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The concept of freedom in the thought of St. Augustine

The existence and nature of free will is an extremely momentous issue for humans in both theoretical and practical terms. Not surprisingly, this issue has interested and continues to interest scientists, theologians and philosophers alike. However, the issue turns out to be so complex and multifaceted that all attempts to understand it in depth have encountered many difficulties. Sometimes they have even led to solutions that may seem either divergent or even contradictory and absolutely irreconcilable.

The research and experiments of the American neurophysiologist Benjamin Libet (1916–2007), for example, had a great impact. Citing the phenomenon of so-called readiness potential discovered by Hans H. Kornhuber and Lüder Deecke (*das Bereitschaftspotential*), Libet argued that the real initiators of our actions are not free will, but certain unconscious processes that occur in the human brain immediately before the moment of decision-making[1]. The hypothesis put forward by Libet was immediately met with criticism from both other neurophysiologists and philosophers[2].

The issue of freedom has been an important topic, and often a topic of primary importance, in the inquiries of many modern and contemporary philosophers. It is difficult not to mention here, for example, Immanuel

1 Cf. B. Libet, *Unconscious cerebral initiative and the role of conscious will in voluntary action*, "The Behavioral and Brain Sciences" 8 (1985) issue 4, p. 529–539, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X00044903.
2 Cf. W. R. Klemm, *Free will debates: simple experiments are not so simple*, "Advances in Cognitive Psychology" 6 (2010) issue 6, p. 47–65.

Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Henri Bergson and Jean-Paul Sartre, or the achievements of Polish phenomenologists, Roman Ingarden[3] and Józef Tischner[4].

The subject of this paper will be an attempt to present the views of St. Augustine, who, as early as the turn of the fourth and fifth centuries, made an in-depth and significant analysis of the phenomenon of free will. At the same time, the intention of the author of the work will be only to present the main themes characteristic of the Augustinian concept of freedom. The essential basis for such an analytical-synthetic reconstruction of St. Augustine's views will be, first of all, the dialogue *De libero arbitrio*. He developed the concept of free will as an essential, and therefore necessary, feature of human existence in polemic with the views prevalent in his time that questioned the existence of freedom so understood. This refers primarily to the views of the Stoics and Manichaeans[5].

St. Augustine's polemic against the views of the stoics and manichaeans

The concept of free will as an essential and therefore necessary feature of human existence, St. Augustine developed in polemic with the views prevalent in his time that questioned the existence of freedom so understood.

The Stoics in their philosophical views recognized the determinism of the laws of nature[6]. Questioning the freedom of the will, they even went as far as accepting fate, which absolutely governs human life. In their interpretation, freedom had no ontological basis, but was itself the essence of human life. The Stoics understood freedom as independence from external

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3   See R. Ingarden, *Książeczka o człowieku*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1975.
4   Cf. J. Tischner, *Myślenie według wartości*, Znak, Kraków 2002, p. 7.
5   Cf. A. Trapè, *Święty Augustyn. Człowiek, duszpasterz, mistyk*, transl. J. Sulowski, PAX, Warszawa 1987, p. 59–62.
6   See. F. Copleston, *A history of philosophy*, vol. 1: *Greece and Rome*, Doubleday, New York–London 1993, p. 430, 432–433.

situations and conditions, adopting an attitude of distance from the world around us[7].

The Tagasta thinker did not share the views of the Stoic school and consequently rejected their doctrine. In his opinion, first of all, the judgments created and pronounced by man are completely independent of the determinism of the laws of nature. Hence, freedom is not, as the Stoics believed, merely an attitude of reserve and indifference to situations imposed by the necessities of fate. In the area of freedom of the will, Augustine distinguishes two actions: free and natural-mechanical. Natural-mechanical actions can be compared to the falling of a branch, which is subject to the determinism of the laws of nature. Free actions, on the other hand, are characteristic only of rational beings, who act consciously and voluntarily[8]. Therefore, with regard to free choice, freedom of will is always the ability to direct oneself.

St. Augustine formulates a certain definition of free will: „Nobis autem voluntas nostra notissima est: neque enim scirem me velle, si quid sit voluntas ipsa nescirem"[9]. From his point of view, coercion becomes the opposite of freedom. Free choice, on the other hand, is a consequence of freedom understood as the ability to make an independent choice. Thus, free choice is a peculiar and distinct phenomenon. Freedom plays a key role in decision-making, for it is freedom that gives a person the ability to refrain from or take a certain action. Person has the ability to act and express himself through what he wants for themselves.

Freedom of will in the ontological sense was also questioned by the Manichaeans. They preached the view that the world is dualistic (black and white), so to speak, because it is governed ultimately by two absolute principles — the principle of good and evil. In such a world, the source of evil is substantive evil, which excludes the complicity of the will in the performance of evil acts. Hence, in Manichaeism there is no place for true

7 Cf. S. Kowalczyk, *Człowiek i Bóg w nauce świętego Augustyna*, Ośrodek Dokumentacji i Studiów Społecznych, Warszawa 1987, p. 76.
8 Cf. S. Kowalczyk, *Człowiek i Bóg w nauce świętego Augustyna*, p. 77.
9 Augustinus, *De duabus animabus*, X, 14, in: *Sancti Aurelii Augustini* […] *opera omnia* […], ed. J.-P. Migne, t. 8, Parisiis 1865 (Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina [=PL], 42).

freedom and responsibility. St. Augustine completely rejected such a view and fully appreciated the value and significance of free will.

For Augustine, the existence of free will was a self-evident fact. He was deeply convinced of its existence. According to the Bishop of Hippo, the foundation of free will is primarily man's mental cognition. In the treatise *De Trinitate*, we read:

> Quam quidem voluntatem de cognitione procedere (nemo enim vult quod omnino quid vel quale sit nescit), non tamen esse cogitationis imaginem; et ideo quamdam in hac re intellegibili nativitatis et processionis insinuari distantiam, quoniam non hoc est cogitatione conspicere quod appetere, vel etiam perfrui voluntate, cernit discernitque qui potest[10].

According to Augustine, the basis and space for the action of free will is intellectual cognition. It can be said that human wills, desires and chooses not only on a purely volitional level, but also on a cognitive basis, the Tagasta thinker distinguishes two attitudes: the desire for cognition and knowledge itself. Mental cognition is accomplished through a choice of will, while knowledge itself is a consequence of this choice. The consequence of freedom understood ontologically is the choice between good and evil. Augustine writes: „Sed illud me movet, quoniam de libera voluntate quaestio est, et videmus ipsam bene uti caeteris vel non bene, quomodo et ipsa inter illa quibus utimur numeranda sit"[11]. Freedom of will is connected with the act of choice, and a person is never forced to commit a certain act. Free will allows one to choose from two possibilities. Therefore, St. Augustine considers free will itself a good and includes it accordingly in the domain of goods. Moreover, in his interpretation, free will, as an ontological feature of human being, is a good received from God. Commentators on the teachings of the Bishop of Hippo point out that with him free will is always considered in the context of the good and is always directed toward it.

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10 Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, XV, XXVII, 50 (PL 42).
11 Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, II, XIX, 51, in: *Sancti Aurelii Augustini […] opera omnia […]*, ed. J.-P. Migne, t. 1, Parisiis 1877 (PL 32).

Obviously, in Augustine's philosophy, the highest place in the hierarchy of goods will be occupied by God:

> Voluntas ergo quae medium bonum est, cum inhaeret incommutabili bono, eique communi non proprio, sicuti est illa de qua multum locuti sumus, et nihil digne diximus, veritas; tenet homo beatam vitam: eaque ipsa vita beata, id est animi affectio inhaerentis incommutabili bono, proprium et primum est hominis bonum[12].

Those who interpret St. Augustine's teachings on the role of free will sometimes refer to his view as philosophical voluntarism. According to this view, in the human person, preference is always given to will over reason, to desire over cognition. At the same time, with regard to Augustine, voluntarism is sometimes understood differently. For example, according to W. Tatarkiewicz, it is about ordinary, moderate voluntarism[13]. Others go further and describe Augustine as a radical irrationalist who completely questions the value of rational cognition in favor of free will[14]. However, everything indicates that, yes, St. Augustine highly valued the role of the will, but he did not overestimate it, and his position on this issue was quite subtle. Intellectual cognition precedes the undertaking of any act of the will, because the free will cannot make a choice with regard to an object that is completely unknown to itself[15]. The emphasis here falls clearly on the primacy of intellectual cognition. He does not recognize the superiority of the will over man's other mental faculties: „Non igitur nisi voluntate peccatur. Nobis autem voluntas nostra notissima est: neque enim scirem me velle, si quid sit voluntas ipsa nescirem"[16].

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12 Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, II, XIX, 52 (PL 32).
13 Cf. W. Tatarkiewicz, *Historia filozofii*, vol. 1: *Filozofia starożytna i średniowiecza*, PWN, Warszawa 2003, p. 198.
14 See *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, second ed. R. Audi, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 964.
15 Cf. Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, XII, XXVII, 50 (PL 42).
16 Augustinus, *De duabus animabus*, X, 14 (PL 42).

Augustine does not try to minimize the value of rational cognition. He does not reduce the intellect to volitional activities. On the contrary, cognition and intellect constitute the space that makes the action of free will possible. The primacy of the will here refers only to the order of action. St. Augustine was a voluntarist only in the sense that he recognized the fully active function of the will in human personality. The Tagasta thinker, contrary to popular opinion, was not an advocate of the absolute primacy of will over intellect. He does not obliterate the aspectual primacy of cognition before the decision of the will. Instead, he emphasizes the sphere of the will in human life and connected it to the domain of mental reflection and religious contemplation. Choice on the part of the will is always preceded by discernment of good and evil, which necessarily implies the corresponding primacy of mental cognition.

In St. Augustine's view, freedom of the will is not an absolute, unlimited freedom in the case of man. This is because person is not an absolute being in any respect. God does not create beings that would be equal to him i.e. unlimited in their freedom[17]. The relationship of human freedom to God's freedom is the finite creature to an infinite Being. Therefore, man's freedom is a limited freedom. Of course, Augustine does not question the existence of free will[18]. Freedom of the will stems from the nature of person — God, foreseeing that man would sin, provided humans with the gift of free will. Despite this, the human will is not free in the sense that it has absolute and unlimited freedom. The will is subject to moral obligation. Augustine based moral obligation on a metaphysical basis[19]. Freedom of will is not self-will, since person is a relative entity. The fact of being created from nothing causes a tendency in human toward evil.

In his writings, St. Augustine attempts to justify the existence of free will. To emphasize his reasons, he refers to Platonic philosophy and the

17 See W.E. Mann, *Augustine on Evil and Original Sin*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, eds. D.V. Meconi, E. Stump, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 42.
18 Cf. Augustinus, *De natura et gratia*, III, 3, in: *Sancti Aurelii Augustini* […] *opera omnia* […], ed. J.-P. Migne, t. 10, p. 1, Parisiis 1965 (PL 44).
19 Cf. Augustinus, *De catechizandis rudibus*, XVIII, 30, in: *Sancti Aurelii Augustini* […] *opera omnia* […], ed. J.-P. Migne, t. 6, Parisiis 1865 (PL 40).

Bible. Most often he draws attention to the direct consciousness of man. In his opinion, every mentally healthy person has the consciousness of freedom:

> Video, et quodammodo tango, et teneo vera esse quae dicis: non enim quidquam tam firme atque intime sentio, quam me habere voluntatem, eaque me moveri ad aliquid fruendum; quid autem meum dicam, prorsus non invenio, si voluntas qua volo et nolo non est mea: quapropter cui tribuendum est, si quid per illam male facio, nisi mihi? […] Motus autem quo huc aut illuc voluntas convertitur, nisi esset voluntarius, atque in nostra positus potestate, neque laudandus cum ad superiora, neque culpandus homo esset cum ad inferiora detorquet quasi quemdam cardinem voluntatis… Hoc autem monendum non esse hominem, quisquis existimat, de hominum numero exterminandus est[20].

As you can see, the experience of freedom is shared by every human being. In ontological terms, it is experienced by all human beings. Recognition of the existence of free will also reveals the meaning of man's active involvement in the realization of higher values. Without free will, it would be impossible to speak of either man's responsibility for his actions, much less for the evil committed. Hence, to negate the existence of free will on the level of being would be to deny and deprive man of an essential element inherent in his nature. The existence of free will is a necessary condition for human responsibility[21]. Augustine was well aware that the highest good can only be God for person, in his reflection on the existence of free will, he referred to the human desire for happiness. In his view, only a free human can achieve happiness[22]. God, as the primary object of the will's predilection, gives meaning and happiness to human life. Understanding freedom, as a necessary element of human existence, is crucial to achieving happiness, every person wants to be happy, but only a free person can be.

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20 Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, III, I, 3 (PL 32).
21 Cf. R. Ingarden, *Książeczka o człowieku*, p. 81–82.
22 Cf. Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, III, III, 6, 8 (PL 32).

Will, being and autonomy in the face of epistemological and biblical inspirations

Freedom, understood as the ability to master oneself, as the intrinsic autonomy of man, is distinct from free will as an entity characteristic of every human being. According to St. Augustine, the latter is substantively the same in all people. In contrast, the former, intrinsic freedom, can vary from person to person. He considers the freedom of internal autonomy on a moral and theological level, defining it as the ability to liberate oneself from transient things and as adherence to God[23]. In his view, human autonomy can only be based on voluntary acts of[24]. If human did not have free will, if everything in the world occurred according to the inevitable necessity of fate, then it would be impossible to speak of internal autonomy. In this context, É. Gilson noted that man is what his will is and this to the extent that a will divided against itself makes person divided against himself[25]. Augustine describes the nature of free will and the question of its enslavement or unconditioned action through the inner activity of senses, drives and desires:

> Denique tam multa faciebam corpore in ipsis cunctationis aestibus, quae aliquando volunt homines et non valent, si aut ipsa membra non habeant aut ea vel conligata vinculis vel resoluta languore vel quoquo modo impedita sint. […] Tam multa ergo feci, ubi non hoc erat velle quod posse; et non faciebam […]. Ibi enim facultas ea, quae voluntas, et ipsum velle iam facere erat; et tamen non fiebat, faciliusque obtemperabat corpus tenuissimae voluntati animae, ut ad nutum membra moverentur, quam ipsa sibi anima ad voluntatem suam magnam in sola voluntate perficiendam[26].

23 Cf. Augustinus, *De vera religione*, XLVI, 88, in: *Sancti Aurelii Augustini* […] *opera omnia* […], ed. J.-P. Migne, t. 3, p. 1, Parisiis 1865 (PL 34).
24 Cf. Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, III, III, 6 (PL 32).
25 Cf. É. Gilson, *Wprowadzenie do nauki świętego Augustyna*, transl. Z. Jakimiak, PAX, Warszawa 1953, p. 172, 180.
26 Augustinus, *Confessiones*, VIII, VIII, 20 (PL 32).

In the deliberations of our author, there is a distinction between good will and bad will. This, of course, is not about some two differently existing wills, but about one will that, depending on the decision, takes such and not another object. The philosopher declares: "Et vae voluntati malae, si mala est; pax bonae voluntati, si bona est. Sive autem mala sit, sive bona sit, voluntas est. Bonam voluntatem sequitur corona, malam sequitur poena"[27]. Thus, the concept of "ill-will" here falls within the scope of human activity, which, by means of choice, settles for the direction it has determined. The distinction used by St. Augustine is related to with the intrinsic freedom of man, which is the result of the moral attitude of rational beings. Self-determination, which is the essence of free will, does not always lead to inner freedom, since only good will is authentically free. Therefore, the expression liberum arbitrium takes on a different meaning when applied to God than when applied to a person, for whom the possibility of doing evil appears through free judgment, while God is free from such a possibility itself.

Freedom in the sense under discussion means the moral uprightness of man. According to St. Augustine, such freedom is not the same in all people; it occurs in many forms and can be subject to evolution. In its potential form, it is already present in children, while it is realized only in adult life. In contrast, the fullness of freedom will be attainable in the life to come, that is, in the state of achieved salvation. During earthly life, the growth of freedom depends on the intensity of the spiritual life lived. This involves an inner union with God, especially cooperation with His grace, loving Him above all else, and a proper appreciation of natural values. The ultimate source of man's inner freedom becomes God — the highest good. The more soul affirms himself in the good, the more freedom he receives[28]. In dialogue *De quantitate animae*, St. Augustine distinguished as many as seven degrees of human spiritual development. These include inner purification and detachment from sense goods, attainment of perfect purity,

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27 Augustinus, *Contra Felicem*, II, XII (PL 42).
28 See S. Kowalczyk, *Człowiek i Bóg w nauce świętego Augustyna*, p. 78.

knowledge of the highest truth (God), attainment of perfection, and possession of the highest Good[29].

Also linked to man's inner freedom is the need to respect God's will as expressed in moral precepts. Human, through obedience to God's commands, becomes free from the burden of sin and can experience true freedom. One hears here an echo of the reflections contained in St. Paul's letters. In one of them we read: "But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance"[30]. Freedom, as the ability to control oneself, as righteousness, is not so much something given as something inflicted. Probably no one, like St. Augustine, realized that human freedom is very imperfect. It does not exclude moral weaknesses and the fact that man constantly experiences the drama of having to make choices between good and evil. Already the first human through original sin turned away from God[31]. He sought freedom, and found spiritual bondage from which he was unable to free himself by his own efforts. The consequence of evil and sin is moral degradation, loss of self-authenticity and even moral perversion. Evil never gives inner freedom, but brings bondage to the gods of the earth and nature.

Why, St. Augustine asked, does a person decide to choose evil? According to him, this question cannot be meaningfully answered, because it is impossible to know anything about what does not exist at all[32]. Metaphysical evil does not exist. Instead, we can talk about how moral evil appears, that is, that which depends on free human choices. Well, the cause of moral evil lies within ourselves and consists in the fact that man can turn away from the immutable and infinite Good. Sin and evil is the result of the abuse of freedom, and it cannot be obtained or magnified by doing evil. Simply put, man's freedom, freedom as good will, does not exclude weakness of will and does not deprive us of the propensity to sin. In St. Augustine's

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29 Augustinus, *De quantitate animae*, XXXIII, 71–76 (PL 32).

30 Rom 6:17.

31 Cf. Augustinus, *Contra Iulianum*, I, VI, 24; V, III, 12 (PL 44).

32 Cf. Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, II, XX, 54 (PL 32).

view, evil is a consequence of our behavior. Person, through the choices he makes, can reject what is good. The author clearly confirms this rule when he writes: "Hoc enim peccabam, quod non in ipso, sed in creaturis eius me atque ceteris voluptates, sublimitates, veritates quaerebam, atque ita irruebam in dolores, confusiones, errors"[33]. Evil is born of free will choices and comes from man. Good, on the other hand, comes from God and is a thing of grace given to person.

The momentousness of free will as an inner autonomy is also made apparent by the good that man achieves through the choice he makes. According to Augustine, free will, as an inner action directed toward the good, also begins to possess something of the good to which it gives itself over. Of course, it is the good conduct that makes a person happy the moment he becomes happy. He already possesses something of this goodness, something that is not insignificant if his will is good, if he wishes to enjoy all the good things that human nature is capable of, and does not seek joy in fulfilling or possessing evil thoughts. In the context of freedom as internal autonomy, St. Augustine also discusses the issue of choosing evil for evil's sake:

> Et ego furtum facere volui et feci nulla compulsus egestate nisi penuria et fastidio iustitiae et sagina iniquitatis. Nam id furatus sum, quod mihi abundabat et multo melius, nec ea re volebam frui, quam furto appetebam, sed ipso furto et peccato. Arbor erat pirus in vicinia nostrae vineae pomis, […] et abstulimus inde onera ingentia non ad nostras epulas, sed vel proicienda porcis […]. Foeda erat, et amavi eam; amavi perire, amavi defectum meum, non illud, ad quod deficiebam, sed defectum meum ipsum amavi, turpis anima et dissiliens a firmamento tuo in exterminium, non dedecore aliquid, sed dedecus appetens[34].

The question arises, which Augustine himself does not answer directly: can I choose evil, as evil? From the point of view of ontology, we cannot

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33 Augustinus, *Confessiones*, I, XX, 31 (PL 32).
34 Augustinus, *Confessiones*, II, IV, 9 (PL 32).

choose evil, as such, evil for evil's sake, because, as we already know, it is the absence of being. Even when we choose what in everyday language we call evil, such as fornication, theft, murder, then we choose this evil *sub ratione boni*, that is, because of the of the good we expect to achieve. According to St. Augustine, the object of our choices is always the good. Moral evil, on the other hand, occurs as a result of choosing not the good that should be chosen in a given case — as a result of choosing a lesser good. In other words, the choice being made always refers to something that is cognizable as good, even if it is objectively bad. Immoral acts are the result and consequence of free will choice. At the same time, this evil consists in such a course of action through which person chooses what is worse[35]. Augustine stresses that the real value of a person's conduct can only be evaluated in the context of free choice. The consequence of a wrong choice is also the responsibility for a voluntarily committed act. Thus, free will itself, despite the possibility of sinful persistence on the part of created beings, is not framed negatively by St. Augustine. Free will always remains man's greatest gift and greatest value.

Context of discussion with pelagianism

St. Augustine's peculiar understanding of philosophy and its tasks entitled him to address topics that included theological aspects of human freedom[36]. The first of these is the intractable question of the relationship between human freedom and God's foreknowledge. The writer of Tagasta, in addressing the above question, presents it in light of what we know about God. The author ponders whether God's provisions can be reconciled with our freedom of choice in such a way that human acts are not predetermined, which could be limit free action:

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35 Cf. Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, II, XVI, 34, 35 (PL 32).
36 Cf. W. Seńko, *Pojęcie filozofii u św. Augustyna*, in: św. Augustyn, *Dialogi filozoficzne*, Kraków 1999, p. 871.

Quod si fieri non potest ut dum volumus non velimus, adest utique voluntas volentibus; nec aliud quidquam est in potestate, nisi quod volentibus adest. Voluntas igitur nostra nec voluntas esset, nisi esset in nostra potestate. Porro, quia est in potestate, libera est nobis. Non enim est nobis liberum, quod in potestate non habemus, aut potest non esse quod habemus. Ita fit ut et Deum non negemus esse praescium omnium futurorum, et nos tamen velimus quod volumus. […]. Nec voluntas esse poterit, si in potestate non erit. Ergo et potestatis est praescius. Non igitur per eius praescientiam mihi potestas adimitur, quae propterea mihi certior aderit, quia ille cuius praescientia non fallitur, adfuturam mihi esse praescivit[37].

St. Augustine stresses emphatically that God's omniscience *praescientia* does not preclude the freedom of human acts. God knows the future, but future human acts depend on man's free resolutions. Thus, according to St. Augustine, freedom is not something apparent. A person who takes an action does not do so because God has decided it so previously. Free will is not dependent on such necessity. The fact that God foresees a man's free act does not make it determine the freedom of his choice. God's omniscience does not make human's acts necessary, for acts of the will by their very nature are always free acts for Augustine[38].

