of the Silesian Department of Polish Ecumenical Council, said that after so many years of common prayers it seems that we are much closer: “We understand each other better, many prejudices fell into oblivion, what was impossible once now is real.”⁸ The World Day of the Bible is another occasion to celebrate biblical and ecumenical services in many towns and villages in Cieszyn area. It started in 1998. The biblical services are preceded by lectures from biblical theology. The participants are not only Catholics and Evangelicals but also members of the Polish Catholic Church and the Seventh-Day Adventists.⁹ The organizer of these meetings is the Committee of Ecumenical Biblical Days. The idea of this ecumenical cooperation is focused on making the Holy Bible more popular among young people (Bible contests run in schools).¹⁰

⁸ J. BUDNIAK: *Ekumenizm jutra na przykładzie Śląska Cieszyńskiego*. Katowice 2002, p. 127.

⁹ IDEM: “Ekumenizm na Śląsku Cieszyńskim na przełomie wieków.” In: „*Pojednacie się*”...: *materiały z sesji naukowej: pastoralny i społeczno-kulturowy wymiar ekumenizmu na Śląsku Cieszyńskim Bielsko-Biała 24—25 marca 2000*. Eds. J. BUDNIAK, H. RUSEK. Cieszyn 2000, p. 74.

¹⁰ J. BUDNIAK: *Ekumenizm jutra...*, p. 119.

Every year, as part of the Week of Prayers for the Unity of Christians, Catholic and Evangelical bishops take part in the Bible marathon in the Library in Bielsko-Biała. During this marathon certain parts of the Holy Bible are read by guest of various denominations invited for this event and by the representative of the Jewish community, too. The marathon is directly broadcast by the diocese radio Anioł Beskidów ('Angel of the Beskid Mountains').

Since 1997, Roman Catholic and Evangelical Churches have organized the "Jonasz" Bible contest. It is an annual event for students of all kinds of schools. This is an initiative under the auspices of Catholic and Evangelical bishops. Several thousand primary and secondary school students from Bielsko—Żywiec Roman Catholic diocese and Cieszyn and Katowice dioceses of the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession, as well as young people from the Silesian Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession from the other side of the river Olza in Czech Republic take part in this contest.

Bogusław Czyż, the president of the Religious Education Society "Jonasz" from Skoczów, who has been organizing this event for 17 years together with the Religious Education Department of Bielsko—Żywiec curia, admits that thanks to this contest the relations between the representatives of various denominations have developed and improved. "The competition brings people together, lets them not only explore the Bible, but also enables meeting the other person. I am pleased with the fruitful results of this cooperation."¹¹ So far 400,000 students have taken part in this event.

In the year 2008, the parish of the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession in Cieszyn celebrated its 300th anniversary of founding which was the occasion for a very festive ecumenical service. The service took place on 5 October in Jesus Church inaugurating the jubilee celebrations and was attended by many faithful and clergy. There were representatives of all Churches and Christian communities in Cieszyn Silesia and the Roman Catholic Church was represented by Bishop Tadeusz Rakoczy. Polish President Lech Kaczyński and the Chairman of European Union Parliament Jerzy Buzek were also present.

The common prayer for freedom which is the gift of God's love must be based on four pillars: truth, justice, love, and freedom because "real freedom flourishes only when the heart conquers hate, resentment and jealousy, when you say 'no' to selfishness and everything that makes the human being concentrate on themselves and defense their self-interests."¹²

¹¹ In the private archives of the author. Cat. number JB/KBib/2014.

¹² JAN PAWEŁ II: "Jak budować pokój?" *L'Osservatore Romano Pol* 254(6) (2003), p. 32.

Ecumenical services for peace — taking example from the inter-religious prayer meetings organized for the first time in Assisi in 1986 whose initiator was Pope John Paul II — are another example confirming the unification initiatives. The first international service attended by clergy from Poland and the Czech Republic took place in John the Baptist Church in Brenna on 18 March 2002. There were representatives of five Christian Churches and the common prayer was presided over by the bishop of Bielsko—Żywiec diocese, Tadeusz Rakoczy, Bishop Tadeusz Szurman from Katowice diocese of the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession was the preacher.¹³

Polish President Bronisław Komorowski, appreciating the role and the significance of ecumenical dialogue in Cieszyn Silesia, came to Cieszyn to participate in the ecumenical prayer for peace in the world on 1 September 2011. There also participated Catholic and Lutheran bishops, as well as many faithful of both religions. Referring to the geographical position of Cieszyn, President Komorowski said that “a voice from here, from the border of nations, languages, cultures and religions proves that being different does not mean misfortune but beauty and wealth of Poland and all world's nations.”¹⁴ The sermon during the service was preached by Bishop Tadeusz Rakoczy. Addressing the congregation, the bishop asked everybody to pray in their everyday prayers for freedom in families, in Poland and in the world. It was the second service for freedom in the history of the diocese.

