

# Zygfryd Glaeser

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## Józef Budniak: Jednoczeni w różnorodności : Tradycja cyrylo-metodiańska jako paradygmat procesu pojednania : Kościołów, kultur i narodów ...

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Ecumeny and Law 1, 215-218

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Józef Budniak: *Jednoczeni w różnorodności.  
Tradycja cyrylo-metodiańska jako paradygmat  
procesu pojednania. Kościołów, kultur i narodów.*  
Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.  
Katowice 2009, 295 pp.

The Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in Poland, unfortunately, does not attract the interest of researchers, not only among historians and scholars of Slavic Studies, but also among theologians. There are many reasons nowadays why less and less researchers refer to the inspiring “Slavic thought” of John Paul II. Apart from the old truth that *Slavica non leguntur*, there exists deeply rooted element of emotional irritability dating back to the times of partitions. The official policy of the Tsar made good use of the Slavophil ideology praising the activities of the saints Cyril and Methodius and was a useful cover for the imperialist and pan-Slavonic program. Hence, we can say echoing J. Klinger, the tendency to minimize the Cyrillo-Methodian issue in Polish historiography was almost a patriotic duty. It might be enough to mention the idea of the famous Slavist, Aleksander Brückner.

Fr. Józef Budniak, as a theologian, breaks a kind of scholarly indifference and with his dissertation joins the group of those researchers who, in the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition, perceive the timeliness of its message today. This sensibility wins Fr. J. Budniak great recognition.

The book by Fr. Professor Józef Budniak, PhD should be recognized as one of the most important among his achievements to date. It is the result of many years of hagiographical and ecumenical research run by Fr. Budniak. Probably the creation of the study was inspired by John Paul II after He had declared Cyril and Methodius co-patron saints of

Europe, together with Saint Benedict (1980). The particular justification of this act is to emphasize the real value that comes from the spiritual unity of the Old Continent which is formed on the basis of two traditions: eastern (Greek) and western (Latin-Roman). The fact that John Paul II declared the Brothers from Salonica co-patrons of Europe played an important role in the processes of integration of cultures, nations and churches of the Old Continent.

Fr. Józef Budniak shows the two saints, Cyril and Methodius against the background of the history of Bohemia and Moravia (cf. chapter 1 and 2). He presents the essence of message that the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition conveys (cf. chapter 3). The author pointed to its role in the process of reconciliation of European churches, cultures and nations (cf. chapter 4), and to its creative permeating into the life of churches, cultures and Christian communities (cf. chapter 5), as well as its reception and ecumenical meaning (cf. chapter 6). The fundamental part of the discussed book has been preceded by the Introduction (pp. 7—18) and ended with the Conclusion (pp. 231—238). The Conclusion is followed by the “Calendar of selected Cyrillo-Methodian events” (pp. 239—248), “List of abbreviations” (pp. 249—252), “Bibliography” (pp. 253—274), “Index of personal names” (pp. 275—282), a summary in Czech language (pp. 283—284) and in German (pp. 285—286) and “Table of contents” in Polish (pp. 287—289), in Czech (pp. 290—292) and in German (pp. 293—295).

In our times, when Europe becomes more and more united — as we know, the process of European unification has not been yet concluded, when the Christians deciphered anew the Christ’s call coming from the High Priest’s Prayer: “All of them may be one,” new important paradigms are being searched for. Paradigms which will help us to discover, understand and accept the values on which it will be possible to build the unity between churches, cultures and nations. It is good that Fr. Józef Budniak resorted to one of the most important paradigms in the widely understood process of reconciliation. He emphasized it again and pointed to the values which can serve the integration of churches, cultures and nations of Europe. Who else but the Brothers from Salonica represented the beginnings of the Slavic Christian thought: theological, philosophical and mystical. In their missionary work they skilfully combined the unity of faith with the respect for cultural identity of nations, in the spirit of respect for every single human being. Saints Cyril and Methodius, Apostles of the Slavs, the architects of the Church, especially in the region of Moravia, showed by the means of their activities and apostolic enthusiasm that it is possible to create and maintain the identity of national cultures together with their spiritual wealth and uniqueness in the Chris-

tian community, in the spirit of respect and peace. Their missionary activity is an example of Christian receptiveness and Christian universalism. This activity fed two trends: the western one — through allegiance to the Holy See that gave them its acceptance for their mission, and the eastern one — with the Church of Constantinople, which was their origin.

The work of Cyril and Methodius has a timeless theological, cultural and ecumenical value. It also constitutes a unique paradigm for the process of reconciliation of churches, cultures, countries and nations. Velehrad in turn has become an important European centre of Christian thought, which influences the religious life revival and the integration processes in the religious and socio-political sense. In His speeches, John Paul II often emphasized that for its proper functioning, Europe must breathe with two lungs: eastern and western. Fr. Budniak likes to add that between these lungs there is a heart, and the heart is Velehrad.

The Cyrillo-Methodian tradition is an important religious, cultural and social heritage in Europe, concerning the Slavic nations in particular. It is worth to discover it again and again and present its timeless value. Therefore, Prof. Józef Budniak wins recognition for his scientific work in which he explores the essential elements of this tradition and shows how many positive aspects it brought and can still bring into the social life of churches, countries and nations. There is no doubt that the study he presented is highly original and creative. Starting with the title and the subtitle which define the problem of the dissertation, then through its structure, it has to be stated that all the elements are not only constructed properly, but also clarify precisely the undertaken issue. This, of course, proves what a mature scholar the author is and how perfect his academic skills are. He proved himself to be a great specialist in this field. From the title page of the book we learn that the publisher's referee was the best expert in the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in Poland, Fr. Leonard Górka, PhD, a professor at the Catholic University of Lublin. It means that before the book was published, its content was consulted with the best experts on this issue, which gives the author credit for his scholarly wisdom, prudence and should turn the readers' attention to his work. He wanted his book to have an objective formal value as well as factual value.

What we got is a simply exemplary study which has been Fr. Budniak's coping stone of his academic career. To sum up, J. Budniak's book is the result of persistent work and conscientious reflection. Even without explicit verbal statements, the work is an excellent tool serving the ecumenical work of rapprochement between Christians, nations and cultures. The reconciliation process is simply impossible when there is no understanding of distinct values and sensitivity among believers. This is the very message of Fr. J. Budniak's work. The work of the theologian from

Cieszyn who is really sensitive to the problems of the Polish-Moravian frontier, is in my opinion, a pioneering work in the Polish language. This publication is an important step in further research concerning the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition.

*Zygfryd Glaeser*