A momentous issue that also fell under the theological aspects of human freedom was for St. Augustine the question of the relationship between human freedom and grace. He elaborated the position on this case in the course of a sharp polemic with the views of Pelagius, who recognized that salvation depends solely on the will of man, and that God's grace is not needed to achieve this phenomena. In order to further understand the crux of St. Augustine's polemic against Pelagius, it is necessary to recall the essential elements of Pelagius' teaching. Well, he defines sin exclusively as the wrong use that man makes of his free judgments. God does not bestow grace to do good on someone who is guided by a wrong, erroneous desire, but grants grace just like a judge who forgives and pardons the guilt

37 Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, III, III, 8 (PL 32).
38 Cf. Augustinus, *De libero arbitrio*, III, III, 8 (PL 32).

committed[39]. In other words, a person earns merit through good deeds, while grace itself is reduced by Pelagius to a gift that crowns earned merit. In his view, God's grace does not need to affect the will at all, since the will is not corrupted and therefore man does not need it. Nor is there any need for God's grace to act before a sin is committed, wishing to forestall it; if it does act, it is only after the sin, in order to erase it. St. Augustine did not share the Pelagian concept of grace. According to him, the essential characteristic of grace is its supernaturalness characteristic of all undeserved gifts of God. The purpose of these gifts is to make salvation possible for person who is in a fallen state. To grant the will self-imposed priority in obtaining salvation would be to diminish and, in a way, relegate to the background the role of God Himself. Although Pelagius recognized the need for grace, he understood it only as a kind of help given according to merit. However, in St. Augustine's view, God's grace would not be grace if it were given by Him for merit. Undoubtedly, the key to understanding St. Augustine's teaching on grace was the letters of St. Paul, especially the passage from the Letter to the Romans:

> But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. […]. Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification[40].

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39 Cf. É. Gilson, *Wprowadzenie do nauki świętego Augustyna*, p. 203–204.
40 Rom 3: 21–24; Rom 5: 16. Νυνι δε χωρις νομου δικαιοσυνη θεου πεφανερωται μαρτυρουμενη υπο του νομου και των προφητων. Δικαιοσυνη δε θεου δια πιστεως ιησου χριστου εις παντας και επι παντας τους πιστευοντας ου γαρ εστιν διαστολη. Παντες γαρ ημαρτον και υστερουνται της δοξης του θεου. Δικαιουμενοι δωρεαν τη αυτου χαριτι δια της απολυτρωσεως της εν χριστω ιησου […]. Και ουχ ως δι ενος αμαρτησαντος το δωρημα το μεν γαρ κριμα εξ ενος εις κατακριμα το δε χαρισμα εκ πολλων παραπτωματων εις δικαιωμα.

St. Augustine, like St. Paul, understood his own powerlessness and weakness resulting from a fallen nature that implores God for grace; he experienced her indispensability in his own life. His personal experiences alone spoke against Pelagius' overly optimistic doctrine. Grace also has a therapeutic meaning for people. This means that it does not destroy the power of free will. On the contrary, through grace, the free will is improved to perform good. These theologically complex relationships are presented and interpreted variously by researchers. At the forefront are mainly two interpretations. According to the first, grace interacts with man's free will in such a way that it leaves the will free to Judg, following to the second interpretation, God's grace acts on him will in such an absolute way that it completely abolishes his free will[41].

Augustine did not deal with this difficult issue directly. His statements, taken in their overall context, seem to prove that God's grace does not overrule human freedom. This is also the thesis of many scholars. For example, Étienne Gilson believes that grace acting on the will not only respects free judgment, but still gives it freedom. For freedom *libertas* is only the good use of free judgment *liberum arbitrium*, so the more the will is subjected to grace, the more healthy it is, and the healthier it is, the more free it is[42]. Supporters of the second interpretation mentioned above suggested that St. Augustine preached the truth of man's eternal destiny either to eternal happiness or eternal damnation. This would be supposed to be confirmed by some of his statements[43]. Of course, this would in effect lead to an acceptance of fatalism and determinism. However, it is not excluded that statements of this type, especially out of context, can be explained by the temperament of St. Augustine, who — embroiled in long-standing disputes, sometimes fell into exaggeration and found it difficult to avoid exaggerations or even balancing on the edge of orthodox Church teaching.

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41 Cf. A. Kasia, *Św. Augustyn*, Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1960, p. 73 (Filozofia Starożytna i Średniowieczna); J. Mausbach, *Die Ethik des hl. Augustinus*, vol. 1, Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau 1929, p. 25.
42 É. Gilson, *Wprowadzenie do nauki świętego Augustyna*, p. 208–209.
43 See Augustinus, *De natura et gratia*, VII, 7 (PL 44).

Conclusions

The attempt made in this work to reconstruct the views of St. Augustine regarding the understanding of freedom, although intended only as a modest outline of them, entitles us to formulate several important conclusions and observations. The bishop of Hippo comprehensively considered the phenomenon of human free will from all possible aspects — psychological, strictly philosophical, theological. Searching for the essence of human freedom, the author realizes that he is still touching only shreds of the mysterious complexity of this phenomenon. Hence, he so often confesses his helplessness and admits his ignorance, and even takes the risk of balancing orthodoxy. Despite the ever-emerging new doubts, in St. Augustine's writings pertaining to the question of freedom, the constant, unchanging intuition persists that freedom is an essential characteristic of human being. Without free will, man would not be himself, and without it his meaningful existence cannot be imagined at all; it is the condition of humanity, the foundation of personal responsibility. Hence, the phenomenon of human freedom arouses constant admiration, amazement and determines true happiness. The philosopher also distinguished between intrinsic freedom, which is the ability to control oneself and can vary from person to person, and free will, which is substantively the same in all people. He also argued that the ultimate source of man's inner freedom is God, and that the more man affirms himself in the good, the more freedom he receives. Augustine believed that obedience to God's commands frees one from the burden of sin and leads to true freedom. There is no doubt that human freedom is imperfect, as it does not exclude moral weaknesses, and man is constantly experiencing the drama of making choices between good and evil. Freedom of the will, according to Augustine, is the ability to direct oneself, and its basis is intellectual cognition. In his view, freedom of the will is not absolute and unlimited, since man is not an absolute entity in any respect. Instead, man's freedom is limited, and this is due to his nature, which God envisioned as a gift of free will. He also disagreed with the Pelagian conception of grace, arguing that grace is a supernatural gift of God that makes salvation possible for those in a fallen state, and that it is not given

according to merit. Augustine's teaching on grace was influenced by his personal experience and understanding of St. Paul's letters. The philosopher suggests that the concept of freedom is fundamental to human nature and is necessary for human happiness. Augustine's approach to the concept of freedom can be seen as an exemplar of a philosophical inquiry that is grounded in thorough analysis, nuanced exploration, and a deep respect for the complexity of the phenomenon under examination. According to the author, the priceless gift of freedom poses a great challenge to both the individual and humanity as a whole. For man can choose good, but he can also choose evil. Freedom can be, as J. Tischner wrote, an unfortunate gift. How is it possible, St. Augustine continues to ask, that man equipped with reason nevertheless succumbs to ignorance and so often chooses evil? This dramatic question still troubles human minds today.

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Abstract

The concept of freedom in the thought of St. Augustine

The article discusses St. Augustine's arguments for the existence of free will and its theological contexts in relation to human nature. The bishop of Hippo refers to the philosophical works of Plato and Plotinus as well as texts from the New Testament, and in justifying the existence of free will points to the direct consciousness of man. Augustine was deeply convinced that this intrinsic action is necessary for valuation and therefore for moral judgment resulting from the choice between good and evil. Without free will, man would not be himself, it is the condition of humanity and the foundation of responsibility. In his writings, the author distinguished between the freedom from autonomy and self-determination; independent acts of will that are an ontological feature of human being. He believed that the ultimate source of man's inner freedom is God. Augustine was also aware that human freedom is imperfect, which manifests itself in ethical dilemmas related to decision-making. The human freedom is never absolute, as a result of man's fallen nature, which God has bestowed with the grace of goodness in the form of the gift of free will. Among other things, this accounted for Augustine's rejection of the concept of grace proposed by Pelagius, who denied its supernatural character claiming that it is given according to merit. Many scholars have attempted to interpret the issue of how grace affects the human will. Their statements seem to support the conclusion in light of which freedom of the will is not abrogated due to the action of grace.

Keywords: St. Augustine, free will, freedom, autonomy, grace, volition

Abstrakt

Pojęcie wolności w myśli św. Augustyna

W artykule omówiono argumentację św. Augustyna na rzecz istnienia wolnej woli oraz jej konteksty teologiczne w odniesieniu do natury ludzkiej. Biskup Hippony odwołuje się do dzieł filozoficznych Platona i Plotyna oraz tekstów z Nowego Testamentu, a uzasadniając istnienie wolnej woli wskazuje na bezpośrednią świadomość człowieka. Augustyn był głęboko przekonany, że to wewnętrzne działanie jest niezbędne do wartościowania, a tym samym do osądu moralnego wynikającego z wyboru między dobrem a złem. Bez wolnej woli człowiek nie byłby sobą, jest ona warunkiem człowieczeństwa i fundamentem odpowiedzialności. W swoich pismach autor odróżniał wolność od autonomii i samostanowienia; niezależne akty woli są ontologiczną cechą istoty ludzkiej. Wierzył, że ostatecznym źródłem wewnętrznej wolności człowieka jest Bóg. Augustyn był również świadomy, że ludzka wolność jest niedoskonała, co przejawia się w dylematach etycznych związanych z podejmowaniem decyzji. Ludzka wolność nigdy nie jest absolutna, co wynika z upadłej natury człowieka, którą Bóg obdarzył łaską dobroci w postaci daru wolnej woli. Wynikało to między innymi z odrzucenia przez Augustyna koncepcji łaski zaproponowanej przez Pelagiusza, który zaprzeczał jej nadprzyrodzonemu charakterowi, twierdząc, że jest ona udzielana według zasług. Wielu uczonych próbowało zinterpretować kwestię wpływu łaski na ludzką wolę. Ich wypowiedzi wydają się popierać wniosek, w świetle którego wolność woli nie jest zniesiona z powodu działania łaski.

Słowa kluczowe: św. Augustyn, wolna wola, wolność, autonomia, wolicjonalność

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Gods and people in literature and philosophy

God by the picture of human or human by the picture of god? Homeric vision of reality versus Heraclitus' vision of reality

Before philosophy was born, there was literature. Religious poets told of distant times when the gods were approachable to humans. Their fantasies were often mixed with old beliefs so that the divine-human world had as much wonder and eccentricity as horror. Homer created a kind of encyclopaedia for the Greeks, and Hesiod revealed the divine root of reality. When philosophy enters the arena of the Greek world, the glory of the poets fades. Was philosophy a better proposition for the ancient world? Was it an alternative to the religiously pluralistic society? And, finally, could it deliver something that the Olympian religion could not? These questions are bothering the researchers of antiquity because their resonance — in the form of the conflict between science and religion — does not disappear. If one assumes that philosophy is a field that supplants religion, then one needs to agree that in future this act will have consequences for the religion itself. Philosophy becomes the foundation for science. It explores reality but also intellectually enriches religion. When we ask about the world as it is, we cannot avoid the question of the nature of god, or his creator and guide. Intellect becomes an infallible arbitrator of human life in all its dimensions. Philosophy conquers not only minds but also hearts, to convey them towards the ideal, bearing in mind the unattainable model of the virtuous

man. Religion describes a god similar to humans; philosophy forges a new figure of man similar to a god.

The works of Homer transfer us to the world in which all the things and phenomena receive their rightful place. In this diverse world, there are many unexpected events and mysterious creatures that inspire awe or terror. His poetry is woven with the thread of worldly experience, but its colours come from the unlimited imagination of the author. Heroes dazzle the mortals, and sometimes even immortals. The latter ones, although endowed with supernatural powers, still fall victim to their own temptations. The greatness of a man is in rising above the level of humanity. Homer's dialectic shows a naturally limited human equipped with abilities which enable him to overcome all obstacles. In contrast to him, god is not exposed to suffering, labour-related hardships, or death. Immortals are enjoying their endless lives, although, as a result, they are mired in their own weaknesses. A mortal, even virtuous one, has to acknowledge gods superiority with due worship.

From the very beginning, philosophy has been contesting these views. It is enough to track the thought of Heraclitus, Empedocles, and the Pythagoreans to see their distinct vision of man and the world. The man-hero is capable of development. He is limited only by his ignorance. Ultimately, there emerges an opposition of knowledge and ignorance. Man can gain divinity. In these dialectics, man plays an important role, and god can only assist him in this journey to the lost paradise. This kind of thinking owes its emergence to the Orphics. Heraclitus discovers Logos. The Ephesian announces its omnipresence as a sage, but also as a priest and prophet. He convinces us that our life is tied to the truth about Logos — the Omnipresent Logos that directs, and rules all has a counterpart in every human psyche. Thanks to that, we are not only part of the cosmos, but we can also understand it, what elevates us to the level of divinity. The divinity of a man is found in his nature. Man, although not equal to Logos, bears a divine heritage.

Like god, like human. Homeric vision of the world

In the Homeric world, there is no place for what is absolutely mysterious and unknown. The latter could bring up the feeling of divinity that is synonymous with otherness. Homer established a certain model of reality philosophy could refer to: on the one hand, by affirming some of its elements and, on the other, criticising given gods' image on the other. That is how Kazimierz Banek writes about the meaning of the religion:

> This type of image of gods did not appeal to all the Hellenes. The possibility of conducting individual research of divine subjects created propitious space for creating diverse theories, especially those directed towards declining anthropomorphism and polytheism. Religious tradition could not help in solving existential problems nor did it fulfil the need to "make a personal connection between human and god"[1].

Poetry delivers stories about the lives of mortals and immortals, placing them in a certain time and space[2].

The border between mortals and gods is clear. Although it is not totally blurred, it is somewhat permeable in its roots. The gods contact people, but they use this closeness to convey onto humans the miseries they want to get rid of. Divinity does not demand moral perfection but eternal happiness[3]. Therefore, gods get rid of the evil and misery by sending it down to earth[4]. As it is known, in the mythical understanding of the world, Zeus rules from his throne forever, while the mortal is subjected to the passage of time, which "overwhelms him" and, in the end, someone else takes his place. Although in poetry the difference between man and god

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1 K. Banek, *Historia religii: religie niechrześcijańskie*, transl. P. Austin, Zakład Wydawniczy Nomos, Kraków 2007, p. 288.
2 W. Burkert, J. Raffan, *Greek Religion*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1985, p. 216–246.
3 J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*, Clarendon Press Paperbacks, 1980, p. 145–203.
4 M. P. Nilsson, F. J. Fielden, *A History of Greek Religion*, 2nd ed., repr. Greenwood Press, Westport (Conn.) 1980, p. 134–179.

is exposed — they are divided by an impassable abyss — in fact, they have a lot in common.

God is mighty because, having supernatural powers, he can act in the world, even suspending the laws of nature. However, he cannot overpower the actions of gods more powerful than himself, nor the power of Moira[5]. The homeric project of a god is quite weak, but not because of a lack of sufficient powers, but rather because he is copying human nature. Divine beings are equipped with human senses. They are often held hostage to their own desires and lust. Although Homer does not know what the ideals of freedom and free will are, his immortal constructs resemble power-hungry people following their desires to widen their field of influence. They are enslaved by the will of revenge, sexuality, and power. The object of their desire can be both earthly and heavenly. Gods are not perfect, but they are superior to man, meaning that human fate depends on their favour or aversion. This is evidenced in the *Iliad*, for example, as Pryam's words testify:

> "neither be left here to be a bane to us and to our children after us". So they said, but Priam spake, and called Helen to him: "Come hither, dear child, and sit before me, that thou mayest see thy former lord and thy kinsfolk and thy people—thou art nowise to blame in my eyes; it is the gods, methinks, that are to blame, who roused against me the tearful war of the Achaeans"[6].

And prayers of both Achaia and Trojans:

> "Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida, most glorious, most great, whichsoever of the twain it be that brought these troubles upon both peoples, grant that he may die and enter the house of Hades, whereas to us there may come

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5   F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy. A Study in the Origins of Western Speculation*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1992, p. 12–16.
6   Homer, *The Iliad*, transl. A. T. Murray, William Heinemann, London, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1924, p. 160–165, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3At ext%3A1999.01.0134%3Abook%3D3.

friendship and oaths of faith". So spake they, and great Hector of the flashing helm shook the helmet[7].

This prayer emphasises the real rule of Zeus, his power to turn fate. The mortal heroes of Homer are beautiful and great thanks to their bravery. Their world is admirable so that sometimes some of them themselves seem to be equal to gods. Paris, the noble spouse of Helen with beautiful locks", wearing beautiful armour, called divine by his enemy Menelaus, is, in fact, dependent on Olympic beings. Only death that comes upon the brave warriors makes us think about the limit of human power[8]. Gods can suspend commonly accepted laws and change the course of action with their powerful decisions. Aphrodite opposes the natural course of action and saves Paris:

> This he then tossed with a swing into the company of the well-greaved Achaeans, and his trusty comrades gathered it up; but himself he sprang back again, eager to slay his foe with spear of bronze. But him Aphrodite snatched up, full easily as a goddess may, and shrouded him in thick mist, and set him down in his fragrant, vaulted chamber, and herself went to summon Helen[9].

He has to become invisible for a moment so that the change of his place of stay can occur. On the battlefield, where the fate of the mortals is at stake, Homer crates images which testify to the wonderfulness and supernatural power of gods able to suspend commonly applicable rules of the world. With the help of those images, he creates faith that a god can imperceptibly carry away and lift to the skies his chosen ones. For the gods have their favourites. They favour them even at the cost of exposure to the wrath of other gods. The world of the Olympic gods is full of violence, sensual love and conflicts. Do they think particular gods really are present in a place in the sense that human beings are? The concept of prayer implies that the

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7   Homer, *The Iliad*, transl. A. T. Murray, p. 320–325.
8   J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*, p. 143.
9   Homer, *The Iliad*, transl. A. T. Murray, p. 320–322.

gods can be present anywhere at will, or at least that they can hear and attend to their worshippers over vast stretches of space[10]. However, Homer upholds our belief that their life is full of happiness. All of these things that happen to gods can be treated as adventures that add a certain flavour to an endlessly ongoing life.

Homer cannot differentiate *bios* from *zoe*. Eternal life in the form of *zoe* must have its significant quality like that of a *bios*. Otherwise, immovable gods stuck in the skies would not have been authentic. "The immortals" are made to human measure, but they are filled with wonder. The wonder is to enchant listeners' imagination[11]. The magic gods can do is not only impossible in the human world, but also unnecessary. Hera gives the ability to speak to Achilles's horse and hastens the sun to set[12]. Despite all these wonders, gods do not inspire respect because of their impulsive actions and frauds caused by passionate affairs or anger at the violation of laws and their will[13]. Homer's poetry affects with powerful, colourful images, stimulates feelings, but suggests a ready image of the world, including the idea of divinity within it[14]. Homer also uses Middle Eastern motifs when he wants to show figures of the deities and their place of living. Olympus is patterned on the Canaanite myth and the presence of god is often accompanied by an aura of bright light[15]. Another trace of Middle Eastern sources in Homer's work can be found in the very attitude of the gods. This testifies to the widespread imaginaries about gods having their prototype in man. The seated position of gods during councils resembles the position of Mesopotamian and Ugaritic gods. Cornford takes an interesting take on this issue: he states that the (Olympian and mystical) type of religion and its idea of divinity may have

10 E. Kearns, *The Gods in the Homeric epics*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, ed. R. Fowler, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 62–63 (Cambridge Companions to Literature).
11 R. Flacelière, *A Literary History of Greece*, Taylor and Francis, Somerset 2008, p. 46.
12 Homer, *Iliad,* XVIII, eds. D. B. Monro, Th. W. Allen, Oxford University Press, 1920, p. 181–246 (Oxford Classical Texts).
13 K. Banek, *Mistycy i bezbożnicy: przełom religijny VI–V w. p.n.e. w Grecji*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2007, p. 19.
14 R. Flacelière, *A Literary History of Greece*, p. 47–48.
15 M. L. West, *The East Face of Helicon. West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1997, p. 221–226.

emerged from two different experiences. We owe the creation of personal gods to collective experiences. In the sphere of Greek polytheism, referred to as a conglomerate, we are yet to consider two types of gods: the Mystery god and the Olympian god. Mystery gods are from tip to toe daimons of human collectives, while Olympian gods have their daimon rooted in the local area, which is distinguishable from their worshippers[16].

Differences between gods and humans

Undeniably, the life of Homeric gods is similar to that of human beings except for two traits: gods enjoy uninterrupted eternal life and are given supernatural power. Gods act in the heavenly and earthly spheres. They argue with each other about their own or human fate. However, gods do not form a democratic government, but rather a monarchy. The model for this monarchy is the Middle Eastern custom of a feast: a practice of a common banquet, which arrived in Greece a century later. In this imaginary, the human sphere is considerably separated from the divine. Time works to the disadvantage of humans because the abyss that separates humans and gods enlarges with time. Thus, the vision of humans in the distant past was similar to how the life of gods was imagined. The mortals were in a much better situation than they are now; people lived alongside gods. Over time, man has lost the eternal youth that the gods still have. Gods know much more than people because of their supernatural power and the authority they exercise. People are much lower in the hierarchy of beings than gods when it comes to the cognition, because of their limited competence. They do not have power, authority, or knowledge. According to the Greek and Middle Eastern myths, as people, we have been condemned to the necessity of hard work and enduring the hardships of everyday life[17]. According to Homer, what elevates a man in human society is his birth, thanks to which he can afford heroic deeds.

16   F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*, p. 110–113.
17   M. L. West, *The East Face of Helicon*, p. 107–120.

Heroes are beings that sit between humans and gods

One can look at the works of Homer from the perspective of an emerging cultural pattern. The poet composes a song in order to proclaim the acts of great heroes and praise their merits. The battling sides create a specific background to show the greatness of a man endowed with many virtues. Although violated matrimonial laws were the pretext for the war, and the war itself became a revenge on the Trojans, it is in this war that the glory of human beings shines brightly. Heroes are, after all, a distinct kind of mortal beings. First of all, they are gods' chosen ones, and thus they occupy a higher position than average mortals. Secondly, their acts are exceptionally great because they are driven by nobility and bravery. The heroes do not have to be crystalline in their morals. Homer shows them in their human, defective nature. After all, they are selfish, proud and oftentimes they disregard gods' laws.

> The always provisional nature of authority is a fundamental feature of both Homeric poems. It lies behind both the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon in the Iliad, and also the implicit approval bestowed upon Odysseus' ability to extricate himself from potentially threatening situations by tricks and deceit[18].

One might infer that it is bravery that elevates them to the pedestal of fame, but the question of heroes is more complicated in Homer's works. Gods love heroes and protect them because they are beautiful, able-bodied, and cunning in fraud, which makes them successful in their actions.

One can say that, before the god's interference in the life of a hero, there is some kind of a heavenly element in his character and life goal. Heroes are somewhat related to gods by birth. Hesiod's story of the four stages of humankind explains it best:

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18 R. Osborne, *Homer's Society*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, p. 213.

Although Homer never contextualizes the heroic generation in such a schematic way, his portrayal reflects the same sense of their place in the decline of mankind. For Homer as for Hesiod these warriors are hēmitheōn genos andrōn, "the race of men who are half-gods", often by the literal fact of divine parentage but more generally because they stand at an intermediate stage between the gods' infinite vitality and the sickly feebleness of modern man[19].