The next service for peace took place in the Romanesque chapel in Cieszyn — the oldest church in Poland, on 5 June 2019. Three Christian traditions participated in the ceremony: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Lutheran. During the service, the bishops made a joint appeal for freedom in the world.

2.2. Academic ecumenism

In a way the history of academic ecumenism in Cieszyn Silesia begins with the International Ecumenical Congress held in Cieszyn on the premises of the University of Silesia from 21st to 28th August 1995. The words “Renew us through prayer and work. *Ora et labora*” were the leading motto of lectures given by academics representing three Christian traditions — Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Lutheran. Welcoming

¹³ “Brenna jak Asyż.” *Głos Ziemi Cieszyńskiej*. Cieszyn 22.03.2002, pp. 1—2.

¹⁴ In the private archives of the author. Sygn. JB/nab.p/1.09.2011.

the Congress participants, Bishop Tadeusz Rakoczy expressed his own joy and the joy of the entire local Church by saying:

The 28th International Ecumenical Congress is held here, in this town Cieszyn, in Poland, on the piece of land where the holy commandment of Christian unity is fulfilled. The commandment is even more holy because it is not expressed by a direct order but by a prayer, an intimate conversation with Father on the night before His death and in the face of the fulfillment of the entire paschal mystery. Christ entrusts this matter to us through the Holy Father with such zeal which is proper only to Him, the only Begotten Son of God and more and more this sensitivity ignites Churches, communities of people who believe in Christ. The Congress takes place on the earth where the evangelic call for Christian unity responds the everyday need of people who live here.¹⁵

All Christian denominations from Europe, the United States and Madagascar were represented in the Congress by 340 people. The importance of this event was highlighted by the presence of invited guests: Cardinal Henryk Gulbinowicz and Polish President Lech Wałęsa.

The Cieszyn Silesia calendar has permanent ecumenical ceremonies that have a religious and state dimension. The fact that the words of prayer for unity of Christians in the Jubilee Year (25 March 2000) were pondered during ecumenical services and academic sessions takes the rank of a symbol. It took place in two Polish towns — Białystok (Roman Catholic—Orthodox) and in Bielsko-Biała (Roman Catholic—Evangelical). The ecumenical service in Bielsko-Biała was preceded by an academic session in St. Jan Kanty Theological Institute. During this session, Bishop Tadeusz Rakoczy focused on the values that the ecumenical process should contain and be guided by. They are: faith shaping our daily life, prayer, discernment of God's will expressed in the Holy Bible, repentance and conciliation. The bishop said that living in love with an individual human being leads to unity of all people and the condition of it is

acknowledgment and confession of sins against unity, change in the way of thinking and behavior towards other brothers and sisters, readiness to accept the logotype of Christ's Gospel, sensitivity of the heart to the word of God and in its light to another man and their inner freedom.¹⁶

¹⁵ "Ordinary Bishop of Bielsko-Żywiec diocese Tadeusz Rakoczy's speech to the participants of the International Ecumenical Congress." In: J. BUDNIAK: *XXVIII Międzynarodowy Kongres Ekumeniczny w Cieszynie. Ora et labora*. Cieszyn—Bytom 1996, pp. 33—36.

¹⁶ T. RAKOCZY: "Słowo wygłoszone podczas nabożeństwa ekumenicznego w kościele pw. Najświętszego Serca Pana Jezusa w Bielsku-Białej. 25 marca 2000 roku." In: *Pojednajte się*..., p. 224.

During the ecumenical service which completed the conference, Archbishop Alfons Nossol asked two questions in his sermon: What will the future united diversity be like and when exactly will the hour of unity strike? Answering the questions he recalled the great witness of faith John Paul II who before the eyes of the whole world on the first Sunday of Lent, the Sunday of Forgiveness in the year 2000, apologized on behalf of the daughters and sons of the Church bearing the name of Christians. The archbishop, continuing his idea, said:

[...] then the Pope embraced the legs of the Crucified, kissed them begging Him to forgive us our sins which led to divisions; begging Him for grace that we would get rid of any further willingness that divides us, tears apart Christ's robe; that our hearts would be filled with an ardent love of unity, of true reconciliation. When this old man with such a youthful heart and spirit embraced Christ's cross, I was reminded of the words by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther: *Crux probat optima...* (In our faith everything is confirmed by the cross...).¹⁷