Wisdom as the key to divine and human nature

Logos, as understood by Heraclitus, is the core of his teaching. Everything that is, is being directed by Logos, and all reality has a specific nature thanks to the existence of the Logos. In the world of Homer, everything had its designated place. Moiras towering over everything, guided all hierarchical reality to the right ending. Everything that happened, happened accordingly to the fate. That is why pre-unity can be found in old beliefs, and its far echoes can be found in Homer's works, and in the philosophy of Heraclitus it takes on a new expression. Firstly, it should be noted that the Logos is the Highest Intelligence, Law and Divine Reason, and as a rule of opposites — it is also a god. This god is everything; by combining all opposites, he is then wholeness and perfection[20]. One can agree with Kazimierz Mrówka that he was pulled out of Olympus in order to take over the entire cosmos[21]. The Logos is the guarantor and the rule of unity. According to Heraclitus, man has a special place because, experiencing Logos — harmony, he finds it also in himself. ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωυτόν *I have sought for myself* (B 101)[22]. Logos influences the quality of human life, because by living in the human psyche as an individual Logos, it gives rise to a life

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19 M. Clarke, *Manhood and Heroism*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, p. 79.
20 W. W. Jaeger, E. S. Robinson, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers. The Gifford Lectures, 1936*, Reprint Clarendon Press, Oxford 1947, p. 116–120, 125–127.
21 K. Mrówka, *Heraklit: fragmenty. Nowy przekład i komentarz*, Scholar, Warszawa 2004, p. 210.
22 Plutarchus, *Adversus Colotem*, 20, 118 c (196 Pohlenz), https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Fragments_of_Heraclitus#Fragment_101. Greek originals from: *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, griechisch und deutsch von H. Diels, hrsg. von W. Kranz, vol. 1–3, Dublin–Zürich 1968.

consistent with the operations of the Logos in the external dimension. In another sense, one can say that the Logos is the law of the reality it creates and directs, because the world maintains proper ratios, and relations between things are accorded with Logos. Then, one can speculate that Logos of the human soul works in a similar way. Rationality manifests itself through thoughts and statements about reality as it is. However, this does not exhaust all traits of rationality because rationality is a life compatible with cognition. Having discovered Common Logos as a cosmic rule and immanent god of the world directing everything, Logos of the soul can only submit to that godly law if it acts reasonably. In accordance with the philosopher's thought, the world gains full integration of its elements through Logos — Reason and Intelligence.

Man, as a microcosm, can also submit to this reasonable action of integration by firstly identifying Logos within himself. This divine principle is radically different from earthly things and even beings. God ceases to be a copy of man and appears as a model of perfection, different from what is known and experienced. Divinity does not mean endless but limited existence (as it was in Homer's writing). Homeric gods are enjoying only immutable conditions despite the passing of time, unlike all other beings. Heraclitean Logos is not perfect by separation from the rest of the reality it directs, nor by gaining immortality during its existence. It is as eternal as eternal is the world in which it immanently exists, although the world does not cover it fully. Wojciech Wrotkowski cites the famous excerpt B 30, where we get to know that fire grasps everything, and that is why reality is, in its essence, harmony and order.

Κόσμον τόνδε, τόν αυτόν απάντων, ούτε τις Θεών, οὔτε ανθρώπων ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ᾽ ήν αεί καί ἔστιν καί ἔσται πῦρ ἀείζωον, ἁπτόμενον μέτρα καί ἀποσβεννύμενον μέτρα.

The world, the same for all, that neither any god nor any man has made; but it has always been and is and will be, fire ever-living, kindling in measures and being extinguished by measure[23].

The unity of the universe encompasses the total space-time and has a divine character[24]. Without wishing to impute Pythagorean views, one could say that divinity is contained in harmony: both spatial and temporal. Eternity is not static but dynamic, in a constant passage form the present to the future.

the maxim B30 (1) understands in a ceaselessly "material" aspect (πῦρ ἀείζωον) the unity of the god-universe, taken "hylozoistically"; and (2) pronounces "space-time totality", as you would put it today (ἀεί), that grasps in itself the very same order in universe (κόσμος), spreading to (2a) all the past (ἤν), (2β) all the present or mundane (ἐστί) and (2γ)all the future (ἔσται, B30; as above)[25].

Fire has to impose a rhythm because it is the originator of the order, then it is a law, according to which everything goes with a proper ratio[26].

The first step: knowing thyself. The turn towards individual Logos

Heraclitus' sentence transmitted by Plutarch alludes to the Delphi invocation: Know thyself. Heraclitus forestalls philosophy's interest in human.

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23 Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata*, V, 14, 104, 2–3, vide lut., Plutarch, *De animae procreatione in Timaeo*, 1014 A6–9; see W. Wrotkowski, *Αιών. Wieczność w teologii Heraklita*, "Przegląd Filozoficzny. Nowa Seria" 16 (2007) no. 1, p. 22; source of English translation: http://www.heraclitusfragments.com/B30/notes.html, excerpt on the website from J. Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, Routledge, 1982.

24 Ch. H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, p. 135–137.

25 W. Wrotkowski, *Wieczność w teologii Heraklita*, p. 22.

26 J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 1920, p. 179–181.

The Ephesian thinker anticipates Socrates because he answers to Delphi's call[27]. This is not only an answer of a religious man who wants to be obedient to a god, but also the answer of a philosopher who does not have any authority except for reason[28]. Heraclitus shows symptoms of being an introvert and solitary, but above all he points to the *psyche* and her cognitive abilities. In the search for oneself, there is a way up and a way down, the path, at the end of which Logos is revealed to man. Accordingly: like the Logos, it is universal, accessible to man, but undiscovered and invisible, the way human is accessible to himself, but undiscovered and invisible. Looking for oneself will remain a specific philosophical attitude for centuries. The consciousness, in fact — self-consciousness, is a condition for a happy life after death.

> You will not find the boundaries of soul by travelling in any direction, so deep is the measure of it. (B 45)[29]

> ψυχῆς ἐστι λόγος ἑαυτὸν αὔξων
> To the soul, belongs the self-multiplying Logos. (B 115)[30]

A fundamental question arises: What is Logos in the human *psyche*? Can it be associated with intellectual abilities? Does deep human Logos testify to the unlimitedness of what is limiting, giving things and phenomena the right measure? Let us start with the fact that, for Heraclitus, *psyche* was a physical substance (atmospheric exhalation or steam) which,

27 K. Mrówka, *Heraklit: fragmenty*, p. 281.
28 K. Mrówka, *Heraklit: fragmenty*, p. 280.
29 Diogenes Laertius, IX, 7 (440), source: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Fragments_of_Heraclitus#Fragment_101, source of the excerpt on the website: J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 1920, p. 152. Online: Page:Early Greek philosophy by John Burnet, 3rd edition, 1920. djvu/152 — Wikisource, the free online library.
30 Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, III, 1, 180 (III, 130 Hense), source: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Fragments_of_Heraclitus#Fragment_101, source of the excerpt on the website: J. Hastings et al., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 6, 1908, p. 593. Online: Encyclopædia of religion and ethics: Hastings, James, 1852–1922. n 82058769: Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming: Internet Archive.

like the entire cosmos, is submitted to the laws of Logos. Therefore, it takes part in the natural cycle of Fire transformations. It can be then treated like other things that abide by the rules of Logos (having its limited amount and proper ratio) if not the fact that it has far (and even undefined) borders, because it has Logos. *Psyche* then cannot be one of the many things. Heraclitus uses here a tern *peirata psyche*, which refers to a mythical image from Homer's and Hesiod's poems.

We owe the later development of philosophy to the thought of Heraclitus. Parmenides of Elea creates metaphysics that is not only a continuation of Xenophanes's idea, but rather a reaction to Heraclitus' work[31]. The teaching of the Ephesian is a material fully open to interpretations of different kinds and even to a critique from those who see the divine Logos from another perspective. It is, finally, the ability to express oneself — the ability to speak. However, thinking and speaking do not exhaust the human Logos. Human Logos can also enable human to the acts that go in accordance with thought and words. Just like common Logos directs the world, so Logos of the psyche directs human actions.

> Of course such a grave role of the term *Logos* makes it the prime term in Heraclitean philosophy. For it is on it that human cognition is based, the theory of oneness and opposites finds its solution in it, also Heraclitean imagination of god and divine fire is identified with it. Finally, the mystery of the structure of eternal, ever-changing cosmos, together with its human dimension — microcosm, lies within it. In other words, Logos "directs" life of a human (because a Logos of his soul is in a way a part of divine Logos), the life of state and society (because human laws have their beginning in one, divine Law — vide B114) and the fate of whole universe. Material substance for universe is fire, endowed with immanent steering its power[32].

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31 Vide E. Zeller, *Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy*, Longmans, Green, London 1886, p. 130.
32 K. Narecki, *Logos we wczesnej myśli greckiej*, transl. P. Austin, Redakcja Wydawnictw Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 1999, p. 93 (rozprawa habilitacyjna, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski).

The task of an enlightened man is to give up to the activity of Logos and become a part of cosmos through this process. The consciousness widened to incomprehensible length of cosmos "creates" a new man.

ἓν τὸ σοφόν ἐπίστασθαι γνώμην κυβερνῆσαι πάντα διὰ πάντων.
Wisdom is one thing. It is to know the thought by which all things are steered through all things. (B 41)[33]

Πάντα τὸ πῦρ ἐπελθὸν κρινεῖ καὶ καταλήψεται.
Fire in its advance will judge and convict all things. (B 66)[34]

Those fragments of Heraclitus's teaching are an attempt to define god and the principles of the world in a totally different style than did Homer, or Ionian philosophers. **God is not a being similar to man, but man can become similar to him, when he understands the One thing ruling all. Therefore, the only trait that could indicate human similarity to god is the ability to think. God is the opposite of multitude, so he is unity, and as such he is other than the universe shaped by his thought**. The thought in which God-Logos is comprised, leads eventually to transformation of a limited human existence. As commonly known[35], at this time in Greece, attempts are made to escape religion locked in certain myths and public religious cult in favour of more individual experiences and a direct contact with god. Nevertheless, those attempts are not a departure from practices, but in some regions — their intensification; practiced in order to achieve the desired state of bliss, euphoria associated with the presence of god in a man, or even his deification.

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33 Diogenes Laertius, IX, I (437), https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Fragments_of_Heraclitus #Fragment_101, source of the excerpt on the website: J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 1920, p. 148. Online: Page:Early Greek philosophy by John Burnet, 3rd edition, 1920.djvu/148 — Wikisource, the free online library.
34 Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, IX, 10, 7 (244 Wendland), https://en.wikisource. org/wiki/Fragments_of_Heraclitus#Fragment_101, source of the excerpt on the website: J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 1920, p. 149.
35 W. Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, Harvard University Press 1987, p. 44–60.

It will not be a misuse if we say that the consciousness of the Logos is not only a contact with an eternal principle of the world, but also a way to change one's own existence. **The goal of Heraclitus teaching is to know the Logos that properly guides human actions. It does not stop us from stating that Heraclitus teaching could lead to a better kind of mundane life and a better life after death. For knowledge gives wisdom that uncovers the true reality, and its cognition has a soteriological sense and leads from death to immortality.** It is worth underscoring, that Heraclitean identification of Dionysus and Hades (B15)[36] could have eschatological meaning, i.e., it was a symbolic expression of the domination of life over death. According to the philosopher this religious worldview, together with the purification rites, the mystery cults does not eventually lead to the proper way of living. The critique of religion is an attempt to save man. That is why Heraclitus, as other philosophers in the fifth century B. C. did, superseded Orphism from enlightenment circles[37]. Heraclitus seems to be arguing with different forms of religiosity, but not in order to negate the existence of god, but to show the thread of its false images and the perplexity of practiced rites.

Heraclitus appears to be the first representative of philosophy to create anthropology. As Krzysztof Narecki has rightly stated, the image of man emerges on the basis of theology and cosmology. "His philosophy of man could be described as the smallest of the three concentric circles. These circles cannot be really separated, and in no way, one cannot imagine an anthropological circle in separation from the cosmological and theological. In Heraclitus's understanding, man is a part of cosmos and, as such, he submits to the law of wholeness, equally as other parts and everything"[38].

Death is to man what it is to a cosmos: a necessary factor in constant change. Man in his individual shape is submitted to it, while as a species, he is immortal. Heraclitus probably introduced and modified ancient Greek

36 Clemens Alexandrinus, *Protrepticus*, 34,5 (I, 26 Stählin), http://www.heraclitusfragments.com/B15/notes.html.
37 A. Krokiewicz, *Studia orfickie. Moralność Homera i etyka Hezjoda*, Aletheia, Warszawa 2000, p. 27 (Dzieła, 2).
38 K. Narecki, *Obraz a myśl filozoficzna Heraklita z Efezu*, TN KUL, Lublin 1981, p. 28.

thought, in which reality arises from one stream of Life or Soul, which, in turn, manifests in everything[39]. Individual man floats on the surface only for a brief moment, like bubble on the water. Then it bursts to give space for the next one. Did Heraclitus assign a specific type of existence to a soul after death? We do not have enough evidence to support this thesis. In constant transitions, Logos decides about the "identity" of life and death. This way ending can be a beginning, and this new beginning will reach its end. The goal of life is contentment and pleasure coming from knowing Logos and from acting accordingly to his warrants. This is good and just.

Conclusion. Homer's idea — god as a human

In Homer's terminology we can find the following phrases to describe a human being: a one-day being, a mortal, which underscores the limited time a man has. According to the poet, man is a conglomerate of diverse experiences and sensual desires but, first of all, he is a being that is contained in a limited time span of birth and death. His desire of uninterrupted life cannot be realised because of him having such nature. What elevates him over his status is also his natural heritage, just a little bit bigger on earth. Nature of a given human enables him to carry out great acts. He becomes a hero by struggling with adversities. Suffering adds him nobility and the ability to bear the pain, tenacity in fight become the causes of his greatness. Poetry is a monument of mortals, who conquer weak human condition, although they cannot defeat death. Only the gods found themselves in this sphere of reality, where there is no suffering, old age, or death. Gods watch over order of the world; their presence should arouse fear, which leads to piety and worship towards gods in a human. However, those immortal beings in Homer's song sometimes cause laughter. Entangled in conflicts and intrigues, they act like whimsical magnates. Immortality and supernatural power do not add to their seriousness nor does it gives them advantage over people. Their limits go in a different direction and place than man's, which

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39 F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*, p. 192–193.

means that despite of their strength and endless life they are inscribed in a hierarchical world. Gods have their model on earth and, although death is taken from them, and supernatural power is added, they are still beings limited in their possibilities.

The idea of a god in Heraclitus is drastically different from the one we get to know in Homer's writing. Human happiness cannot be linked to satisfying bodily desires, but with the knowledge that gives birth to the right actions. By following literary and philosophical transmission we can see how the image of man is changing and how important wisdom is. According to the philosopher, to gain knowledge means to be guided by Logos, which gets human being out of errors and limitations by integrating its thoughts, actions, and words. By discovering the Logos, man becomes an integrated whole, but also a part of a cosmos. Knowledge makes him someone, who despite having a mortal nature is elevated over his finitude and limitations. A man observing Logos (Reason, God, Law) changes his consciousness. The discovery of the divine Logos makes him acquire wisdom in the universal, theoretical, and existential, practical dimension. This idea of God-Logos changed entirely the perspective of human existence and the idea of a man's place in the world. If the Logos is god, then man can participate in this divine reality to become good and just.

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Abstract

Gods and people in literature and philosophy.
God by the picture of human or human by the picture of god?
Homeric vision of reality versus Heraclitus' vision of reality

The article deals with the theological issues of Homer and Heraclitus. The analysis of the works of Homer and the philosophical thought of Heraclitus serves to compare and contrast them extracting significant differences regarding the image of god and man. The author develops both literary and philosophical understanding of gods. She compares the man-god relationship in early Greek literature and philosophy. There is an interesting intrinsic tension in the literary tropes that can only be understood if the religious function of this literature is taken into account. The author tries to describe the vision of the world and the place of human beings in it in both sources: literature and philosophy. In philosophical writings, there can be seen a movement in the vision of the world structure: the gods become more inaccessible to humans, but humans gain the opportunity to become godlier if they follow a proper set of thoughts and actions proposed by philosophy. Religious poets were speaking of the past when the gods were approachable to people. Their fantasies were often mixed with old beliefs so that the divine-human world has as much wonder and eccentricity as dread. Philosophy conquers not only minds but also hearts, to convey them towards the ideal, bearing in mind the unattainable model of a virtuous man. While religion describes gods similar to humans, philosophy forges a new god-resemblant human figure.

Keywords: philosophy of religion, gods, religion, literature

Abstrakt

Bogowie i ludzie w literaturze i filozofii.
Bóg przez obraz człowieka czy człowiek przez obraz Boga?
Homerowska wizja rzeczywistości a wizja rzeczywistości Heraklita

Artykuł dotyczy zagadnień teologicznych u Homera i Heraklita. Analiza dzieł Homera i myśli filozoficznej Heraklita służy ich porównaniu i zestawieniu, wydobywając istotne różnice dotyczące obrazu boga i człowieka. Autorka rozwija zarówno literackie, jak i filozoficzne rozumienie bogów. Porównuje relację człowiek–bóg we wczesnej greckiej literaturze i filozofii. Istnieje interesujące wewnętrzne napięcie w poszukiwaniach literackich, które można zrozumieć tylko wtedy, gdy weźmie się pod uwagę religijną funkcję tej literatury. Autorka stara się opisać wizję świata i miejsce w nim człowieka w obu źródłach: literaturze i filozofii. W pismach filozoficznych można dostrzec ruch w wizji struktury świata: bogowie stają się bardziej niedostępni dla ludzi, ale ludzie zyskują możliwość stania się bardziej boskimi, jeśli podążają za odpowiednim zestawem myśli i działań proponowanych przez filozofię. Religijni poeci mówili o przeszłości, kiedy bogowie byli dostępni dla ludzi. Ich fantazje często mieszały się ze starymi wierzeniami, dzięki czemu świat bosko-ludzki jest równie cudowny i ekscentryczny, co przerażający. Filozofia podbija nie tylko umysły, ale i serca, by skierować je ku ideałowi, pamiętając o nieosiągalnym wzorcu cnotliwego człowieka. Podczas gdy religia opisuje bogów podobnych do ludzi, filozofia tworzy nową postać człowieka przypominającą boga.

Słowa kluczowe: filozofia religii, bogowie, religia, literatura

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Philosophical social space of the Riga Treaty era — Russian perspective, meaning

The article is an attempt to describe the philosophical social space of the Riga Treaty era from the Russian perspective and an attempt to describe its meaning. The article describes in a condensed form the development of social thought (Russian / Soviet Marxism). It describes, among others the roles of the philosophy of law, the so-called legal nihilism, the meaning of Leon Petrażycki's thoughts[1]. In conclusion, he puts the perspective of the treatise of Riga in the context of Hilary Putnam's thought experiment on the "twin land".

The article refers to the Treaty of Riga concluded by Poland with the Soviet state in Riga on March 18, 1921. It ended the two-year war between these countries. On October 12, 1920, peace preliminaries were signed, ending the fighting at the front. However, after long and difficult negotiations, on March 18, 1921, a definitive treaty was signed. The peace of Riga marked the end of armed conflicts devastating Eastern Europe from

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[1] Leon Petrażycki (1867–1931) philosopher, lawyer, sociologist, ethicist and logician. He lectured at St. Petersburg State University. After the revolution of 1905, he joined the liberal Constitution-Democratic Party. In 1906 he was elected to the First State Duma. In 1919 he left for Poland, starting work at the University of Warsaw. He was a promoter of women's rights.
Some works by Petrażycki and about him: L. Petrażycki, *Law and morality*, Cambridge 1955; J. Górecki, *Sociology and jurisprudence of Leon Petrażycki*, Urbana 1975; K. Motyka, *Leon Petrażycki challenge to legal orthodoxy*, Lublin 2007; M. Fuszara, *Leon Petrażycki's theory and women's rights*, "Societas/Communitas. Półrocznik Instytutu Stosowanych Nauk Społecznych Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego" 2009 no. 1, p. 37–46; R. Tokarczyk, *Law and state according to Leon Petrażycki*, Firenze 1982; J. Licki, *The life and work of Leon Petrażycki: report at the Scientific Session on Petrażycki*, Warszawa 1977.

August 1914. It was the beginning of stabilization for the inhabitants of this part of Europe for the next 17–18 years. It closed the legal-international framework of the new order that had already been introduced in much of Europe through the Treaty of Versailles[2].

Leszek Kołakowski[3], in his monumental work *Main Currents of Marxism* in the epilogue, wrote: "Marxism was the greatest fantasy of our century. He was a dream of a society of perfect unity in which all human aspirations will be fulfilled and all values — reconciled. Although he adopted Hegel's theory of the "contradiction of progress", he also adopted the liberal-evolutionist faith, according to which "in the final analysis" it must turn out that history inevitably progresses for the better and that the increase of human dominion over nature also means (after a certain break) an increase in freedom . He owed much of his success to the fact that he combined messianic fantasies with the real social cause of the European working-class struggle against exploitation and poverty, and framed this combination into a coherent whole bearing the absurd Proudhon title of "scientific socialism"[4].

In his book *Okupowanej Warszawy dzień powszedni* [Occupied Warsaw Weekday], Tomasz Szarota proposed an analysis of the phenomenon

2   See more: J. Borzęcki, *The Soviet-Polish Peace of 1921 and the Creation of Interwar Europe*, New Haven 2008; M. Wołos, *A New Order in Central and Eastern Europe: Polish-Soviet Negotiations and the Peace of Riga (1920–1921)*, "Zapiski Historyczne" 86 (2021) issue 2, p. 97–124.

3   Leszek Kołakowski (1927–2009) philosopher, historian of philosophy and religious thought, essayist, columnist, prose writer. 1952–1956 associated with the line of orthodox Marxism. Later he switched to revisionist positions. In 1966 he was removed from the communist PZPR. In 1968 he emigrated from Poland (he was deprived of his post at the University of Warsaw). He has taught philosophy at universities in Canada and the USA. He moved to Oxford and joined the All Souls Collage there. He was a co-founder in 1976 of the Workers' Defense Committee and its foreign representative. In the 1950s and 1960s involved in polemics with the religious worldview. On the other hand, he tried to "humanize" Marxism and redefine leftism. His views evolved towards a greater and greater understanding of man's religious quest. Some works by Kołakowski: *Religion, if there is no God: on God, the Devil, sin, and other worries of the so-called philosophy of religion*, New York 1982; *The devil and scripture*, London 1973; *Toward a Marxist humanism; essays on the Left today*, New York 1968; *Metaphysical horror*, Oxford–New York 1988; *Husserl and the search for certitude*, Chicago 1987; *Bergson*, Oxford–New York 1985; *Modernity on endless trial*, Chicago 1990.

4   L. Kołakowski, *Main currents of Marxism*, transl. P. S. Falla, Oxford 1978, p. 523.

in terms of the collective psychological experience of reality[5]. He called this phenomenon "psychological social space". In that case, it was a space where society and individuals functioned in a specific antinomy between faith and hope and fear, anxiety. In this perspective, for example, various events, attitudes, decisions, etc. were viewed.

In this article, I would like to propose a similar research formula. However, it will not be a "psychological social space" but a philosophical social space. The methodological framework will be similar, but the perspective will be slightly different. Therefore, we will be interested primarily in the philosophical approach, but what is important and what will turn out below, we will not avoid psychology, law and history. Let us start with the latter, with the history but not the history of the Treaty of Riga in the scrite sense, but with a fragment of the history of philosophy in Russia.

It should be remembered that in the years 1918–1920 works by non-Marxist philosophers such as Berdyaev[6], Frank[7], Losski[8], Novgorodtsev[9],

5   T. Szarota, *Okupowanej Warszawy dzień powszedni*, Warszawa 2010, p. 381 and next; W. Paduchowski, *Nowa Huta nieznana i tajna. Obraz miasta w materiałach Urzędu Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego i Milicji Obywatelskiej (1949–1956)*, Kraków 2014, p. 153–188.

6   Nikolai Aleksandrowicz Berdyaev (1874–1948), philosopher and journalist. Representative of Christian existentialism and personalism. In 1922, together with a group of prominent intellectuals, he was expelled from Russia. While in exile in France, he was one of the most famous figures in the intellectual life of Paris. He maintained contacts with the most outstanding philosophers of Europe. His work enjoyed exceptional popularity in the West. See: R. T. Ptaszek, *Bierdiajew Nikolai Aleksandrowicz*, in: *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, vol. 1: A–B, Lublin 2000, p. 570–572.

7   Semyon (Simon) Ludwigowicz Frank (1877–1950), philosopher. He studied law, philosophy and economics. At one time, an adherent of Marxism. In 1922 he was expelled from Russia. He moved from a fascination with Marxism to idealism. He developed his own philosophy of God. See J. Tupikowski, *Frank Siemion (Simon) Ludwigowicz*, in: *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, vol. 3: E–Gn, Lublin 2002, p. 609–610.

8   Nikolai Onufriyevich Losskij (1870–1965), philosopher, creator of intuitivism, supporter of Russian personalism. In 1922 expelled from Russia. A friend of the President of Czechoslovakia, Tomasz Masaryk. During World War II, a supporter of Father Józef Tisa. In the years 1941–1945 he lectured in Bratislava. In 1945, he left for the USA, fearing the NKVD. See M. Aleksadrowicz, *Łosskij Nikołaj Onufrijewicz*, in: *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, vol. 6: Kr–Mc, Lublin 2005, p. 628–630.

9   Paweł Iwanowicz Novgorodtsev (1866–1924), philosopher, sociologist, jurist. In 1906, he joined the founding group of the Party of Constitutional Democrats (cadets) and on its behalf

Askoldov[10] were still published in Russia, even though there were only a few non-Marxist periodicals — "Thought and Word", "Thought". However, in 1920 the philosophical departments of universities were closed. In 1922, all known non-Marxist philosophers were expelled from Russia[11]. Instead, the Communist Academy in Moscow and the Institute of Red Professors were established in 1921, which was needed to prepare new communist cadres to replace the old intelligentsia[12].

Interestingly, one of the distinguishing features of communism was the belief in the importance of philosophy in political life. From the early writings of Plekhanov, that is, from the beginning, Russian Marxism tended to develop into a comprehensive "system", responding to all philosophical, sociological and political issues. Russian Marxists differed as to the correct philosophical content of the doctrine. On the other hand, all were convinced that the party must and in fact has a strictly defined philosophical view of the world, and that there can only be one such view[13].

The very thought of Marx became known in Russia as early as the 1840s and was very popular. Russian Marxism was not homogeneous. There were many varieties of it. His followers often held very sharp polemics with one another as to the correct interpretation of Marx's thought. We must remember that it was not only its supporters who spoke about Marxism and

became a deputy to the First State Duma. After the Bolshevik Revolution, he was imprisoned for demanding the convening of the Duma. In 1920, he evacuated from Crimea together with the White's military units and emigrated. Most of his works focused on law in its historical and systematic aspect in conjunction with philosophy, psychology, social sciences and politics. See M. Aleksandrowicz, *Nowgorodcew Paweł Iwanowicz*, in: *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, vol. 7: Me–Pań, Lublin 2006, p. 725–727.

10 Sergey Alexeyevich Askoldov (1871–1945), a philosopher, also had a history and natural science education. In 1928 he was arrested and exiled to the Komi republic. In 1935 he settled in Nowogród. During the German occupation, he was involved in anti-communist propaganda. He died in Berlin. See *Sergey Askoldov,* https://www.peoples.ru/science/philosophy/sergey_askoldov/ (access December 2021); https://biblioclub.ru/index.php?page=author_red&id=180 (access December 2021); *De profundis. Z głębokości. Zbiór rozpraw o rosyjskiej rewolucji,* introduction M. Półtoracki, Warszawa 1988, s. 4; M. Łosski, *Historia filozofii rosyjskiej*, Kęty 2000, p. 428–430.

11 L. Kołakowski, *Main currents*, p. 45–46.
12 L. Kołakowski, *Main currents*, p. 49.
13 L. Kołakowski, *Main currents*, p. 56.

its role in Russia. For example, one of the students of the Moscow Theological Academy, Paweł Floreński, in a letter to his friend Włodzimierz Ern, wrote: "Regardless of our attitude towards Marxism, one cannot fail to recognize a significant part of the truth in it; notwithstanding its widespread historical importance in our day, it aptly shows the relationship of economic facts"[14]. Another thinker, Semyon Frank, who assessed the situation in Russia and the situation of Russian society in the 19th and early 20th centuries from a certain historical perspective, wrote: "«Marxism» in a broad, general sense as a belief in the truthfulness of the economic and sociological teachings of Karl Marx, was not at all novelty of those years. The doctrine of Marx was supported by almost all Russian socialists of the years. 70th, after in 1872 one of the first Russian disciples of Marx, the revolutionary Herman Lopatin, translated Marx's Capital into Russia. […] Russian socialism based on the teachings of Marx was «nationality». Namely, the Russian socialists of the 1870s and 1880s believed (with the approval of Marx himself) that the Russian road to socialism was different from the Western European one. […] Against this Narodnik socialism, which in radical and revolutionary circles also identified itself with the teachings of Marx, in the 1890s «Marxism» appeared in the narrow, specific sense of the word […]. «Marxism» in this sense had a double meaning: it was a new political doctrine and a political movement, and at the same time a new general direction of Russian thought"[15].

At the end of the 19th century, the so-called the phenomenon of legal Marxism — creation. Its ideological leader at the beginning of the 20th century was Piotr Struve[16]. "Legal Marxists" spoke in the pages of legally issued periodicals, published at their own expense. Its representatives

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14 T. Obolevitch, *Żyd, który przyjął chrześcijaństwo. Wokół filozofii Siemiona Franka*, Zielona Góra 2021, p. 10.

15 T. Obolevitch, *Żyd, który przyjął chrześcijaństwo*, p. 11.

16 Piotr Berngardowicz Struve (1870–1944), philosopher, publicist, political activist. From the end of the 19th century, he developed his political activity within legal Marxism. Initially, he collaborated with W. I. Lenin, and then in a sharp dispute with him. Breaking with Marxism and Social Democracy, he switched to the side of liberalism. He was one of the founders of the Cadets party. After the Bolshevik revolution in 1920, he left Russia and emigrated. In 1941, he was imprisoned by the Germans in Graz, released shortly before his death, he left for Paris.

argued with the movement of the then popular nationality, at the same time sharing some of Marx's political and economic ideas. They saw the path of Russia's development on the basis of a capitalist system, not a revolution. Representatives of this trend stood at a high level of philosophical considerations. They rejected positivism and dialectical materialism. This movement was seen as an idealistic or neo-Kantian trend in Marxism. They professed the position of "realism" in the economic sphere, and searched for new ethical principles. Later they abandoned Marxism in favor of philosophical and then religious idealism. Frank said: "The «right» wing [of Marxism], having quickly shed its Marxist umbilical cord, emerged as a movement aimed at a decisive revision of the spiritual foundations of the traditional views of the Russian radical intelligentsia"[17]. Lenin, on the other hand, wrote about legal Marxism: "It was an extremely original phenomenon, the very possibility of which no one could even believe in the 1880s or early 1890s. In a country of absolutism, with the press completely gagged, in an age of insane political reaction haunting the smallest seeds of political discontent and protest — suddenly it makes its way into censored writings, the theory of revolutionary Marxism, taught in Aesopian language, but understandable to «all interested». The government is used to seeing only the theory of (revolutionary) nationalism as dangerous, failing to see its internal evolution as it happens, and rejoicing at any criticism directed against this theory. Before the government realized it, it took a long time (for Russian relations) to detect a new enemy and attacked by a heavy army of censors and gendarmes. Meanwhile, Marxist books were published one after another, Marxist magazines and newspapers were created, all of them were becoming Marxists, Marxists were flattered, Marxist favors were sought, publishers were delighted with the extraordinary sales of Marxist books"[18]. After the publication of the book *Critical Notes on the Economic Development of Russia* (1894) by the aforementioned Piotr

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See M. Aleksandrowicz, *Struve Piotr Berngardowicz*, in: *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, vol. 9: Se–Ż, Lublin 2008, s. 235–237.

17   T. Obolevitch, *Żyd, który przyjął chrześcijaństwo*, p. 12–13.

18   A. Walicki, *Rosyjska filozofia i myśl społeczna od oświecenia do marksizmu*, Warszawa 1973, p. 632.

Struv, legal Marxism became a very strong intellectual current in Russia. He had not only his own magazines but also his own representatives at the faculties of universities. Almost all the economic works justifying the progressive nature of capitalism, the necessity of the disintegration of the communal community and the proletarianization of the peasantry were written through the prism of legal Marxism[19].

But what was the situation of Marxism after the Bolshevik revolution? Interestingly, in the 1920s there was some kind of dispute in Soviet Marxism. It took place between the so-called "Mechanists" and "dialecticians". Including in the monthly entitled *Under the mark of Marxism*. This periodical played a significant role in the history of Soviet philosophy and was one of the most important theoretical press organs of the Bolshevik party. Only texts of people identifying with Marxism appeared in the magazine. Nevertheless, it initially referred to even such figures of world philosophy as Husserl, but shortly thereafter, the texts contained therein can be called philosophical productionists. Leszek Kołakowski wrote: "If you wanted to capture the meaning of the dispute in one sentence, you can say this: «mechanists» represented the resistance of natural sciences to the intervention of philosophy, while «dialectics» demanded the supremacy of philosophy over sciences and in this sense expressed the characteristic tendency of the Soviet ideological development. Rather, mechanists represented a negative point, while dialectics attached great importance to philosophy and considered themselves specialists in this field. Mechanists had a much better idea of what natural science actually was, and in these matters dialectics were ignorant and repeated only vague formulas about the need to philosophically generalize the sciences and give them unity. On the other hand, dialectics were stronger in their knowledge of the history of philosophy, which was the weakness of the opposing camp"[20]. Soon the party condemned both of them anyway.

The history of the philosophy of the Stalinist era became mainly the history of party appearances. The younger generation of careerists, informers

19   A. Walicki, *Rosyjska filozofia*, p. 633.
20   L. Kołakowski, *Main currents*, p. 63.

and ignoramuses had their say. They monopolized the entire philosophical life of Russia over the next decades. In other words, he was the executor of the death sentence on philosophy. Yes, philosophical careers were made, but they were owed mainly to denunciations on colleagues and repetition of current party clichés. As Leszek Kołakowski wrote, they were usually people unfamiliar with foreign languages and unfamiliar with world philosophy. Instead, he could learn more or less the writings of Lenin and Stalin by heart[21].

After presenting an introduction that outlined the basic assumptions of the ideas and thoughts of the first communist state in history. It is necessary to move on to the Bolshevik theory of state and law in the era of the Treaty of Riga.

The Marxist formula is: "As long as there is a state, there is no freedom, when there is freedom, there will be no state". Which was close to the essentially anarchist alternative: "either the state or the freedom"[22]. Before taking power, the Bolshevik party never specified its relationship to the law. Lenin argued that the dictatorship of the proletariat was to exercise "power unrestricted by any regulations, based directly on violence"[23]. Before 1917, Lenin was fascinated by the idea of direct legislation by the people (eg in the form of the power of soviets). This idea was familiar to the circles of the Russian intelligentsia from the mid-nineteenth century, both in liberal and utopian circles. She was attractive because of her dislike of the restrictive laws of absolutism and monarchy. Based on this concept, a trend called nihilism has developed, we will be interested primarily in the so-called legal nihilism. Due to the objective and not subjective treatment of law, including international law, in the Russian tradition. The slogan of legal nihilism fell on fertile ground, reflected in the writings of Alexander Herzen [24], Leo

21 L. Kołakowski, *Main currents*, p. 74.

22 A. Lityński, *Prawo bolszewików: rewolucja i ewolucja*, "Zeszyty Prawnicze" 11 (2011) no. 4, p. 13.

23 W. Lenin, *Dzieła*, vol. 10, Warszawa 1955, p. 239. For: A. Walicki, *Filozofia prawa rosyjskiego liberalizmu*, Warszawa 1995, p. 104.

24 See, among others: A. Kelly, *Herzen, Aleksandr Ivanovich*, w: *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. E. Craig, vol. 4, London–New York; M. Malia, *Alexander Herzen and the Birth of*

Tolstoy[25], and Mikołaj Berdyaev[26]. One should remember here, following Andrzej Walicki[27], that: "The central idea of «nihilism» was to liberate the individual from all traditional beliefs and norms of behaviour"[28]. It was science, especially natural sciences and their dissemination, that was to break the traditional ties imposed on people by society, family and religion.

Lenin's legal nihilism was characterized by an undisguised contempt for concepts such as the independence of the judiciary and procedural justice. It also had several shades. One of them manifested itself in the so-called Lenin's "direct people's justice", that is, in justifying spontaneous acts of rape and violence against "the enemies of the people". As early as 1901, Lenin praised the "street court" which, according to him, brought "a fresh breeze to the atmosphere of office formalities"[29]. He called on workers to exert direct political pressure on the judiciary. In 1906, Lenin's apology of

Russian Socialism. 1812–1855, Harvard 1961; A. Walicki, *Dwa oblicza Hercena: filozofia wolności i "rosyjska idea"*, "Przegląd Filozoficzny" 22 (2013) no. 3, p. 123–136, https://doi.org/10.2478/pfns-2013-0054.

25 See, among others, J. Ernest, *Tolstoy*, Abingdon 2015; D. Moulin, *Leo Tolstoy*, London–New Delhi–New York 2011; W. Warawa, *Metafizyczne źródła radykalizmu i nihilizmu w Rosji*, "Kultura i Wartości" 2015 no. 14, p. 63–72.

26 See, among others: O.I. Miroshnichenko, *Legal Mentality as a Means to Overcome Formal Legal Nihilism in Russian Society*, „Asian Social Science" 10 (2014) no. 19, p. 168–172; N.P. Poltoratzsky, *The Russian Idea of Berdyaev*, "The Russian Review" 21 (1962) no. 2, p. 121–136; H. Rarot, *Problem nihilizmu i jego przezwyciężenia. Mikołaj Bierdiajew i Vittorio Posenti*, "Przegląd Filozoficzny Nowa Seria" 18 (2009) no. 1, p. 267–290.

27 Andrzej Walicki (1930–2020), historian of ideas, historian of Russian thought and Polish romanticism. His works concerned such issues as: Marxism, liberal thought, totalitarianism, communism, patriotism, nationalism and the history of the intelligentsia.

Some of Walicki's works: *Legal philosophies of Russian liberalism*, Notre Dame 1992; *The Slavophile controversy: history of a conservative utopia in nineteenth-century Russian thought*, Notre Dame 1989; *Stanisław Brzozowski and the Polish beginnings of "Western Marxism"*, Oxford–New York 1989; *A history of Russian thought from the enlightenment to Marxism*, Stanford (CA) 1979; *The controversy over capitalism: studies in the social philosophy of the Russian populists*, Notre Dame 1989; *Legal philosophies of Russian liberalism*, Oxford 1987; *Russia, Poland, and universal regeneration: studies on Russian and Polish thought of the romantic epoch*, Notre Dame 1991; *Marxism and the leap to the kingdom of freedom: the rise and fall of the Communist utopia*, Stanford (CA) 1995.

28 A. Walicki, *Rosyjska filozofia*, p. 310.

29 A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok do królestwa wolności. Dzieje komunistycznej utopii*, Warszawa 1996, p. 329.

"people's justice" went even further, as it turned into an apology of lynch judgments. In the article *Cadet victory and the tasks of the workers' party*, he wrote: "the people, the masses of the population not included in any organizational framework, randomly gathered in a given place, enter the scene directly and on their own. They themselves issue judgments and carry them out themselves, they exercise power, they create a new revolutionary law"[30]. He used similar words in 1920 in his article *Contribution to the History of the Dictatorship*. He referred to the law of lynching there, positively assessing this form of justice. The superiority of bottom-up, direct justice was also emphasized in the treaty *State and revolution*. This did not bother him, however, six weeks after the Bolshevik coup d'état on the creation of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution and Sabotage known as the Cheka. A centralized police organization unencumbered by any law or procedure. She was responsible only to the highest party authorities. Lenin believed that institutional (top-down) terror needed active support from spontaneous (bottom-up) terror. Lenin: "he wanted a revolutionary mobilization of the masses, and he was ready to pay for it by allowing the masses to act spontaneously. The masses, however, as a rule failed his expectations, as in his opinion «they acted apathetic and passed lenient sentences"[31]. Therefore, he was more and more inclined to professional activities, which he developed in the text entitled "What to do?". The decree of December 7, 1917 abolished all existing legal institutions, of which Lenin was very proud. He hoped that this would pave the way for a genuine democratization of the judiciary[32].

Another shade of Leninist legal nihilism concerned the hostility of the Bolsheviks to economic freedom. According to Lenin, trade was the worst poison in the social organism. "Lenin did not hesitate to directly incite the rebellious masses to pogroms against the rich under the slogan «steal stolen»"[33]. Walicki wrote: "Like young Marx, young Lenin was a law stu-

30 A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok*, p. 330.
31 A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok*, p. 330.
32 A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok*, p. 331, see more: M. Liebmanm, *Leninism Under Lenin*, Merlin Press, 1973; J.L. Talmon, *The origins of totalitarian democracy*, London 1985.
33 A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok*, p. 331.

dent, and even a practicing lawyer for some time. Unlike Marx, however, he never took law seriously and saw it as an instrument of human liberation. In this respect, it was deeply rooted in the worst Russian tradition of contempt for the law that is so characteristic of Russian nationality. He did not share the view of Plekhanov that the «legal worldview» of the Enlightenment was an expression of noble aspirations and honest illusions of the progressive bourgeoisie, for any cult of law was for him simply absurd"[34].

After seizing power, the Bolshevik legal theorists tried to combine the ideology of legal nihilism with Marxism. The general clause for the Bolsheviks was, firstly, "revolutionary legal consciousness" and, secondly, "revolutionary conscience". Immediately after the revolution, the scholar to whom Bolshevik lawyers most often referred was Leon Petrażycki — a Pole but considered a native scientist — a well-known theorist, co-founder of the so-called psychological theory of law[35]. Only a few elements have been adapted from his teachings, complementing the rest with Marxism. The two general clauses mentioned earlier, namely "revolutionary legal awareness" and "revolutionary conscience", are considered to be Petrażycki's elements of the Bolshevik legal doctrine. The most vocal propagator of Petrazycki's views among the Bolsheviks was Mikhail A. Rejsner (they taught at the University of St. Petersburg together)[36]. The latter, in mid-1918, recognized the concept of "justice" as changing. In this he distinguished between "bourgeois justice" which must be fought against because it formed the old law from the new — socialist or proletarian justice. In addition, he continued (he also claimed before 1917) that "the existence of law [prawowaja żizń] is divided into two hostile worlds — the intuitive and

34 A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok*, p. 328.

35 On Petrażycki's thoughts see, among others: E. Fittipaldi, *On Leon Petrażycki's Critical Realism and Legal Realism*, in: *Russian Legal Realism*, eds. B. Brożek, J. Stanek, J. Stelmach, Springer, 2018, p. 93–110 (Law and Philosophy Library, 125); E. Timoshina, *The Logical and Methodological Foundations of the Theory of Law of Leon Petrażycki in the Context of the Analytical-Phenomenological Tradition*, in: *Russian Legal Realism*, p. 111–126; M. Antonov, *Eugen Ehrlich and Leon Petrażycki: Are Emotions a Viable Criterion to Distinguish Between Law and Morality?*, in: *Russian Legal Realism*, p. 127–238.

36 See more: O. Merezhko, *The Unrecognized Father of Freudo-Marxism: Mikhail Reisner's Socio-Psychological Theory of State and Law*, in: *Russian Legal Realism*, p. 147–158.

the positive law, each of which lives a separate life"[37]. He drew a conclusion about the superiority of intuitive law over statute. Such a law — resulting from intuition — was to exist forever "regardless of the orders of the ruler, God or Satan". His theses were a combination of Petrażycki's theory with Marxist theses. In the early days, Leon Petrażycki was the most frequently mentioned bourgeois scholar in Bolshevik theory of law. Despite this, he remained a consistent anti-Bolshevik. Unlike several colleagues, he left Russia in 1918[38].

In 1919, Alexander Gigorie Gojchbarg, one of the leading Soviet lawyers, wrote that with the victory of communism, the law would disappear altogether, and that harmonious coexistence of people would not take place under the force of law, but on the basis of full freedom[39]. The same, a few years later, wrote in a scientific work that the proletariat already knows that religion is an opium for the people, but not everyone knows yet that "the law also constitutes an even more dangerous and dull opium for this people"[40]. Another great figure of the Soviet legal science — Piotr Iwanowicz Stuczka wrote in 1921 that he was afraid that in such a revolutionary time there might be no readers to read a book on such "counter-revolutionary matters as law"[41]. Former activist of the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania, one of the first Bolsheviks to attempt a theoretical approach to the criminal law of the Bolsheviks, co-creator of the "monumental" court decree No. 1. He wrote: "In this era, law is not a code, an unwritten collection of laws; without any laws, without special rules — armed people fight against their class opponents. Eugeniusz Paszukanis, the most influential Soviet jurist in the 1920s, developed the theory that law appeared and disappeared with the appearance and disappearance

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37 A. Bosiacki, *Utopia, władza, prawo. Doktryna i koncepcje prawne bolszewickiej Rosji 1917–1921*, Warszawa 2012, p. 154.

38 A. Bosiacki, *Utopia, władza, prawo*, p. 145–155.

39 A. Lityński, *Prawo bolszewików*, p. 14–15; N. Reich, in: N. Reich, H.-Ch. Reichel, *Einführung in das sozialistische Recht*, München 1975, p. 40–41.

40 C. J. Friedrich, Z. K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, Cambridge 1956, s. 13; O. S. Loffe, *Razvitie civilisticheskoy mysli v SSSR*, Leningrad 1975, p. 39; A. Lityński, *Prawo bolszewików*, p. 15.

41 O. S. Loffe, *Razvitie civilisticheskoy*, p. 39–40.

of commodity production. In socialism, economy is replaced by economic policy, that is the quote conscious regulation of economic processes"[42].