The Decree on ecumenism highlights that “it is necessary to get to know the spirit of the separated brethren” (DE 9). Conferences and academic sessions serve this purpose and constitute an area of ecumenical meetings. Dialogue is the way on which exists the possibility of mutual meetings and understanding the other. This form of ecumenism is included in all ecumenical conferences and academic sessions held both at the University of Silesia in Cieszyn and in St. Jan Kanty Theological Institute in Bielsko-Biała. The conferences have been held every year since 1999 when the University of Silesia in Cieszyn had the Department of Pedagogy where students specialized in Catholic and Evangelical religious education to be teachers of both Churches — Catholic and Evangelical. Unfortunately, the specialty was canceled in 2007 because the University of Silesia in Katowice opened the same specialty in its Theological Department preparing young people for their future work as religious teachers.

2.3. Practical ecumenism (socio-cultural)

As faith without deeds is dead, neither can one speak of authentic ecumenism without mutual actions. The encyclical emphasizes: “ecumenical cooperation is a true school of ecumenism, a dynamic road to unity. Unity

¹⁷ A. Nossol: “Homilia ekumeniczna.” In: “*Pojednajcie się*”..., p. 227.

of action leads to the full unity of faith: ‘Through such cooperation, all believers in Christ are able to learn easily how they can understand each other better and esteem each other more, and how the road to the unity of Christians may be made smooth’” (UUS 40). One of the priorities in the ecumenical activity, and also the base of practical activity, are couples of different denominations (generally known as mixed couples). These marriages should be given special care by the Churches. The following rules are vital in the ecumenical pastoral work of families: encouraging the faithful to pray for the unity of Christians and to participate in common services and other forms of parish activities; getting more knowledge about Churches; reminding parents that the child despite their affiliation to one Church should be educated about the spiritual riches of the other Church through participation in celebrations, services and common visits in the other church.

There are parishes in Cieszyn Silesia where the parish priests — Catholic and Protestant — visit the multi-religious families together. First they pray together and then have a discussion on different subjects with the members of the family. The ecumenical ministry, understood as such, can be a device to strengthen the love between the spouses. Their love, on the other hand, is an example of ecumenical love and a sign of unity for the divided Church. Well-run ministry of mixed couples can bring good results. The couples might become excellent examples of ecumenical activities. Since 1999 Cieszyn Silesia has been host to the Festival of Religious Creativity “Psallite Deo”. The event is organized under the auspices of the ordinary of Bielsko—Żywiec diocese and the head of Cieszyn diocese of the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession, the ordinary of Łódź—Poznań diocese of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the bishop of the Evangelical-Reformed Church in Poland. This cultural and musical event has an ecumenical character and the concerts take place in Catholic and Evangelical churches. In the area of Cieszyn Silesia there are kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools run by Catholic Church and Evangelical Church. The schools are attended by students of both denominations. Recently, there has been a research made on the students which says that the young people have a positive attitude towards each other and the teachers are kind and without any prejudices.

3. Conclusions

The importance of ecumenical movement in Cieszyn Silesia was appreciated by John Paul II during his visit in Skoczów on 22 May 1995, when he canonized Jan Sarkander. In his speech dedicated to the clergymen and congregation of two Churches, he said:

The region where we are right now, I mean [...] Cieszyn Silesia, is known in Poland as a place of special ecumenical testimony. For ages it has been a place of harmonious coexistence between the members of the Catholic Church and the Evangelical Church, and their intensive ecumenical dialogue. The dialogue which is carried out with a deep conviction that so much joins us — that we are joined by a common faith in Christ, and by our common motherland. Today's meeting with you is a perfect opportunity to express my gratitude that the ecumenical dialogue is permanently developed and deepened, and that it is reflected in many forms of constructive cooperation: both on the diocesan level and in parishes.¹⁸

In Cieszyn Silesia there is a strong ecumenical awareness and it seems to be a role model for other communities. Cieszyn Silesia citizens believe that it is possible to aspire to unity. God's providence led them to this point of having one region but two different Christian confessions so there is no other possibility then trying to unite.

The joint voice of Christians in the issues of morality, culture and upbringing unites the society giving them a sense of unity in the pursuit of the common goal, which is building a civilization of love, peace and justice. In those activities, in which more and more young people are involved, the testament of Jesus "That they may all be one" (J 17, 21) is fulfilled. Analyzing the reception of the encyclical *Ut unum sint* of the most eminent Polish ecumenist, Reverend Professor Waław Hryniewicz could be quoted: "The authentic reception can occur when partners differ from each other, because diversity enables a real relationship of giving and taking."¹⁹ The look of the wise "today" at its "yesterday" helps to build a better "tomorrow" and constitutes a kind of rules of actions for Churches and Christian communities in Cieszyn Silesia.