After all, it might seem that Bolshevik law will soon cease to exist. Adam Lityński wrote: "One can see that in the first months after the coup d'état, the Bolsheviks led by Lenin did not free themselves from bourgeois legal concepts and concepts, since they were looking for ways of operating their government in accordance with what they knew from bourgeois practice"[43].

In the early Bolshevik period, the discussion about the imminent death of the law was very much alive. It was not until the mid-1930s that Stalin accepted law as a legal component of socialism. Besides, he announced in 1933 that the state must first become stronger in order to die[44]. Gojchbarg and Stuczka were condemned by Andriej Wyszyński and Paszukanis was shot. Legal Nihilzim could not ensure full obedience contrary to the written norm. "As time went on, the teachings of Marx were abandoned more and more, but his works were always referred to, less and less truthfully, and more and more formally"[45]. Legal nihilism, however, was present in Soviet reality all the time until the end. Adam Bosiacki formulated the thesis that "the combination of legal and socialist nihilism, politically understood communist normativism, is probably the most original doctrinal concept of Stalinism", which has never been clearly formulated[46].

Lenin was aware of the impossibility of adhering to the Marxist doctrine, who stated that it was possible to maintain the norms of the old legislation, but only if it was compatible with the program of the Bolsheviks and Socialist Revolutionary Party[47].

On the philosophical social space, next to, inter alia, the tradition of legal nihilism consisted of ideology as well as conducted utilitarian real politics.

42 A. Walicki, *Filozofia prawa*, p. 447.
43 A. Lityński, *Prawo bolszewików*, p. 16.
44 A. Lityński, *Prawo bolszewików*, p. 24.
45 A. Lityński, *Prawo bolszewików*, p. 17.
46 A. Lityński, *Prawo bolszewików*, p. 18.
47 A. Bosiacki, *Utopia, władza, prawo*, p. 157.

The Austrian philosopher and historian of ideas Ernst Topitsch claims that two factors shaped the foreign strategy of the Soviets: ideology as a theoretical construct and real politics, which consequently meant "a rational policy of power". Marek Kornat, as it were, summed up this issue by stating that there was a rational program of Soviet expansion, rooted in the communist idea/ideology, and that its tool was Soviet Russia as a state of a new type[48]. This state did not wage war against the whole world, but used the tools of both expansion and coexistence[49]. Lenin said (1918): "History tells us that peace is a respite for war, and war is a means of obtaining anything at least better or worse peace"[50].

Contrary to Marx's ideas, communism did not take over the whole world and thus the Soviets had to coexist with capitalism. It resulted from various political and economic necessities, the need for a sensible, pragmatic arrangement of relations with the capitalist countries of the world. This required the conclusion of contracts, treaties and various agreements. All this required the Soviets to maintain the forms adopted in international law. The neighborhood of capitalist countries forced the application of non-revolutionary norms.

Metaphor is often used in teaching. In the case of the Polish-Bolshevik war, there is also a metaphor of a collision of two worlds sitting at one table, this time in Riga. At this point, he will propose to the reader a thought

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48 M. Kornat, *Program czy improwizacja? Idee polityki zagranicznej państwa sowieckiego*, "Dzieje Najnowsze" 49 (2017) no. 4, p. 108–109, https://doi.org/10.12775/DN.2017.4.05. See more: T. J. Uldricks, *Diplomacy and Ideology. The Origins of Soviet Foreign Relations 1917–1930*, London 1979; E. Topitsch, *Stalins Krieg. Die Sowjetische Langzeitstrategie gegen den Westen als rationale Machtpolitik*, Herford 1990.

49 M. Kornat, *Program czy improwizacja?*, p. 99. See more: A. B. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence. The History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917–1973*, New York–Washington 1968.

50 M. Kornat, *Program czy improwizacja?*, p. 98. Marek Kornat writes that the foreign policy of the Soviet state can be understood only in the long term and that there are basically three interpretations of this issue in world sovietology. "Primo the fact that the foreign policy of the new (Soviet) empire was dictated by the communist ideology. Secundo that ideology was only a foreign policy tool serving a state in which the factor of a great power was paramount. Tertio that ideology and *Realpolitik* are two factors shaping the foreign strategy of the Soviet state". Kornat favors the latter. See: M. Kornat, *Program czy improwizacja?*, p. 108.

experiment created by the American philosopher Hilary Putnam[51]. He believed that the meaning of words did not depend on how we think about them — "Forge of possible worlds"[52].

I go to the store and ask for a liter of milk. How is it that I get what I asked for? The most common explanation for this is that the word "milk" evokes the same image in the minds of the customer and the salesperson. We use the same language. Therefore, the word "milk" is associated with a certain state of mind that is common to these two people. This state of affairs about meaning was opposed by the aforementioned philosopher Putnam. He formulated the slogan that "meanings are not in the head".

So let us ask ourselves, if we think about the same thing, do we mean the same thing? Putnam proposed a thought experiment in which there is a planet called Twin Earth very similar to Earth. However, there are some differences between them. In Twin Earth there is a fluid called "water", it is indistinguishable from ordinary water in terms of temperature and pressure. It looks and tastes like water. In fact, however, the substance we call "water" in Twin Earth is not ordinary water, but a liquid with a chemical composition other than water. When earthlings come to Twin Earth, they will initially think that "water" has the same meaning on Earth and Twin Earth. Until they scientifically investigate a substance called "water", they won't see the difference. This means that up to this point the ideas about the substance called "water" will be the same. Both as for "water" on Earth and Twin Earth. Our mental image associated with the word "water" will be the same. After examining the chemical composition of the substance, you will find that the meaning of the word "water" refers to two different things. The conclusion is that the meanings are not in the head and do not

51 Hilary Putnam (1926–2016), an American philosopher, one of the founders of functionalism, a theory of mind that equates mental processes with the functions performed by human brains, and a causal theory of meaning that speaks in favor of semantic externalism. He also developed the so-called internal realism, a position constituting a compromise between realism and idealism, but in the last years of his life he moved to the positions of common-sense realism. He also referred to the achievements of American pragmatism. See: K. Czerniawski, *Światy możliwe w eksperymentach myślowych*, "Filozofuj" 2016 no. 6 (12), p. 44.

52 K. Czerniawski, *Światy możliwe*, s. 44–45.

depend only on whether we share common ideas associated with a word, but also on what the world to which the words relate is. This phenomenon is called semantic externalism. So it is the belief that meanings are something that depends on what exists outside our mind.

The famous "Plato's Cave" may be considered one of the first thought experiments. The ancient philosopher wanted us to imagine a group of people trapped in a cave. Throughout their lives, they could only see their shadows on the wall of the cave. In his opinion, such people considered shadows to be real objects and did not understand that they were only secondary to the real world.

Such a thought experiment is only successful if the possible world is closely related to our real world. Only then can the conclusions from the situation in one world be transferred to another world[53].

The Polish-Bolshevik war is sometimes described as a collision of two worlds. They were not imagined worlds as in Putnam's concept — they were real worlds. However, a conclusion can be drawn from his experiment. Both Poles and Bolsheviks understood the Treaty of Riga and its meaning derived in their own way from their separate worlds. They sat at the negotiating table in Riga, understanding the word "peace" in a very different way. According to the author of the above text, the philosophical social space as a theoretical construct helps to understand the diversity and complexity of looking at international relations (including the Riga Treaty) in the context of the Russian tradition of socio-political thought. This difference, also in the field of ideas and philosophy, did not and still does not allow for the permanent maintenance of the East-West peace.

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53 K. Czerniawski, *Światy możliwe*, s. 44–45. See more: H. Putnam, *Pragmatism and realism*, eds. J. Conant, U. M. Żegleń, London–New York 2002.

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Abstract

Philosophical social space of the Riga Treaty era — Russian perspective, meaning

The article is an attempt to describe the philosophical social space of the Riga Treaty era from the Russian perspective and an attempt to describe its meaning. The article describes in a condensed form the development of social thought (Russian / Soviet Marxism). It describes, among others the roles of the philosophy of law, the so-called legal nihilism, the meaning of Leon Petrażycki's thoughts. In conclusion, he puts the perspective of the treatise of Riga in the context of Hilary Putnam's thought experiment on the "twin land".

Keywords: the Treaty of Riga, philosophy of law, Marxism, Leninism, twin land

Abstrakt

*Filozoficzna przestrzeń społeczna epoki traktatu
ryskiego — perspektywa rosyjska, znaczenie*

Artykuł jest próbą opisu filozoficznej przestrzeni społecznej epoki traktatu ryskiego z perspektywy rosyjskiej oraz próbą opisu jej znaczenia. Artykuł ukazuje w skondensowanej formie rozwój myśli społecznej (rosyjskiego/radzieckiego marksizmu). Omawia m.in. role filozofii prawa, tzw. nihilizm prawny, znaczenie myśli Leona Petrażyckiego. Na zakończenie umieszcza perspektywę traktatu ryskiego w kontekście eksperymentu myślowego Hilarego Putnama na temat „bliźniaczej ziemi".

Słowa kluczowe: traktat ryski, filozofia prawa, marksizm, leninizm, bliźniacza ziemia

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The application of the phenomenological method as an element of the analysis of moral experience according to Paolo Valori[1]

Paolo Valori was an Italian Jesuit living in 1919–2003 who, for many years, taught ethics, phenomenology, and metaphysics at the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Pontifical Lateran University, and the Sapienza University of Rome. He was one of the first Italian scholars to become interested in the thought of Husserl. He belonged to the group of researchers of the so-called second wave of Italian phenomenology. He cooperated with Professor Angela Ales Bello in establishing the Italian Centre for Phenomenological Research in Rome. Years of studies, including those spent in the Leuven Archives (where he translated several manuscripts into Italian and French), resulted in several dozen publications on the views of Edmund Husserl (especially the comprehensive monograph of 1959 which was the second in Italy[2] and the suggestion for applying them in the studies on ethics of 1971[3]).

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1   This text is an extended version of the lecture given at the conference *In Search of a Hidden Phenomenology* which was held at The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow on 19–20 May 2022.
In this text I present a broader analysis of Valori's concept, which I have recently written about in a different context here: T. Mietelski, *Paolo Valori on Searching for Truth Everywhere as a Feature of Christian Philosophy*, "Forum Philosophicum" 28 (2023) no. 1, p. 181–195.
2   Cf. P. Valori, *Il metodo fenomenologico e la fondazione della filosofia*, Città di Castello 1959.
3   Cf. P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale. Saggio di una fondazione fenomenologica dell'etica*, Brescia 1971. In this text I am referring to the third edition: *L'esperienza morale. Saggio di una fondazione fenomenologica dell'etica*, Brescia 1985.

Obviously, the very fact of applying the phenomenological method in analysing ethics was nothing new. Such analyses were already carried out by Husserl, although it was mainly done in unpublished manuscripts, as a result of which some scholars claimed that Husserl was not dealing with such topics. However, the texts by Alois Roth[4] or Ullrich Melle[5] revealed the presence of such concepts in Husserl's views. And the father of the classical concept of phenomenological ethics is, of course, Max Scheler.

What, then, is original about Valori's approach? The idea of using the phenomenological method as one element of a broader analysis of moral experience. In his approach, this analysis proceeds in four steps, which also mark sections of this text. The first step is to determine the background of the moral fact with the help of human sciences; the second step is a phenomenological analysis of moral experience; the third step marks the search for the ontological foundation of the results obtained. In this way, the analysis reaches an end from the philosophical point of view, but it can be continued within the scope of moral theology, which is an additional, fourth step of the process.

Studying the background of analysis with the help of human sciences

The first step in the study of morality is to define the background of the analysis with the help of the sciences which Valori defines (in Italian) as *scienze umane,* commenting that he means those sciences which, in German culture, are called *Geisteswissenschaften*. And he lists such disciplines as sociology, empirical psychology, psychoanalysis, psychiatry, linguistic analysis, cultural anthropology, semantics, ethnology, historiography, political economy, political science, and religious studies[6]. Such an ap-

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4   Cf. A. Roth, *Edmund Husserls ethische Untersuchungen*, Haag 1960.
5   Cf. U. Melle, *Edmund Husserl: From Reason to Love*, in: *Phenomenological Approaches to Moral Philosophy. A Handbook*, eds. J. J. Drummond, L. Embree, Dordrecht 2002, p. 229–248.
6   Cf. P. Valori, *Il fenomeno e la natura delle scienze umane*, "Seminarium" 18 (1978) no. 3, p. 354. The origins of this position can be attributed to the views of Scheler, who spoke of the relationship

proach is justified, since a moral act is understood by Valori as "a free and conscious act of a man, aiming at moral value or lack thereof, that is [...] to fulfil or not to fulfil one's own or another person's dignity"[7]. With such an understanding of the moral act, in order to judge a given behaviour, it is necessary to understand it from both the external and internal side. This can be done through social sciences at the external and objective level, and through psychological sciences at the internal and subjective level[8]. Valori says: "thus, human sciences are not only useful, but necessary for ethics: by changing our viev of anthropology, and they cannot fail to influence our axiology as well"[9].

Nevertheless, these sciences do not, according to Valori, capture the totality of moral experience, but only its empirical-sensory aspect. They cannot resolve conflicts of values, they do not reveal the drama of moral choices, they do not explain the phenomena of moral life, they do not turn to the future, but they serve to verify the deeds that have already been done[10].

According to Valori, the limitation of *human sciences* is the creation of interpretation keys that are too easy, as a result of which they totalize and monopolize the reality despite its complexity[11]. Valori particularly reaches for the analyses related to neopositivism, sociology, structuralism, and psychoanalysis in order to show that they reduce the meaning of moral experience. At the same time, their results are worth incorporating into phenomenological analysis. He writes: "there is no doubt that a moral fact is inextricably linked to the dynamics of emotional reactions, social pressures, linguistic-ethnological structures, and the introjection of ancestral

between philosophical anthropology and the sciences: cf. M. Scheler, *Mensch und Geschichte*, in: M. Scheler, *Späte Schriften*, Bern–München 1976, p. 120–144; A. Węgrzecki, *Scheler*, Warszawa 1975, p. 75f.

7   P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi. Scienze umane, filosofia, teologia*, "Gregorianum" 58 (1977) no. 1, p. 73. Cf. P. Valori, *Filosofia morale e scienze umane*, in: *Ricerca morale e scienze umane*, a cura di A. Molinario, Bologna 1979, p. 50.

8   Cf. P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi*, p. 76.

9   P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 251.

10   Cf. P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi*, p. 77.

11   Cf. P. Valori, *Il fenomeno e la natura delle scienze umane*, p. 357.

and parental prohibitions. Only that from all these conditions it emerges as a specific, irreducible remnant"[12].

Thus, it is necessary to move to the second step, i.e. the analysis of moral experience with the use of the phenomenological method.

Phenomenological analysis of a moral experience

This second step begins with defining the concept of experience. According to Valori, it is "a direct and receptive contact with the reality captured in its essence and meaning"[13]. Thus, it concerns the extension of the concept of experience, which is typical of phenomenology[14].

The second moment of the phenomenological step is the analysis of the phenomena of a moral experience. The first class of moral phenomena that seem necessary to consider are valuing judgements. Contrary to Kant and some of his successors, Valori recognises that the phenomenon of duty is secondary. The primary phenomenon is that of valuing judgements[15] and, more specifically, judgements related to inner experience, since judgements related to outer experience, although they appear to be universal, would not be able to refer to values if they were not connected to consciousness first. Therefore, Valori adopts the methodological principle of the priority of a personal experience. He says: "philosophical analysis, including the analysis of moral phenomena, is, in a way, a philosopher's personal fact, even if he is intellectually and compassionately united with the whole human experience in intersubjectivity"[16].

Valori defines the ethical valuing judgement as "an experienced, existential act, rooted in the very human condition, in which the subject — while

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12 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 94.
13 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 121.
14 Cf. E. Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, transl. F. Kersten, The Hague 1983, p. 44; M. Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, Halle 1916, p. 46.
15 Cf. Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, p. 210.
16 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 128.

searching for the reason and meaning of his life — expresses the value of those actions which seem to establish or enrich that meaning"[17]. Moral life is a search for the good, but this search is a free choice of a person: "moral valuing is a free act in relation to a free action, mine or that of others, but such a free act presupposes the affirmation of a value that transcends and normalizes me"[18]. Thus, ethical valuing is free, personalistic, existential, normative, and objective.

Starting from the analysis of inner consciousness and extending it by intersubjective communication makes it possible to conclude that "the valuing ethical judgement has its own peculiarity, i.e. it expresses a particular recognition of the free conduct of a human being as such; it expresses a relation not to ability, physical strength, external success, or conformity to social, political, family, religious law, etc., but to the dignity of a human person precisely because he is a person"[19].

The phenomenon of ethical valuing is related to the acts of preference, choice, and regret, as well as the phenomenon of duty, although, as has been said, Valori does not consider it central even though it often comes to the fore and appears as the guiding motif of morality. In order to grasp moral experience in its entirety, a phenomenology of valuing and a phenomenology of duty are necessary. A valuing judgement has a static, theoretical, and contemplative dimension, while a duty judgement has a dynamic, active, and practical dimension[20].

The analysis of value judgements, acts of preference and choice, the phenomena of regret and duty, leads Valori to recognise the existence of a specific moral experience characterised by the perception of the value of "a specific human being as a person, in and for himself […], acting or not acting according to his unique and inalienable dignity, according to a greater or lesser faithfulness to the authentic meaning of his life"[21]. It

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17 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 110. Cf. P. Valori, *Valore morale*, in: *Nuovo dizionario di teologia morale*, a cura di F. Compagnoni, G. Piana, S. Privitera, Milano 1994, p. 1419.
18 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 132.
19 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 137.
20 Cf. P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 139–150.
21 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 161.

is, therefore, not just about the communal dimension (legal-social experience), the relationship with the deity (religious experience), human activity (aesthetic experience), let alone the man in his empirical conditions (psychological, social, biological, and economic ones). A moral phenomenon appears as non-reducible to other types of phenomena, and a moral value emerges "from all its empirical conditioning […] and yet denotes a quality of human action when it is truly in conformity with the dignity of the person"[22].

Therefore, the distinction of moral experience allows us to move on to the third moment of phenomenological analysis, namely the affirmation of the existence of a specific type of value, i.e. moral value.

Valori suggests a definition of moral value which sees it as "an excellence or quality inherent in the human act (internal or external) when it appears authentically human, consistent with the dignity of a person, and corresponding to the most profound meaning of their existence"[23]. What is good, therefore, is "that behaviour which makes *a human being* feel valued, whereby the human being is understood here not as an abstract […] but as a real, specific, individual person existing in the intersubjectivity of people"[24]. In other words, "the dignity of the human being […] constitutes the essential criterion of any moral judgement. Behaviour or action, whether individual or communal, is honest as long as it fulfils this dignity"[25].

According to Valori, his concept resolves all the aporias concerning value, especially its ontological status, because his ethics is founded on the most solid and richest reality, i.e. on a person. The philosopher in question regards the person not as what he actually is, but as what he will become if he wishes, following an inner dynamism in order to fulfil himself and live an authentic life[26]. The horizon of ethics is therefore ideal since it cannot

22 P. Valori, *Phenomenology of personalistic morality*, in: *The Self and the Other*, ed. A.-T. Tymie-niecka, Dordrecht 1977, p. 82 (Analecta Husserliana, 6).
23 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 179.
24 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 180.
25 P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi*, p. 79.
26 Cf. M. Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, p. 495f.

be fulfilled completely. However, it is real because it has as its object the existence of a specific person with his individual biological, psychological, sociological, and economic conditions, and with his supreme qualities such as dignity, rationality, freedom, and capacity to love. This ethics embraces the person as existing in its reality, but open towards the infinite possibility[27].

Such a phenomenology of moral experience is, to some extent, autonomous and self-sufficient, intuitive, and direct, and, as such, it does not require proving beyond the intrinsic obviousness[28].

The necessity to proceed to moral ontology

Nevertheless, Valori is aware of the fact that phenomenological ethics has serious limitations. It excessively separates value from being and good. Another serious problem is the excessive separation of emotional intuition from the power of reason, and the thesis of the ideal existence of value[29]. However, the greatest weakness of the phenomenology of moral experience is that, from a cognitive point of view, moral experience and the value of the person can be learned through phenomenology, but their ultimate reason cannot be explained without ontology. Phenomenological analysis, according to Valori, reveals the existence of an unconditioned, inalienable, absolute dignity of the person, but it does not explain the ontological roots of this dignity; "it does not thematize the ontological foundation of such value"[30]. In other words, on the basis of phenomenological analysis, it is possible to conclude that killing an innocent person is wrong because it is an action against the dignity of the person, but it is impossible to explain why the person has this dignity.

27 Cf. P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 188.
28 Cf. P. Valori, *Lezioni di filosofia morale*, Roma 1971, p. 52; P. Valori, *Filosofia morale: questioni conclusive*, Roma 1988, p. 6.
29 Cf. P. Valori, *Lezioni di filosofia morale*, p. 53f.
30 P. Valori, *Dalla fenomenologia alla ontologia morale. I grandi sistemi etici: il kantismo, il collettivismo, l'esistenzialismo*, Roma 1988, p. 19.

Therefore, ontological justification is needed. However, this raises the question of the relationship between phenomenology and metaphysics. According to Valori, strictly speaking, phenomenology "faithful to its methodological canons is not metaphysics, and it cannot be metaphysics without betraying its most authentic inspiration. It is the first step of philosophical knowledge, necessary but not sufficient; and it must remain so in order to be consistent with itself"[31]. In his opinion, phenomenology did not set itself the goal of being ontology in the powerful meaning of the word, that is, in the classical-realistic sense. Valori concludes, citing Stanislas Brenton, that phenomenology as a method ignores ontology in the strict sense of the word[32].

In terms of the construction of a doctrine, i.e. an attempt to understand reality, phenomenology seems not only to ignore (in the sense of remaining neutral), but even to positively exclude ontology. In this sense, says Valori, phenomenology would be transformed into a form of speculative idealism which would be original in that it would be methodological. However, even if traces of such a conviction can be found in Husserl's texts, according to Valori, it does not seem to represent "the authentic philosophical force of phenomenology and its real interests"[33]. It is because Valori believes that, while interpreting Husserl's thought, we should pay more attention to the *animus* permeating his work than to some occasional claims. And the *animus*, in his opinion, is not the positive exclusion of ontology.

Valori notes that certain elements of the phenomenological method could be a prelude to a pure view of being. Such elements include intentionality, approaching obviousness as presence, discovering eidetic structures, *epochè* or transcendental intersubjectivity. Phenomenology would, therefore, in this sense, be a prelude or preparation for ontology. But how can this be reconciled, Valori asks, with the stated ignoring of ontology? He answers to this question in the following manner: if one accepts phenomenology in

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31 P. Valori, *Fenomenologia*, in: *Dizionario teologico interdisciplinare*, a cura di L. Pacomio, vol. 2, Torino 1977, p. 196.
32 Cf. P. Valori, *Il metodo fenomenologico e la fondazione della filosofia*, p. 198; S. Brenton, *De la phénoménologie à l'ontologie*, "Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica" 49 (1957) no. 3, p. 222.
33 P. Valori, *Il metodo fenomenologico e la fondazione della filosofia*, p. 199.

its moderate form, that is, leaving aside extreme theses that do not seem to belong to its essence (*epochè* in the gnoseological sense or the too far-reaching distinction between consciousness and being), it can provide privileged access to the truth of apparent existence. After closer analysis, says Valori, it turns out that phenomenology "not only does not exclude ontology, but it is clearly heading towards it, even if it did not want to or could not reach it"[34]. At the same time, however, Valori disagrees with Alwin Diemer who argued that phenomenology is a metaphysical system rather than a method[35]. He admits him to be right in that one cannot speak of methodology without some form of metaphysics, but he thinks that the problem should be formulated differently. Valori asks: is metaphysics in Husserl to serve methodology, or the other way round? And he leans towards the first possibility[36]. Phenomenology, in his view, does not set itself the task of searching for the ultimate reason of reality, even if it opens the way for metaphysics. The first task of phenomenology is the observation and hermeneutics of the data present in intentional consciousness. Even if, says Valori, this will lead to the constitution of the transcendental Self, even if it takes metaphysics into account — it will always be within the function of phenomenology, and not the other way round[37]. Therefore, phenomenology "can build a useful and perhaps necessary propaedeutic of a critical ontology, which, of course, is not explicitly defined, nor easily definable"[38].

34 P. Valori, *Il metodo fenomenologico e la fondazione della filosofia*, p. 199–201.

35 Cf. A. Diemer, *Edmund Husserl. Versuch einer systematischen Darstellung seiner Phänome-nologie*, Meisenheim am Glan 1965, p. 4–6. Husserl itself, in his famous article for *Encylopaedia Britannica*, wrote that phenomenology is anti-metaphysical because it rejects metaphysics as a formal system, but all metaphysical issues fall within the scope of interest of phenomenology and find the proper method in phenomenology (cf. E. Husserl, *Der Encyclopaedia Britannica Artikel. Erster Entwurf*, in: E. Husserl, *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, Den Haag 1968, p. 253).

36 Cf. P. Valori, *Moral experience and teleology*, in: *The Teleologies in Husserlian Phenomenology*, ed. A.-T. Tymieniecka, Dordrecht 1979, p. 187 (Analecta Husserliana, 9); P. Valori, *Husserl e Kierkegaard*, in: *Kierkegaard e Nietzsche*, Milano–Roma 1953, p. 195; P. Valori, *Fenomenologia e metafisica. Colloquio con il prof. Giannini*, "Aquinas" 21 (1978) no. 2–3, p. 444.

37 Cf. P. Valori, *Il metodo fenomenologico e la fondazione della filosofia*, p. 139.

38 P. Valori, *Recenti studi sulla fenomenologia husserliana*, "La Civiltà Cattolica" 112 (1961) no. 1, p. 283.

From the methodological point of view, it is therefore legitimate to proceed to the third step of analysis, i.e. to ontology, which, however, does not invalidate phenomenological analyses. For Valori the moral fact appears as the first in the epistemological order, although the authentic experiencing of this fact leads to the discovery of metaphysical truths, such as freedom, the person, openness to the Absolute, which are the first in the ontological order[39]. The phenomenological moment and the metaphysical moment are different but not separated from each other; they are two moments of one philosophical process[40]. Valori maintains that "a correct ontology and, *a fortiori*, metaphysics of ethical life […] cannot fail to require this radical, phenomenological questioning of order, lest we remain at a dogmatic and pre-critical level"[41]. It is phenomenological analysis that allows the further introduction of the concepts of norm, purpose, law, value, nature, good, and love into the philosophical system. Phenomenological analysis can enrich, explain, and justify metaphysics.

The first moment of ontological analysis is to examine contemporary ethical systems that presuppose the existence of moral value and its transcendence over an empirical fact but assume its foundation on an ontological system that is, in his view, inappropriate[42]. Every modern ethical system is metaphysics, claims Valori, because by absolutizing certain elements of reality it puts them "in place of the *old* God"[43]. Atheistic humanisms, however, do not protect the fundamental principle of moral life, namely the absolute primacy of the person. Marxism subjects the person to the collective, rationalism to reason, while in Sartre's existentialism the person is "arbitrary freedom that begins and ends in the case"[44].

Hence, after examining the wrong solutions, the second moment of ontological analysis is to answer the question of what characterizes phenomenological ethics founded on ontology. In Valori's opinion, it has the

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39 Cf. P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 237f.
40 Cf. P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi*, p. 78.
41 P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 11.
42 Cf. P. Valori, *Dalla fenomenologia alla ontologia morale*, p. 23.
43 P. Valori, *Può esistere una etica laica?*, "La Civiltà Cattolica" 135 (1984) no. 3, p. 23.
44 P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi*, p. 81.

following features: it is anti-naturalistic in that it does not reduce moral value to a biological, psychological, psychoanalytic, emotive, and socio-logical fact; it avoids every form of rationalism, whether idealist-Platonic or formalist-Kantian; being objective, it is not objectivist. From the positive side, in turn, it is a personalistic, communal, existential ethics that is open to the Absolute[45]. It should "fund value, understanding it as a reflection, for human consciousness, of the transcendent structures of being, since they express perfection and therefore appear worthy of respect and love"[46]. However, from the methodological point of view, it takes into account the contribution of human science, placing its results in the context of the moral ideal; it is based on moral experience; it is inspired by Christianity, but not in order to imitate it, but rather to update this inspiration; it takes into account current ethical discussions, not in order to follow other solu-tions, but to discern whether they may include some valuable elements which make it possible to grasp the moral ideal better[47].

The opportunity to continue the analysis within moral theology

In ontology, the analysis of moral experience in Valori's concept reaches an end from the philosophical point of view. The ontological discourse does not, on the one hand, release us from the preceding scientific and phe-nomenological analysis of moral value and fact, as well as their practical content, i.e. laws, norms, customs, rights, and obligations[48]. On the other hand, the discourse may be continued in theology. Also, moral theology does not wipe out the results of scientific and philosophical analyses, nor is it a gap-filler.

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45 Cf. P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 239f.
46 P. Valori, *Per un discorso ontologico concreto*, Roma 1967, p. 19.
47 Cf. P. Valori, *L'esperienza morale*, p. 240f.
48 Cf. P. Valori, *Può esistere una etica laica?*, p. 27.

Valori believes that the philosophical opening to the Absolute will remain incomplete if it is not fulfilled in a real, existential, supernatural, and supra-rational encounter with God. It is a qualitative leap made by faith, and it transcends science and philosophy. Valori argues that, in order to accept the Revelation, there is no need to go through previous degrees of moral reflection, but, at the same time, the response of faith does not make scientific, phenomenological, and ontological analysis redundant[49]. The philosopher in question believes that "value is based on being, so the affirmation of absolute moral value cannot fail to include a reference to the ontological Absolute"[50]. Secular ethics, i.e. autonomous ethics that disregards the existence of God, is, according to Valori, possible at the gnoseological-phenomenological level and at the ontological — direct and proximate — level. It is not possible, however, at the indirect and ultimate ontological level. He argues that the phenomenological analysis of moral experience leads to showing that "moral value finds its gnoseological criterion and closer ontological foundation in human dignity"[51]. However, it finds its ultimate foundation in the reference to the Absolute[52].

In Valori's view, ethical analysis is thus situated at the intersection of different points of view: human sciences, the phenomenology of experience, moral ontology, and, as the final horizon, faith, and its reflective analysis, i.e. theology.

It is worth noting briefly at the end some of the objections that can be made to Valori's concept, in particular those traditionally made to both phenomenological method and material ethics. These include the following doubts: What exactly is the object of phenomenological analysis? Does it capture real reality, or rather its representation in consciousness? What is the ontological status of values? Do they exist realistically, ideally, intentionally or in yet another way? What is the ontological status of the person? What is human dignity? What is its definition? Valori is aware of

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49 Cf. P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi*, p. 71, 81.
50 P. Valori, *Può esistere una etica laica?*, p. 23.
51 P. Valori, *Filosofia morale: questioni conclusive*, p. 16.
52 Cf. P. Valori, *Significato e metodologia della ricerca morale oggi*, p. 81.

some of these objections, and he tries to provide an answer, but he fails to notice all of them. He is aware of the difficulties involved in phenomenological reduction and in bracketing the data of the natural approach. He is also aware of numerous aporias concerning values and he attempts to solve them in an original, though not always sufficient, way. He does not address the definition of dignity or the ontological status of the person in a broader manner. Valori's adoption (following Scheler) of a kind of updating concept of a person makes it possible to ask the questions: what if the development of a person does not take place? As a free subject, he may not want to fulfil his or her dignity. What happens then with their personal status? What about the people who, with no fault of their own, fail to update their worth?

Conclusion

The analyses carried out in this text led to the following conclusions. First, Valori understood Husserl's phenomenology mainly as a method of philosophising that allows one to accurately and faithfully capture and describe the reality, and to take into account the many factors that define it. For this reason, he concluded that the phenomenological method could be applied to the study of morality, and he made it one of the elements of the analysis of moral experience. In Valori's view, phenomenology understood in this way can also serve as an introduction to metaphysics.

Second, by moving to moral ontology, Valori wanted to complement phenomenology with a metaphysical system. He does not say that he is referring to classical metaphysics, but his suggestion of ontology based on phenomenology shares many features with this suggestion. Without going into detail, as this exceeds the subject of this text, it can be said that similar theses on phenomenological method and metaphysics were put forward in Poland by Karol Wojtyła and Tadeusz Styczeń[53]. Such a juxtaposition is in-

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53 Cf. K. Wojtyła, *System etyczny Maksa Schelera jako środek do opracowania etyki chrześcijańskiej*, "Polonia Sacra" 1953/1954, nr 6, p. 143–161; K. Wojtyła, *Ocena możliwości*

teresting insofar as it is unlikely that at the time they published their texts, Valori on the one hand and Wojtyła and Styczeń on the other knew each other's views. Therefore, one can therefore speak of a parallelism between the Italian and Polish interpretations of Husserl's thought and its application to the study of morality.

Third, Valori modifies the requirement of the presuppositionlessness of phenomenology. The lack of assumptions seems to be the absence of certain specific presuppositions. However, for Valori, presuppositionlessness is the absence of the presuppositions of classical metaphysics in the epistemological order, since starting from the establishment of a system closes the possibility of dialogue. Therefore, in this approach, presuppositionlessness is a way of questioning other views and means that, at the starting point, the background for phenomenological analysis is provided by the results of the human sciences. Then the analysis should then be complemented by an ontological justification, taking into account the fallacies of rationalism, collectivism, and existentialism. The final stage may also include the incorporation of the theses of moral theology into the analysis. This procedure by Valori can be described as a modification of the postulate of presuppositionlessness towards interdisciplinarity, which is an original development within the phenomenological method.

Fourth, this framing of interdisciplinarity also establishes an interesting research perspective. Valori did not explicitly talk about including the results of neuroscience and cognitive science into his analysis. This is obvious, as he was writing in the last century, when these disciplines were not yet ultimately defined. However, the development of neuroscience is undoubtedly a challenge for today's philosophy and, in particular, ethics. While it is clear that the results achieved in the study of the human brain can be incorporated into the analysis of moral experience, it seems necessary to define stricter rules regarding interdisciplinarity, especially its role and place in the normative framing of ethical issues.

zbudowania etyki chrześcijańskiej przy założeniu systemu Maksa Schelera, Lublin 1959; T. Styczeń, *Problem możliwości etyki jako empirycznie uprawomocnionej i ogólnie ważnej teorii moralności*, Lublin 1972.

To summarise these considerations, it can be said that Valori understands phenomenology first and foremost as a philosophical method. He appreciates this method because it allows for a comprehensive and faithful description of reality. For this reason, he makes this method one of the most important elements of his conception of the analysis of moral experience.

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Abstract

The application of the phenomenological method as an element of the analysis of moral experience according to Paolo Valori

The purpose of this article is to present the application of the phenomenological method as one of the elements of the analysis of moral experience in the view of Paolo Valori (1919–2003). In his approach, such analysis proceeds in four steps. The first is the identification of the background of a moral fact with the help of human sciences; the second step is the phenomenological analysis of moral experience; the third step marks the search for the ontological foundation of the results obtained; in this way, the analysis reaches an end from the philosophical point of view, but it can be continued within moral theology, which is the fourth step of the process.

Keywords: Paolo Valori, phenomenology, ontology, ethics, moral experience

Abstrakt

Zastosowanie metody fenomenologicznej jako element analizy doświadczenia moralnego według Paolo Valori

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie zastosowania metody fenomenologicznej jako jednego z elementów analizy doświadczenia moralnego w ujęciu Paolo Valoriego (1919–2003). W jego ujęciu analiza taka przebiega w czterech krokach. Pierwszym jest identyfikacja tła faktu moralnego za pomocą nauk humanistycznych; drugim krokiem jest fenomenologiczna analiza doświadczenia moralnego; trzeci krok oznacza poszukiwanie ontologicznego fundamentu uzyskanych wyników; w ten sposób analiza dobiega końca z filozoficznego punktu widzenia, ale może być kontynuowana w ramach teologii moralnej, która jest czwartym etapem procesu.

Słowa kluczowe: Paolo Valori, fenomenologia, ontologia, etyka, doświadczenie moralne

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An attempt at an evaluation of Philippa Foot's conception of naturalistic virtue ethics

Since the beginning of her philosophical activity, Philippa Foot focused on arethology, which she considered a perspective that is capable of solving problems faced by modern normative ethics. She contributed to the popularisation of the ideas of her teacher, Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret Anscombe, who attempted to reactivate the virtue ethics of Aristotle and Aquinas[1]. The most important elements of Ph. Foot's ethical reflections concerning virtue theory included the rejection of emotivism, expressivism and prescriptivism as well as the negation of the distinction between fact and value (which she borrowed from Anscombe), that supposedly was the source of the mixing of descriptive and evaluative meaning[2]. Foot's aim was to create a foundation for morality that would be devoid of metaphysical justifications. I argue that at each stage of the evolution of her project, Foot was forced either to make arbitrary judgements or to adopt metaphysical theses, which she specifically wanted to avoid.

I also point out that an attempt to justify the necessity of morality from a biological perspective is not faultless.

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1   Cf. G. E. M. Anscombe, *Modern Moral Philosophy*, "Philosophy" 33 (1958) no. 124, p. 1–19.
2   P. Foot, *The Grammar of Goodness. An Interview with Philippa Foot*, "Harvard Review of Philosophy" 11 (2003), p. 34.

What is virtue ethics?

Virtue ethics originated in ancient Greece and found its fullest expression in Aristotle's work. In the Middle Ages, it was further developed by St. Thomas Aquinas.

The doctrine of virtues (arethology) teaches us how to act efficiently in order to reach the goal, which is the good of man. Aristotle, and later also Aquinas, distinguished between skills in the intellectual and moral dimensions. Skills enable us to know and properly desire the good of persons in truth. However, it is not enough to know what a virtue is — it is also necessary to train the intellect how to know it and the will how to make the right decisions.

Aristotle emphasised that the rational behaviour should follow nature, which means that we should live according to the conditions set for us within a harmonious cosmic order. For him, ethics was a practical ability to obtain the good by finding the "golden mean" between extremes.

According to Aristotle, virtue is an acquired but enduring disposition to a morally good action. A virtuous person is someone who acts virtuously, which means that he acts in a morally good way and is guided by morally good motives. Thus, virtue has two equivalent dimensions: intellectual and affective. In the intellectual dimension, virtue assumes that a virtuous person knows what should be done in particular circumstances, understands the principles of morally good conduct derived from virtues (including honesty, truthfulness, justice, benevolence, etc.), and applies them correctly in specific life situations. The virtue of prudence, understood as an enduring disposition to make correct moral judgements which stem from correct reasoning in moral matters, is crucial here. Aristotle pointed to a very close connection between the moral virtues and φρόνησις, which means than man is "able to deliberate well about what is good and advantageous for himself […] as a means to the good life in general"[3].

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3   Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics*, 1140a.

According to Aristotle, the sign of having an enduring disposition is pleasure or sorrow that accompany, respectively, actions to be enjoyed (morally good) or grieved (morally bad).

Aristotle observed that virtue is acquired by repeatedly making morally good choices and making the right decisions based on reasoned reflection (φρόνησις). In this conception, human life is a complex process of development in which how we act is a reflection of our previous, conscious and repeated choices. What a person does always imprints its mark on his moral character. For example, someone who regularly tells the truth becomes a truthful person, and someone who acts courageously becomes a courageous person.

Contemporary virtue ethics has taken over from ancient ethics the teleological scheme of justifying morality, in which the goal of human life is the attainment of happiness understood as fulfilment. In this scheme, virtues function as means to the realisation of this good. This is also the role Aristotle assigned to virtues, which for him were a tool that enabled the transition from a state of nature *in potentia* (in which man is born) to a state of nature *in actu* (in which his goal is fulfilled).

It is worth emphasising here that for the ancients every creature had a purpose (telos) and fulfilled its role in a harmonious world. A given role, which was defined by the standard set within the harmonious structure of the world, could be fulfilled in a better or worse manner. Each element of nature, while striving for its own perfection, i.e. to fit as well as possible into the harmony of the cosmos, had its own distinct essence to which it conformed and for the sake of which it acted. Thus, each creature could be judged according to its measure. Man, as a member of a community, fulfilled his role properly when he adequately performed the tasks entrusted to him and behaved with dignity, while adhering to the principle of the "golden mean". As both Aristotle's virtue ethics, which offers a complete list of virtues and their oppositions, and virtue ethics developed by the Thomists, which places great emphasis on education and upbringing, have been extensively analysed in the subject literature, there is no need to repeat these considerations here. So, let us now turn to the proposal for a new approach to arethology formulated by Philippa Foot.

Self-interest as the foundation of morality

For a long time, Ph. Foot was influenced by Hume's naturalistic conception, in which the good and duty were defined in terms of individual or social "utility or pleasure". In her early works, Ph. Foot observed that moral issues are the source of the rationale for an action undertaken by the practical subject and that morality is closely linked to the universal human goal, which is the self-interest of each subject. In *Moral Beliefs*, she even argued that self-interest is the only goal to which all moral subjects relate[4], so virtue must serve self-interest.

The pursuit of self-interest is a naturally given and objective goal. Only this goal gives meaning to our actions. During this period, Ph. Foot considered issues such as friendship, marriage and the bringing up of children[5] only from this perspective. Even while defending the concept of the universality of self-interest as the foundation of ethics, she abandoned recognising justice as virtue, because my being just benefits other people. Thus, being just presupposes that I make a concession from what is in my interest, thus I diminish my own benefit[6].

In the later, more significant period, she abandoned such a close connection between the pursuit of self-interest and morality. She accepted the existence of ethical knowledge, i.e. a certain system of beliefs that makes it possible to characterise given actions according to a catalogue of virtues and vices. Morality in such a case would only be enforceable if the subject already possesses the appropriate dispositions to act morally, which he has acquired during his upbringing.

At the same time, however, in Foot's opinion, virtues had a *raison d'être* only because they were based on human nature, which defines unchangeable categories of negative and positive character traits. Foot combined the thesis of the subject's rationality with this notion of human nature.

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4   Cf. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, Blackwell, Oxford 1978, p. 125, 128ff.
5   Cf. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 5.
6   Cf. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 125.

In this period of Foot's work, she recognised that "in some general way, virtues are beneficial"[7]. This thesis, however, as she emphasised, opens up the field for reflections on virtue theory only when it is devoid of its utilitarian overtones. What was important here, in her opinion, was that the notion of virtue gives rise to the intuition that what is beneficial for the individual subject is related to the moral good.

In this theory of virtue, Ph. Foot admitted that something can be good for me (as long as I am virtuous) as well as for someone else. To an extent following Aristotle and Kant, she observed that virtues inform the will as to whether an action is good, so moral choices are determined by *intentions*[8]. The notion of *practical wisdom*, whose counterpart in Aristotle's thought was associated with the skills of the intellect (called the dianoetic virtues), was linked to the will. This wisdom, according to Foot, combines the ability to recognise and select appropriate means "to certain good ends" and the knowledge of "how much particular ends are worth"[9]. She equated the capacity to apply both these abilities in practice with virtue[10].

Thus, practical wisdom consists not only in the ability to identify goals that relate to life as such. However, clarifying what skill are necessary to identify these goals is not easy. Foot attempted to answer this question by linking virtues to the idea of *human nature*. In relation to it, virtues "are *corrective*, each one [is] standing at a point at which there is some temptation to be resisted or deficiency of motivation to be made good"[11]. For Foot, also in this period of her work, the thesis of the corrective dimension of virtues (e.g. temperance or courage) implied the existence of an unchangeable class of qualities — positive and negative — which are inscribed in the constitution of being human. From this perspective, she attempted to define a good action. "A positively good action" would be one "that was in accordance with virtue, by which I mean contrary to no virtue, and

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7   P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 2: "First of all it seems clear that virtues are, in some general way, beneficial".
8   Cf. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 4.
9   P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 5.
10   Por. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 17.
11   P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 8.

moreover one for which a virtue was required"[12]. This statement does not negate the fact that there may be actions that require virtue but whose purpose is not good. Foot emphasised (while addressing the naturalistic project of morality "devoid of fiction") that a modern theory of virtue must take into account the possibility that *morally bad* actions can also be "virtuous". Thus, the good of an action requires an additional criterion, namely non-contradiction with other virtues. A virtuous, i.e. good, action should not merely define an aspect of a human action in isolation from its goal.

In her project, virtue was still treated as something that is beneficial, which means that virtue should be instrumentally useful. The question arises, however, whether every subject, with his desires and interests, will have a sufficient rationale to be virtuous? Foot recognised that what is useful and beneficial to me can give me an appropriate, *sufficient* and *necessary* rationale to act. However, she admitted, that she did not fully know how to define rationales for an action. Nevertheless, she claimed that all such rationales depend either on the interest of the practical subject (in the sense of what is in his interest) or on his desires[13]. That which is in my interest or that which is the object of my desires is useful and therefore constitutes a good *for me*.

According to Foot, all expressions that speak of *what is good* and right, in the sense of what is virtuous and moral, must be formulated in the subjective dimension because, when they are deprived of a perspective that defines what corresponds to the goals and interests of a particular individual, they lose their meaning[14]. Thus, the notions of objective moral good or "an objectively good state of affairs" do not exist[15]. Moreover, it becomes possible that "what is good for me" is unrelated to "what is good in the moral sense".

The moral good and virtue depend on having rationales for an action. These, however, arise when they are the result of interests and desires,

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12 P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 14.
13 Cf. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 130, 156, 179.
14 Cf. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 154.
15 Cf. P. Foot, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 154; P. Foot, *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2002, p. 66–70, 100–102; P. Foot, *The Grammar of Goodness. An Interview with Philippa Foot*, p. 36.

which is also the case with the extra-moral good. Thus, at this stage of her work, Foot did not formulate the objective bases for solving the ethical problem of the good, but in a radical effort to demystify morality, she developed a conception that justified subjectivism and instrumentalism.

An attempt to ground morality in biology

In the final stage of her ethical reflections, Philippa Foot recognised that a rational human action affects humans not only individually but also socially. In her late works, she abandoned Hume's model of practical rationality which linked the rationale for an action to self-interest and replaced it with Aristotelian rationality. As a consequence, Foot also rejected the view, which she had defended in the previous period, that morality is not a source of man's rationales for an action.