¹⁸ JAN PAWEŁ II: "Przemówienie wygłoszone w czasie spotkania z wiernymi w kościele ewangelicko-augsburskim w Skoczowie." In: *Drogowskazy dla Polaków Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*. Kraków 1999, vol. 3, p. 273.

¹⁹ W. HRYNIEWICZ: *Hermeneutyka w dialogu*. Opole 1998, p. 158.

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JÓZEF BUDNIAK

Réception de l'encyclique *Ut unum sint* de Jean-Paul II en Silésie de Cieszyn

Résumé

Il y a des endroits où le mouvement œcuménique est né et s'est développé à partir de la spécificité de la réalité sociale et culturelle. Ces lieux incluent la Silésie de Cieszyn, située à la frontières de nations, de cultures et pendant plusieurs siècles — de religions. C'est une région frontalière au sens littéral et symbolique. C'est dans cette région que la plus grande communauté des luthériens de Pologne a trouvé sa place aujourd'hui. Ici, le mouvement œcuménique est une conséquence nécessaire et inévitable de la coexistence des Églises catholique romaine et évangélique d'Augsbourg. Ces églises sont devenues un symbole d'une vie œcuménique fondée sur la foi et la tolérance, la vie en commun et le respect. Aujourd'hui, tous ces éléments forment un portrait moderne de l'œcuménisme. L'œcuménisme dans la Silésie de Cieszyn a une longue et riche histoire. Le phénomène de la coexistence des églises est apparu dans cette région il y a près de cinq siècles, ce qui signifie que l'œcuménisme existait ici bien avant que l'Église catholique romaine publie la première encyclique œcuménique *Ut unum sint*.

Sur la base des exemples de relations œcuméniques présentés dans l'ouvrage, on peut dire que le regard de l'un « aujourd'hui » sage sur son « hier » permet de construire un meilleur « demain ». On peut donc être tenté de dire qu'un présent bien vécu, bien ancré dans l'histoire, suscite une espérance positive pour l'avenir des Églises. Pour présenter la réception de l'encyclique *Ut unum sint* de Jean-Paul II parmi la communauté pluriconfessionnelle de la Silésie de Cieszyn, on citera l'un des œcuménistes polonais les plus remarquables, le professeur Waclaw Hryniewicz: « Une réception authentique peut avoir lieu lorsque les partenaires diffèrent les uns des autres, car la diversité permet une véritable relation de donner et de recevoir ».

Mots-clés: œcuménisme, Silésie de Cieszyn, encyclique *Ut unum sint*, histoire, réception

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Ricezione dell'enciclica *Ut unum sint* di Giovanni Paolo II in Slesia di Cieszyn

Abstract

Ci sono luoghi dove il movimento ecumenico è nato e si è sviluppato dalla specificità della realtà sociale e culturale. Questi luoghi includono la Slesia di Cieszyn, situata ai confini di nazioni, culture e per diversi secoli — di religioni. È una regione di confine nel senso letterale e simbolico. È in questa regione che oggi ha trovato posto la più grande comunità di luterani in Polonia. È qui che il movimento ecumenico è una conseguenza necessaria e inevitabile della coesistenza delle Chiese cattolica romana ed evangelica di Augusta. Queste chiese sono diventate il simbolo della vita ecumenica basata sulla fede e sulla tolleranza, sulla condivisione di esperienze e sul rispetto. Tutti questi elementi

formano oggi un ritratto moderno dell'ecumenismo. L'ecumenismo in Slesia di Cieszyn ha una storia lunga e ricca. Il fenomeno della coesistenza delle chiese è apparso in questa regione quasi cinque secoli fa. Ciò significa che l'ecumenismo esisteva qui molto prima che la Chiesa cattolica romana pubblicasse la prima enciclica ecumenica *Ut unum sint*.

Sulla base degli esempi di relazioni ecumeniche presentati nell'opera si può affermare che lo sguardo di un „oggi” saggio sul suo „ieri” rende possibile la costruzione di un „domani” migliore. Si può quindi essere tentati di affermare che un presente ben vissuto, ben ancorato nella storia, suscita una positiva speranza per il futuro delle Chiese. Presentando la ricezione dell'enciclica *Ut unum sint* di Giovanni Paolo II presso la comunità multireligiosa della Slesia di Cieszyn, si cita uno dei più eminenti ecumenisti polacchi, il professore Waław Hryniewicz: „Una ricezione autentica può avvenire quando i partner differiscono l'uno dall'altro, perché la diversità consente a un vero rapporto di dare e di avere”.

Parole chiave: ecumenismo, Slesia di Cieszyn, enciclica *Ut unum sint*, storia, accoglienza