Foot admitted that she had previously made a mistake and that most of her earlier reflections had been misguided[16]. She acknowledged that Hume's conception of a rationale for an action does not provide any objective rationale for moral choices — apart from rationales that derive from self-interest. Thus, such normativity cannot be the basis for formulating a conception of morality.

After abandoning Hume's conception of a rationale for an action, Foot returned to his thesis which she defended in her first works that the practical character of morality is the source of objective rationales for a moral action[17]. However, she linked her defence of Hume's thesis of the practical dimension of morality with the turn towards Aristotle's teleological-biological thinking and Kant's conception of the rationality of the will.

In her return to Aristotle, Foot placed reflections on the status of the good in ethics in a biological perspective. Following Peter Geach[18], she as-

16 Cf. P. Foot, *Moral Dilemmas*, p. 169, 199; P. Foot, *Natural Goodness*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2001, p. 9, 17; P. Foot, *The Grammar of Goodness. An Interview with Philippa Foot*, p. 41.
17 Cf. P. Foot, *Moral Dilemmas*, p. 173, 193–194.
18 P. Geach, *Good and Evil*, "Analysis"17 (1956), repr. in *Theories of Ethics*, ed. P. Foot, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1967.

sumed that evaluating the individual and his action is only possible in the context of his position within the species to which he biologically belongs[19]. As she emphasised: "The central feature of my own account is that it will set the evaluation of a human action in the wider contexts not only of the evaluation of other features of human life but also of evaluative judgements of the characteristics and operations of other living things"[20].

P. Geach inspired Foot by distinguishing between the concept of the attributive good (a good dog) and the predicative good (this dog is good). In his opinion, the word 'good' constitutes the functionality of the subject and is the object of desire. Philippa Foot was further inspired by the article written by her student Michael Thompson *The Representations of Life*[21], from which she took the idea that actions of any organism can only be judged as adequate and correct in the context of this organism's belonging to a species. A good individual is one that satisfies the requirements of a species. The natural good is therefore a good that depends on the relationship which develops between the individual and the "life form" inherent in his biological species[22].

The properties of the life form must be essential from the perspective of the form, i.e. they must be properties teleologically related to that life form. Foot explained the essentiality of a given property and its teleology referring to the category of Aristotelian necessities, which she borrowed from Elizabeth Anscombe. Foot treated the characteristics of living organisms necessary for the realisation of the goods proper to those organisms as Aristotelian necessities. Each creature acts according to its essence and aims to realise potential according to its own nature. A well-behaved human being acts according to his measure, just like a bear, a snail, or a lilac flower do.

The object of evaluation is that which plays an important role in the life of a given species, namely self-maintenance, defence, foraging, and

19 Cf. P. Foot, *Moral Dilemmas*, p. 163.
20 P. Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 25.
21 M. Thompson, *The Representation of Life*, in: *Virtues and Reasons. Philippa Foot and Moral Theory*, eds. R. Hursthouse, G. Lawrence & W. Quinn, Oxford 1995.
22 Cf. P. Foot, *Natural Goodness*, s. 26; P. Foot, *Moral Dilemmas*, p. 164.

reproduction[23]. Let us say, we observe lionesses and we discover that they take care of their offspring, so when we come across a lioness that does not do it, this means that this particular lioness is a defective specimen. Evaluation here refers to the norm, not to statistical normalities[24].

Thus, according to Foot, evaluation has an objective dimension, as it is based on characteristics that play a role in the life of the entire species. She tried to demonstrate that the same axiological structure appears at the level of human beings as at the level of plants and animals.

Problems with justifying further conceptions

Foot did not provide any general, holistic outline of the hierarchy of duties. When she analysed individual cases in which she referred to this hierarchy, the basis on which she established it were ordinary solutions people use to solve problems in their daily lives. She seemed to forget that that her reflections were devoted to material grounds and that what she presented was not analyses of the structures of judgements or definitions of moral concepts and their mutual, formal relations. However, it is impossible to determine what is an objective and real good (and the objectivity and reality of the good is a postulate of the system under discussion) from the material perspective on the basis of what the users of language call the good, that is, on the basis of what is considered to be the good. This is a certain version of the naturalistic fallacy, a version that is rather common in analytic metaethical studies, and at the same time particularly blatant: inferring from how things actually are in language about how they are or ought to be in reality.

According to the general principles of Foot's system, if it turned out, for example, that reproduction was man's natural good, then the proper means of realising this good for our species, i.e. heterosexual relations, would of course have to be considered naturally good and thus intrinsically

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23 Cf. P. Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 41.
24 Cf. P. Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 33.

morally good. However, Muslims would probably consider that polygamy is an even greater good.

Risking certain oversimplification, one could consider that a pregnant woman who drinks alcohol and smokes cigarettes would be preferable to a woman who is for some reason infertile. In order to defend her theory from such objections, Foot might argue that there are necessary conditions that must characterise and *de facto* characterise moral judgements: for example, that they concern acts that are performed consciously and voluntarily. But what about a raped girl who gives birth to a child? Is she a "worse" reproducer (a member of the species homo sapiens) than a woman who intentionally gives birth to a child only to claim an allowance?

Foot tried to solve such problems by combining the norms of practical rationality with moral norms; she granted moral norms a status of primary norms and claimed that taking them into consideration is a necessary condition of practical rationality.

Again at a risk of simplifying her thought, it can be claimed that Foot assumed that if something is good in a moral sense it should be regarded as a rationale and thus as a requirement of rationality, which is a sufficient condition for considering an action to be rational and morally justified.

Unfortunately, such an assumption also holds true for propaganda or dogmatic beliefs. She tried to defend her position by claiming that such rationales for an action are not necessarily rational, since they do not have justifying norms external to them and, after all, cannot justify themselves. Critics, however, point out the weakness of such reasoning because what norms and beliefs we recognise depend largely on what kind of people we are. This is where we encounter a volitional factor of a subjective nature, which, for example, may be the result of our general genetic predispositions, life events, upbringing, the books we have read, a meeting with a person who fascinates us, etc.

Philippa Foot did not specify what we should considered to be human goods. She sometimes pointed to love and friendship as specifically human

goods, but at the same time she emphasised that the list of goods of the animate world ceases to be fully adequate when we consider the world of humans[25].

What, then, might Foot's strategies for determining the goods be? If she were to apply the same principle that she applied to plants and animals, she might simply consider anything that constitutes the main goal of the aspirations of most individuals of our species to be the good. A strong point of this strategy is that it allows us to legitimately call such defined goods "natural". However, many members of the human species prefer conformism or particularism, many are cruel or even sadistic or masochistic, and many are long-suffering and passive. But all these features are not what Foot wanted to acknowledge as "natural" aspirations, goals, or goods. Thus, she was forced to arbitrarily choose certain character dispositions and types of behaviour which she previously valued positively from a moral but unspecified point of view, and then assigned to them the status of natural. The latter merely means that they realise the respective goods inherent in the human life form, which, however, she no longer explicitly mentioned. The failures of such an approach are apparent. First, Foot reversed the direction of reasoning inherent in the basic structure of her conception: instead of first defining goods on a morally neutral, value-free basis, and only from this perspective to define virtues and thus the sphere of goodness, she defined goods on the basis of what she considered to be virtues. Second, there is no justification for associating the area of values she delineated along the way with what is natural, either in the sense in which we use the term philosophically or in the sense in which Foot used it when discussing evaluations of plants and animals. This latter point was discussed by Alasdair MacIntyre in his review of Foot's book *Natural Goodness*[26].

It is worth mentioning here that MacIntyre, at least as prominent a representative of virtue ethics as Foot, proposed a conception based on dual teleology. He defined virtues as character traits that enable the attainment of goods that are internal to practices. But practices must be consistent

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25 Cf. P. Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 44.
26 A. MacIntyre, *Virtues in Foot and Geach*, "The Philosophical Quarterly" 52 (2002) no. 209, p. 621–631.

with the human good, understood as the search for the unity of human life as a whole. Thus, virtue is that disposition which fulfils the function of moulding human life into the shape of some individually defined unity. The problem, however, lies in answering the question of how this unity is to be understood. MacIntyre treated the human *telos* as something undefined, something that needs to be sought and discovered throughout one's life rather than merely realised as a "predefined" universal conception of the good.

Summary

Philippa Foot attempted to justify the rejection of the distinction between facts and values, treating the latter as special cases of the former. For her, values and facts had the same status. However, if the spheres of practical rationality and morality are fully equated, moral considerations alone will define rationales for an action. What is moral will be both practically rational and what is practically rational will be moral. But such equation is not a valuable proposition, since it is based on an arbitrary assumption that morality is a necessary condition of practical rationality.

Philippa Foot did not present any conception of the human good that would be independent of prior moral evaluations, nor did she introduce any criterion for defining what constitutes the human good that would be independent of the notion of virtue. Moreover, she was inconsistent in her reflections: on the one hand, she made what we consider to be virtue dependent on what we discover to be our good, but on the other hand, what she valued highly determined whether something was worthy of being considered good.

This inconsistency is instructive insofar as the author, who followed Hume's assumptions in all her reflections, at one point had to contradict these assumptions in order to pursue her own project. I see the reasons for the unsatisfactory outcomes of her deliberations in the fact that her concepts of morality, virtue and justice were originally detached from a broader vision of the world (such as the ancient harmony or the Christian divine order in classical theories of virtue). The turn to metaphysics

in the last period of her work seems a rather good idea for solving her earlier problems, which cannot be said about the overly narrow naturalistic perspective from which she attempted to answer the questions related to goodness, morality and virtue. Solving the problems of morality from such a perspective, as her subsequent unsuccessful attempts confirmed, probably was not the right path to follow.

However, one can admire Foot for her consistent search for a solution to the problem of the objectivity of morality, even though the assumptions she adopted severely limited the range of possible solutions. Undoubtedly, Philippa Foot was a seeker of wisdom. She was not afraid of abandoning previously adopted theoretical frameworks in order to seek better justifications for her intuitions. Her work can inspire us and at the very least prompt us to ask ourselves whether our assumptions are likely to meet intended targets.

When I look at the evolution of Foot's conception of virtue ethics, I cannot help thinking that the most important function of philosophy is not to find ultimate solutions to problems but to indicate problems that can inspire philosophers to undertake further studies. One of such problems can be related to demonstrating the inadequacy of the naturalistic grounding of morality.

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Abstract

*An attempt at an evaluation of Philippa Foot's
conception of naturalistic virtue ethics*

In this article I present subsequent stages of the evolution of Ph. Foot's conception. I point out that her concepts of morality, virtue and justice are detached from earlier visions of the world (ancient harmony, Christian divine order). At each stage of the evolution of her project, she is forced either to make arbitrary decisions or to make metaphysical assumptions. I emphasize that biological references in justifying the need for morality may be legitimate as long as we understand ethics as a practical science that aims to achieve practical goals (including the protection of the human species).

Keywords: virtue, justice, morality, nature, metaethics

Abstrakt

Próby uzasadnienia moralności w naturalistycznej metaetyce Philippy Foot

W artykule prezentuję poszczególne etapy rozwoju koncepcji Philippy Foot. Wskazuję, że jej koncepcje moralności, cnoty, sprawiedliwości, są oderwane od wcześniejszych wizji świata (antyczna harmonia, chrześcijański boski ład). W każdym z etapów ewolucji tego projektu autorka zmuszona jest albo do podejmowania arbitralnych rozstrzygnięć, albo do przyjmowania założeń metafizycznych. Podkreślam, że odwołania biologiczne w przypadku uzasadnienia potrzeby moralności mogą być zasadne, o ile rozumiemy etykę jako naukę praktyczną, której celem jest realizowanie praktycznych celów (w tym ochrona gatunku ludzkiego).

Słowa kluczowe: cnota, sprawiedliwość, moralność, natura, metaetyka

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Plato's Theaetetus & logos of the digital humanities

It is a fair presumption that until the fit word is present,
you do not have the idea, and the word to become fit
requires a suitable contextual usage.
  Eric A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*

I insist on calling it *hermeneutics*, that is interpretation.
It is, in fact, one of our cognitive activities which,
by going backwards, seeks to reconstruct from a text
written by others the structures, rules and choices
of the *thinking* which is there so expressed.
  Roberto Busa, *Computerized hermeneutics*

The specifics of the humanities are the study of the human and its off-spring, already recalled by Socrates in the *Theaetetus*. The dialogue marks a substantial shift in Plato — the discovery to be attributed to Wincenty Lutosławski, the author of the chronology of Plato's works — that is, from pre-existent and transcendental ideas to the categories of reason, from philosophy as the "love of wisdom" to the "love of knowledge".

The legacy of Greek philosophy for the humanities is the "soul" as the principle of movement, i.e. of thought. Martin Heidegger's interpretation of Greek philosophy as "care", and that of "ideas" in Edmund Husserl's phenomenology, both revive in Jan Patočka as "care of the soul", allowing him to reread Plato from the perspective of today's scientific mindset.

Plato's dialogues would not be possible without writing, as several authors show; however, it is Walter Ong, the author of *Language as Hermeneutic*, who grasps "writing" as the first "technology" that transforms thought. Thus, contrary to the widely held view of the so-called lack of the definition of knowledge in the *Theaetetus*, I argue that the quest for knowledge refers to the logic of thinking — the theme related to Charles S. Peirce's logic of discovery and still distinct from "technology" — and provides the constitution of the humanities of the information and communication age, i.e., the digital humanities.

"The care of the soul": Socrates, Plato

Expressions such as the "care of the soul" and the "spiritual person", closely related to the "sciences of spirit" (*Geisteswissenschaften*) understood as the "Humanities", require precise analysis based on the findings of Scottish classicist John Burnet and Czech phenomenologist Jan Patočka, among others.

Certainly, it is Plato who voices this turning point that shapes the development of philosophy in general and the humanities in particular. But the real hero of it is undoubtedly Socrates. Burnet, in his influential article on the legacy of Socrates, of which Plato became the true exponent, notes that Socrates must be placed in the context of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War to properly address the "exhortation to 'care for his soul'", which "must have come as a shock to the Athenian of those days, and may even have seemed not a little ridiculous. It is implied, we must observe, that there is something in us which is capable of attaining wisdom, and that this same thing is capable of attaining goodness and righteousness. This something Socrates called 'soul' (ψυχή)"[1]. Socrates comes to this statement from scratch, in a sense that he does not find it at hand, ready to express his thought. Firstly, it comes to signify "courage"; and secondly, the

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1   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, London 1916, p. 12–13.

"breath of life"[2]. The first sense, which is not to be confused with Socrates' intent is due to the remarks that seek to explain courage and pride from the image of a warrior's breath and perhaps more so from the snort of his horse. It is an ideal of the age of heroes, no doubt; the ideal of bravery (εὔψυχος). As Burnet observes: "So the word ψυχή was used, just like the Latin *spiritus*, for what we still call 'high spirit'"[3]. And in this way the sense should also be extended to mean "man of spirit" as the "magnanimous" man (μεγαλόψυχος)[4]. However, "The second meaning of ψυχή is the 'breath of life', the presence or absence of which is the most obvious distinction between the animate and the inanimate"[5]. There is some apparent confusion in this statement formulated by Burnet, because the body is not considered the "living body", except in the presence of the soul, the body becomes animate; the dead therefore is the inanimate in a sense that the soul leaves it with its ultimate breath. Thus, the soul brings life or rather is the breath of life. This sense captures the phenomena of the dead, with whom one comes into contact by calling ghosts, or in dreams, but also the case of "quit the body temporarily, which explains the phenomenon of swooning (λιποψυχία)"[6]. In the Homeric world, "In a sense, no doubt, the ψυχή continues to exist after death, since it can appear to the survivors, but it is hardly even a ghost, since it cannot appear to them otherwise than in a dream"[7]. Thus, the soul is *imprisoned* in the body, but it is something different from the body. "It is a shadow (σκιά) or image (εἴδωλον), with no more substance, as Apollodorus put it, than the reflection of the body in a mirror"[8].

Not opposing it entirely, the scientific school of Ionia advanced the "materialistic"[9] explanation. Burnet points out, that "This appears to have

2   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 13.
3   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p.13.
4   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p.13.
5   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 14.
6   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 14.
7   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 14.
8   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 14.
9   On Parmenides as "the father of Materialism", see J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, London 1945, p. vi.

originated in the doctrine of Anaximenes, that 'air' (ἀήρ), the primary substance, was the life of the world, just as the breath was the life of the body. That doctrine was being taught at Athens by Diogenes of Apollonia in the early manhood of Socrates, who is represented as an adherent of it in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes"[10]. Materialist explanation shifts the soul (ψυχή) from dream to "normal waking consciousness"[11]. Burnet observed, "This point is especially emphasized in the system of Heraclitus, which was based precisely on the opposition between waking and sleeping, life and death"[12]. Heraclitus maintained that the "soul is in a state of flux just as much as the body". Consequently, nothing can be affirmed, because nothing is the same again, just as you cannot step into the river twice. Put differently, "There is nothing you can speak of as 'I' or even 'this'"[13].

In the pre-Socratic period, in Sophocles' latest play the *Philoctetes*, Burnet finds two instances, which allude to the soul in the sense ascribed by Socrates. Burnet notes: "Odysseus tells Neoptolemus that he is to 'entrap the ψυχή of Philoctetes with words', which seems to imply that it is the seat of knowledge, and Philoctetes speaks of 'the mean soul of Odysseus peering through crannies', which seems to imply that it is the seat of character"[14]. But they are really on the limit. The urging to "care for his soul" seems to imply no more than "take care of his skin" or recommend to have "a good time"[15]. Burnet concludes: "If we can trust Aristophanes, the words would suggest to him that he was to 'mind his ghost'. The *Birds* tell us how Pisander came to Socrates 'wanting to see the ψυχή that had deserted him while still alive', where there is a play on the double meaning 'courage' and 'ghost'. Socrates is recognized as the authority on ψυχαί, who 'calls spirits' (ψυχαγωγεῖ) from the deep"[16].

10 J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 19.
11 J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 19.
12 J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 19.
13 J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 19.
14 J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 19.
15 J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 24.
16 J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 24.

Socrates claimed to bring the soul into existence "in language derived from his mother's calling", in a way never thought of, of which especially Plato's dialogues the *Theaetetus* and the *Symposium* leave the mark[17]. The doctrine of Socrates, to which Plato gives voice substantially shapes language by transforming it into the medium of thinking. As stated by Julius Stenzel: "Socraticism was essentially an experiment in the reinforcement of language and a realization that language had a power when effectively used both to define and to control action"[18]. If this is the case, Plato offers especially in the *Theaetetus* a *genesis of the sense* or *logic* of the soul (ψυχή), that is, the *logos*.

Jan Patočka in *Plato and Europe* advances an analysis intended to pose the problem,[19] noting: "[t]he conceptualization of the soul in philosophy from its Greek origins consists in just what is capable of truth within man, and what, precisely because it is concerned about truth, poses the question: how, why does existence in its entirety, manifest itself, how, why does it show itself?"[20] Put differently, "Care of the soul is fundamentally care that follows from […] the manifesting of the world in its whole, that occurs within man, with man"[21]. Yet, if "Socrates proves immortality in the *Phaedo* through the similarity of the soul to the ideas"[22], Plato's argument is unconvincing[23]. Patočka notes: "Plato's grand myths are all about life *after death* or *before natality*, about life before this life. The myths about prenatal existence of the soul are in fact even more important than those after death"[24]. The reason is due to the master's choice, which manifests in the play of the soul's conversation in view of death/birth as the last test of existence through freedom, as Patočka rightly states[25]. Put it otherwise, life after death and prenatal life are not within time, so they pertain to pure

17   J. Burnet, *The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul*, p. 27.
18   E. A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Cambridge (MA) 1963, p. xi.
19   J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, Stanford (CA) 2002, p. 28.
20   J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 27.
21   J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 27.
22   J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 137.
23   J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 137.
24   J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 137.
25   J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 137.

being[26]. If pure being belongs to life — one of the arguments in the *Phaedo* is actually about the form of life — then the form of life also means the logos, to be precise the logos of the idea.

In the *Theaetetus* Socrates reveals his expertise, stating: "I watch over the labor of their souls, not of their bodies. And the most important thing about my art is the ability to apply all possible tests to the offspring, to determine whether the young mind is being delivered of a phantom, that is, an error, or a fertile truth"[27]. In addition, his method consists of "the business of match-making"[28], since he knows who is in labor pains and therefore either can rightly expect help from him or the direction of the other master. In the *Theaetetus* explicitly, the care of the soul receives not only motivation but also — in the problem posed to Theaetetus — the ultimate purpose of the master's work accompanying the disciple is revealed, namely "what knowledge is?"[29] Hence the difference between the "idea" and the "logos of idea" is another side of the same problem. It is important to note that in the dialogue one of the main proponents of knowledge is recalled Protagoras, the sophist. There are reasons. First, the presence in the conversation of Theodorus as the truthful exponent of the sophist and himself the man of science, the mathematician, the teacher of the intelligent Theaetetus, the young man with whom the conversation goes on. Second, the symbolic context is marked by the Pythagorean doctrine of the relationships between numbers and letters. Thirdly, the theme of the next dialogue, the *Sophist*, emerges and perplexes Plato. Indeed, in the *Theaetetus* Plato states, regarding the sophist: "[w]hat we have to do is to make a change from the one to the other, because the other state is better. In education, too, what we have to do is to change a worse state into a better state; only whereas the doctor brings about the change by the use of drugs, the professional teacher (σοφιστής) does it by the use of words"[30]. In the *Soph-*

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26 J. Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, p. 137.
27 Plato, *Theaetetus* 150c.
28 Plato, *Theaetetus* 151b.
29 Plato, *Theaetetus* 151d.
30 Plato, *Theaetetus* 167a.

ist, Plato finally addresses the question of the difference between Socrates and Protagoras by thematizing the concept of the "spiritual person"[31].

The logic of the Theaetetus

The question as a leitmotif guides the conversation of now old Socrates — Socrates on the threshold of the trial — in the dialogue with young Theaetetus, asking him: "What is knowledge?" Commentators, even contemporary ones, launch into discussing the conclusion and agree, that Plato provided none, as if the dialogue served no purpose. It was the Polish philosopher Wincenty Lutosławski who studied Plato's writings with a method of "measuring style", so-called "stylometry". Thanks to his work — published under the title "The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic: With an Account of Plato's Style and of the Chronology of his Writings"[32], the American logician, Charles S. Peirce could find in Plato a germ of synechism (pragmatism), that is, solving the problem of the continuity of thought, i.e., the logic of discovery, i.e. abduction[33]. Lutosławski has demonstrated, that the date of the composition of the *Theaetetus* must be placed beyond 26 years after Socrates' death. And that the dialogue presents not only a refined logical structure but also contains and provides the most elaborate logic ever, marking the new shift in Plato.

In the framework of the growth of Plato's logic proposed by Lutosławski, it may be worthwhile to deal more carefully with Peirce's judgment in this regard. First, "Peirce's renewed interest in Plato climaxed right around the same time he first read Wincenty Lutoslawski's *Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic* in 1898. Lutosławski's title no doubt excited Peirce's interest with its notion that logic — and even Platonism — have been subject to growth"[34].

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31 J. Patočka, *The Spiritual Person and the Intellectual*, in: *Living in Problematicity* (Svazek). Kindle Edition, p. 50–69.
32 D. O'Hara, *The slow percolation of forms: Charles Peirce's writings on Plato*, p. 101, Ph.D. dissertation, https://etda.libraries.psu.edu/catalog/6652 (01.12.2022).
33 D. O'Hara, *The slow percolation of forms*, p. 133.
34 D. O'Hara, *The slow percolation of forms*, p. 54.

However, Lutosławski was not a logician. On the one hand, Peirce found in Plato the first logician — always of the late dialogues, affirmed the such by the method of the chronology of texts — on the other hand, Peirce finally addressed the question of the movement of thought itself, which required placing oneself in the history of logic[35]. Yet, in the year 1897, on the threshold of reading Lutosławski's book, Peirce published the article titled *The Logic of Relatives*, in which he desires "to convey some idea of what the new logic is, how two 'algebras', i.e., systems of diagrammatic representation by means of letters and other characters, more or less analogous to those of the algebra of arithmetic, have been invented for the study of the logic of relations"[36]. This is in fact the closest context in which Peirce meets "Plato's Logic", and the logic of the *Theaetetus*. Second, it has been proven by dating, that Peirce anticipated the discovery of *Triadic Logic*, compared to Jan Łukasiewicz, the author of *Aristotle's Syllogistic From the Standpoint of Modern Formal Logic*, and Emil Post[37]. However, Peirce's *Triadic Logic* agrees with the Platonic approach of dialogues, that is, it is based not on an extensional account as in Łukasiewicz's case[38], but ontology. Beyond doubt, Peirce asserts: "Triadic Logic is that logic, which though not rejecting entirely the Principle of Excluded Middle, nevertheless recognizes that every proposition, S is P, is either true or false, or else has a lower mode of being such that it can neither be determinately P, nor determinately not-P, but

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35 D. O'Hara, *The slow percolation of forms*, p. 74.

36 Cfr. Ch. S. Peirce, *The Logic of Relatives*, in: *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, t. 3–4, eds. Ch. Hartshorne, P. Weiss, Harward University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1933, 3.456; Sun-Joo Shin, *Peirce's Deductive Logic*, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2022 Edition), ed. E. N. Zalta; https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/peirce-logic/.

37 Sun-Joo Shin, *Peirce's Deductive Logic*, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2022 Edition).

38 Cfr. J. Łukasiewicz, *Aristotle's Syllogistic from the Standpoint of Modern Formal Logic*, Dublin 1957. Aristotle's concept of "bilateral possibility" in Łukasiewicz's many-valued logic does not compete with the position of the lower mode of being of Peirce's triadic logic, contrary to Dariusz Łukasiewicz's claim. Cfr. D. Łukasiewicz, *On Jan Łukasiewicz's many-valued logic and his criticism of determinism*, "Philosophia Scientiæ" 15 (2011) 2, p. 7–20. https://doi.org/10.4000/philosophiascientiae.650.

is at the limit between P and not P"[39]. In other words, the three values of a proposition, read in light of the *Theaetetus* are: i) an opinion to be proved to be believed, ii) a judgment as the well-articulated, true proposition, iii) the judgment with an account. If the first proposition is something plausible (*Firstness* in Peirce), the second — "the limit *between*" — is part of current history (*Secondness*), the third, as in the case of the *Theaetetus*, is *fully* represented "in the long run"[40], that is, as the Socrates' dream (*Thirdness*). Third, if it is true, that Plato's logic is due to writing as technology, Peirce's logic faces a shift due to the development of the "scientific evidence" — the challenge of "the whole of modern 'higher criticism'" — not to be confused with logic[41].

Peirce's position stands at the turning point of technology. The shift in symbolic analysis was achieved with a master's thesis written by computer science pioneer Claude E. Shannon in 1937. However, it required binary notation and electronic realization of the Boolean Algebra[42]. It is in this context that the question of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη/τέχνη) emerges again, precisely because of technology (τέχνη) as a support of order (λόγος). Thus, as Walter Ong notes: "[i]f writing is a technology that transforms thought […] and if the technology of print further transforms thought […] and if electronic technology effects comparable transformations in thought […] it would appear that technology has a much closer interior bond with human consciousness than is commonly allowed for"[43].

Returning to the *Theaetetus*. The beginning of the conversation is marked by asking the question yet another way, "So knowledge and wisdom will be the same thing?"[44]

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39 Sun-Joo Shin, *Peirce's Deductive Logic*, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2022 Edition). Cfr. M. Fisch, A. Turquette, *Peirce's Triadic Logic*, "Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society" 2 (1966) no. 2, p. 75.
40 Peirce's famous saying.
41 Peirce's manuscripts on "Minute Logic." Cfr. D. O'Hara, *The slow percolation of forms*, p. 213.
42 W. Ong, *Language as Hermeneutic. A Primer on the Word and Digitization*, Ithaca–London 2017, p. 72.
43 W. Ong, *Language as Hermeneutic*, p. 90.
44 Plato, *Theaetetus* 145e.

It is important to note that Theaetetus was an exquisite mathematician, the friend of Plato and Socrates. The young man's mind was trained in the science provided to him by Theodorus. And what it means to be trained in science — or rather laboratory science — is what is the background of Peirce's research in the *Fixation of belief* and *How to make our ideas clear*[45]. So, the question about knowledge is indirectly addressed to a problem with judgment, which Plato's disciple Aristotle will explain with the metaphor of an army on the run, that is, in panic, but capable of stopping[46]. Plato examines Socrates' ability, which is neither irrational (*alogos*), because he can "debunk", nor rational (*logos*) in the mathematical sense of geometry. Socrates' knowledge is in a sense "solid", analogous to the solidity of Theaetetus' discovery that there are exactly five regular convex polyhedra in Plato's geometry. The *Theaetetus* and the *Parmenides* mark the turning point, which opens up for Plato the questions of the hermeneutics of language initiated in the *Protagoras* and discussed at length in the *Sophist*, armed with the "idea of an idea"[47], as Peirce captures it, or better yet, the "*logos* of idea".

Ong notes: "*Leg-* is the same root which gives us our English term 'lay' as well as the Greek verb *legein*, of which *logos* is a cognate. In ancient Greek *legein* means basically to pick up, gather, choose, count, arrange, and thus involves the manipulation of discrete units. From this meaning, *legein* develops as an extended meaning 'to recount, tell, relate' — that is, to pick out and lay matters in order by use of words"[48]. These are also origins of discourse, that is, of the ordered dialogue, which becomes a standard since Plato's *Symposium*[49]. In the *Symposium* Plato elaborated the passage from the oral world of praise. In Socrates' praise, that is speech fully controlled in verbal articulation, we enter the world of writing. But it is not the

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45 Ch. S. Peirce, *How to make our ideas clear*, "Popular Science Monthly" 12 (January 1878), p. 286–302.
46 Cfr. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* II 19, 100a.
47 Cfr. D. O'Hara, *The slow percolation of forms*, p. 45–46.
48 W. Ong, *Language as Hermeneutic*, p. 68.
49 Cfr. W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic: With an Account of Plato's Style and of the Chronology of his Writings*, Longmans 1897, p. 400, Footonote 251.

whole story, as it were, concluded with Socrates' breakthrough, but as if something is still missing to satisfy the argument, for fulfillment. The twist requires a guest that no one was expecting. Thus, one can rightly argue that at this moment it is not Socrates who is praised, because "[u]nderstanding, knowledge, truth, are realized in the total, existential human lifeworld"[50].

Now, two things need to be focused on. The first concerns Plato's logical achievements highlighted by Lutosławski that are at stake in the *Theaetetus*[51]. The second refers to logic itself, that is, the logic of the soul, as a source of movement and change due to the universality of reason[52]. The author of the chronology of Plato's works notes in this regard, that: "in the earlier dialogue [*Phaedo*] the difficulty is stated and left ironically to wiser men for a solution. In the *Theaetetus* the statement of the difficulty is no longer particular as in the *Phaedo*, but is expressly generalized, and shown to be applicable to innumerable instances, out of which one had been selected as an example"[53]. On the one hand, the multitude converges toward unity of understanding, on the other hand, the term "soul" becomes the problem[54]. Lutosławski underlines: "[t]hen also the form of the statement is much sharper in the later work, where the problem is reduced to three axioms two of which are in contradiction with the third. The axioms are here said to be in the soul, whereby it becomes clear that we are no longer dealing with transcendental ideas, as in the *Phaedo*, but with subjective notions. While in the *Phaedo* only the fixity of notions is insisted upon, here we see activity as a condition of change, which corresponds to the increasing interest in physical science, and to the constant application of the opposition between ποιεῖν and πάσχειν, common to the *Theaetetus* with the *Phaedrus*"[55]. Put it differently, "in the *Phaedo* there was no question of change, and only fixity of relations was sought. The notion of change and movement belongs to a later stage, prepared in the *Republic*, beginning

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50 W. Ong, *Language as Hermeneutic*, p. 34.
51 Cfr. W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 371–400.
52 This kind of logic attracts Peirce, illuminating his own project of the *Triadic Logic*.
53 Cfr. W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 383.
54 Plato, *Theaetetus* 184d.
55 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 383.

with the *Phaedrus*, and growing in the *Theaetetus* and *Parmenides*"[56]. Lutosławski then points out that the shift is marked by the substitution of categories for ideas[57]. One of the inferences is that, for the digital humanities, it is to be considered πάσχειν and not ποιεῖν, still on "some single form, soul or whatever one ought to call it"[58], common with physical science. The reason is well grasped by Ong, stating: "[t]oday the humanities are still assumed to make man more human, but they locate the threat that they must counter not in the animal world but elsewhere, in the world of machines"[59]. Therefore, the issue is about the substitution of the logos of soul for the soul, namely *anima rationale*, and the intimate order instead of the mechanical one.

The "logos" of soul. Knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and technology (τέχνη)

If the idea in the *Theaetetus* stands for the logos of soul, the thing to note is that the dialogue crowns a search for such a structure, so its dating some thirty years after the master's death is justified. The structure is exposed in the spoken language — because "the professional teacher (σοφιστής) does it [to change a worse state into a better state] by the use of words"[60] —, in fact, it is explained in "its three kinds: speech (206d), enumeration of parts (207a), and definition (208e)"[61]. In this regard, Lutosławski notes: "The three degrees are declared insufficient to guarantee knowledge, but it may be taken for granted that each of them is held indispensable for knowledge"[62]. However, the "spoken" language of the dialogue would not

56 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, FN 247.
57 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 384.
58 Plato, *Theaetetus* 184d.
59 W. Ong, *Language as Hermeneutic*, p. 319.
60 Plato, *Theaetetus* 167a.
61 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 377.
62 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 377.

be possible without writing, as evidence[63], that is, by the technology of letters. Moreover, at stake is still the historical situation due to the Greeks, which becomes a significant factor for the digital humanities and philosophy in the information and communication era. Walter Ong notes: "Socratic-type dialog is not a feature of primary oral culture. *Logos* calls for yes-no responses, as *mythos* does not, and as computers later would. The strength of the Greek drive toward yes-no responses is confirmed by G. E. R. Lloyd, who in his *Polarity and Analogy*, has shown how, by circumstantial comparison with a large number of other cultures across the world, ancient Greek thought from the pre-Socratics on specialized markedly in differentiation ('polarity')"[64].

The impact of the writing on memory, which Plato highlights in the *Phaedrus* as a factor of pretending to know rather than actually knowing[65], allows the comparison to be made with computer technology and its impact on the human mind[66].

Lutosławski argues that with the *Theaetetus* Plato enters the critical phase of his philosophy and that the *Theaetetus* shares style with the *Parmenides* and the *Sophist*[67], and that "the *Theaetetus* is a late dialogue, written by Plato after fifty or possibly after sixty"[68], and "at the beginning of another period, after a long interruption"[69].

If the writing were technology, as Ong argues, and even electronic or computer technology, the reconstruction of the dialogue should hold up, thus unveiling the *logos* of Plato's account, on the boundary to the *alogos*

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63 "As Havelock (*Preface*) has shown, even though Plato's text represents the Socratic dialogues as oral discourse, this is a kind of discussion directed by a mind formed in a writing culture" (W. Ong, *Language as Hermeneutic*, p. 76).

64 W. Ong, *Language as Hermeneutic*, p. 76.

65 Plato, *Pheadrus* 274c–275b.

66 Cfr. N. Carr, *Is Google Making Us Stupid? What the Internet is doing to our brains*, The Atlantis 2008.

67 Cfr. W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 389.

68 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 391.

69 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 399.

detectable by the calculus of Theaetetus[70]. Without going into a discussion of the "mathematical part" — no doubt necessary to do justice to the Greek mathematics of the irrationals and Plato's thought — let us follow Ofman's conclusion: "La mathématique grecque ultérieure ne reprendra d'aucune manière le 'résultat du reste' dans ce cadre. Il sera abandonné au profit de la théorie des proportions et des entiers relativement premiers. On est bien dans une aporie, dont on sort en changeant de méthode, tout comme indubitablement, il s'agira de le faire pour répondre à la question posée par Socrate: 'qu'est-ce que la science[71]?'".

The "Dialogue", i.e. dia-"logos"

Socrates examines Protagoras' statement assuming from the beginning, that "Man is the measure of all things: of the things which are, that they are, and of the things which are not, that they are not (152a)". However, it does not seem contradictory for the sophist to refrain from judging the existence of gods, which in that case according to Socrates would make the arguments "merely persuasive or plausible (163a)". Proving through analysis that in fact "not every man's judgment is true (179c)", Socrates eventually poses the problem of future predication, which is the key point of logic, that is, the question of the *soul* as the principle of motion (156a). Socrates drew from this examination that it is necessary to test "this moving Being, and find whether it rings true or sounds as if it had some flaw in it (179d)". Therefore, Socrates concludes at the end: "Then we are set free from your friend, Theodorus. We do not yet concede to him that every man is the measure of all things if he is not a man of understanding (183c)".

To form the arguments, one at a time, the conversation is as follows. In a symbolic way,

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70 If Theaetetus' algorithm allowed for the identification of irrationals through symbolic proportion, math progressed due to the theory of proportions formulated by Eudoxus. Cfr. M. Kordos, *Wykłady z historii matematyki*, Warszawa 2005, s. 67–77.

71 S. Ofman, *Comprendre Les Mathématiques Pour Comprendre Platon — Théétète (147d–148b)*, "Lato Sensu. Revue de la Société de philosophie des sciences" 1 (2014) no. 1, p. 71–80.

if *p* then non-*q*, else *q*

In the first stage of the dialogue, the exam of Protagoras' thesis (152a), a mode of being corresponding to the *fixed* argument, *q* is out of the question; however, the problem is mentioned because it raises some perplexity for Socrates (163a). Socrates' objective is to find "the *limit* between *q* and not *q*"[72]. However, at this point Plato's Socrates does not perceive the difference between Protagoras and himself, the issue Plato takes up later in the *Sophist*[73].

Protagoras' secret doctrine — as Socrates argues — consists in assuming that "there is nothing which in itself is just one thing: nothing which you could rightly call anything or any kind of thing. […] What is really true, is this: the things of which we naturally say that they 'are', are in the process of coming to be, as the result of movement and change and blending with one another (152d/e)". This opposite and conflicting view[74], represented by the Heraclitean doctrine dates back to antiquity (179e-180d).

Aporia: How is it possible for both of them to be right, that is, to be talking about something and not about nothing? Moreover, because of the conflicting opinions, they seem to struggle for the same.

if *p* then non-*q*, else *q*

In Łukasiewicz's notation (Polish notation): AKpNqKNpq

Test for tautology:

1. NAKpNqKNpq
2. KNKpNqNKNpq
3. KANpqApNq

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72 Following the account of Peirce's *Tradic Logic*, quoted above. Here, the substitution of "q" for "p".
73 Cfr. J. Patočka, *The Spiritual Person and the Intellectual*.
74 Cfr. W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 378.

4. KCqpCpq
5. Epq

No doubt, there is a dramatic opposition between two conflicting views[75]. And yet Russell's joke, known as "Russell is the Pope". In addition, *Reductio ad absurdum*.

Parmenides and followers "insist that all things are One and that this One stands still, itself within itself, having no place in which to move". (180e) Parmenides' argument standing in opposition to all other doctrines, (152e) does indeed reveal the *soul*, that is, according to Plato: "some single form, soul or whatever one ought to call it"[76]. Lutosławski points out that for Plato: "knowledge was no longer conceived to be a mere intuition of pre-existing ideas, but a product of the mind's activity. Knowledge is to be found in that state of the soul, in which it considers being, or in its judgments (187a). Knowledge is brought under the head of δόξα, not in the meaning of opinion, but of judgment. This position is not contradicted in the following discussion and may be accepted as Plato's true conviction. He explains thought as a conversation of the soul with itself (189e) leading to a choice between affirmation and negation, wherein judgment consists (190a)"[77]. Therefore, Lutosławski's remark about δόξα as judgment refers to a phenomenon, that is, the unified sense of the multitude. Hence intentionality in phenomenology takes its name.

Thus, Parmenides' argument, *p*
Protagoras' argument, *q*
Heraclitus' argument, *r*

if *p* then *q*, else *r*

In Łukasiewicz's notation: AKpqKNpr

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75 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 378.
76 Plato, *Theaetetus* 184d.
77 W. Lutosławski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 375–376.

Test for tautology:

1. NAKpqKNpr
2. KNKpqNKNpr
3. KANpNqApNr
4. KCpNqCNpNr

Thus, it is tautology, namely *tautos logos*.

The 'if *p* then *q*, else *r*' function, that is, 'AKpqKNpr', known as *Reduced Ordered Binary Decision Diagram* (ROBDD) was first introduced by Randall Bryant in 1986 in *Transactions on Computers*[78], and later described in the paper delivered to the 27th ACM/IEEE Design Automation Conference[79]. The authors claim that "Efficient manipulation of Boolean functions is an important component of many computer-aided design tasks"[80]. In Boolean Algebra, compared with Sheffer stroke and Peirce arrow, the ROBDD satisfies the theorem of Claude E. Shannon, founder of information theory[81].

Conclusion

The humanities nowadays make use of computers in a variety of ways, so that the texts of past authors can be examined not only under the aspect of style, as proposed and done by Lutosławski, but of ever-increasing ease in the investigations posed to the text or comparative texts.

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78 R.E. Bryant, *Graph-Based Algorithms for Boolean Function Manipulation*, "IEEE Transactions on Computers" C-35 (August 1986) issue 8, p. 677–691; https://doi.org/10.1109/TC.1986.1676819.
79 K.S. Brace, R.L. Rudell, R.E. Bryant, *Efficient implementation of a BDD package*, 27th ACM/IEEE Design Automation Conference, 1990, p. 40–45; https://doi.org/10.1109/DAC.1990.114826.
80 Cfr. P. Janik, *Weryfikacja równoważności funkcjonalnej opisów układów cyfrowych*, University of Science and Technology, Wrocław 1992, M.S. Thesis.
81 P. Janik, *Weryfikacja równoważności funkcjonalnej opisów układów cyfrowych*, p. 25.

But it is Plato who efficiently introduces to philosophy the so-called "technology-assisted mind", as one would say, with the results lasting for centuries. If we ask what Plato's phenomenon of influence consists of eventually we come to the ideas, or better yet the logos of idea, which is the source of science itself. The order of ideas depends on technology, as scholars have shown. Still, it is education — at least in its purpose — that makes man sensitive to technology through training. Thus, effectiveness in thinking according to technology, as the effect of training, is not the same as thinking humanly. And without thinking humanely, understanding cannot be achieved[82].

The digital humanities that emerge from this investigation find a legacy in *philosophy* or better said in Plato's *philology* and the latest "logos" realization.

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Abstract

Plato's Theaetetus & logos of the digital humanities

The specifics of the humanities are the study of the human and its offspring, already recalled by Socrates in the "Theaetetus". The dialogue marks a substantial shift in Plato — the discovery to be attributed to Wincenty Lutosławski, the author of the chronology of Plato's works — that is, from pre-existent and transcendental ideas to the categories of reason, from philosophy as the "love of wisdom" to the "love of knowledge". Thus, contrary to the widely held view of the so-called lack of the definition of knowledge in the "Theaetetus", I argue that the quest for knowledge refers to the logic of thinking — the theme related to Charles S. Peirce's logic of discovery and still distinct from "technology" — and provides the constitution of the humanities of the information and communication age as the digital humanities.

Keywords: Plato, Theaetetus, logos, phenomenology, digital humanities

Abstrakt

Teajtet Platona i logos cyfrowej humanistyki

Specyfiką nauk humanistycznych jest badanie człowieka i jego dziedzictwa, o czym przypomina już Sokrates w Teajtecie. Dialog ten wyznacza istotną zmianę u Platona — odkrycie to należy przypisać Wincentemu Lutosławskiemu, autorowi chronologii dzieł Platona — tj. od idei preegzystujących i transcendentalnych do kategorii rozumu, od filozofii jako "umiłowania mądrości" do "umiłowania wiedzy". Tak więc, w przeciwieństwie do szeroko rozpowszechnionego poglądu o tak zwanym braku definicji wiedzy w Teajtecie, argumentuję, że poszukiwanie wiedzy odnosi się do logiki myślenia — tematu związanego z logiką odkrycia Charlesa S. Peirce'a i wciąż odrębnego od "technologii" — i stanowi konstytucję humanistyki ery informacji i komunikacji jako cyfrowej humanistyki.

Słowa kluczowe: Platon, Teajtet, logos, fenomenologia, cyfrowa humanistyka

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Back to sensuality itself. Jocelyn Benoist's anti-phenomenological turn?

It would probably not be an overstatement to say that the history of phenomenology has been shaped by the schisms that have been brought about by its successive heretics. Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Emmanuel Lévinas, Michel Henry, Jacques Derrida — to name but a few — have all denied the central tenets of the Husserlian tradition, only to return to some marginalised (in their view: not radical enough) threads of Husserl's philosophy. When compiling this rich tradition of phenomenological nonconformists one should add Jocelyn Benoist, although not without some reservations. An alumnus of the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, the former director of the Husserl Archives in Paris, he specialises in Brentano, the early Husserl, Frege and early analytic philosophy. Inspired, on the one hand, by Merleau-Ponty's thought, and on the other by his early confrontation with analytic philosophy (especially John McDowell and Charles Travis), Benoist rejected a phenomenology centred on the category of intentionality and turned towards the materiality of experience understood in its sensuality (against both Kantian and Hegelian themes in phenomenology)[1].

The present paper is concerned precisely with this turn, which Benoist proposes as a corrective to phenomenology. Due to the complexity of the subject, I confine myself to the question of aesthetics and present Benoist's project within this area. To this end, I begin by juxtaposing two notions of perception: a Husserlian one and a Travis-inspired one, resulting in two

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1   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, Paris 2013, p. 12–17.

understandings of phenomenology and two aesthetic projects. In section 2, I discuss the classical project of formal aesthetics (Georg Friedrich Meier, Immanuel Kant) and its limitations. In section 3, I present Benoist's phenomenology of sound sensuality and the project of poetics as a material aesthetics. Finally, I indicate how this transformation is reflected in art and translated into the understanding of phenomenology itself. The aim of the paper is twofold: on the historical side, I show how Benoist's project fits into the broader current of phenomenology (this will be served by systematic juxtapositions with other heretics of phenomenology, such as Merleau-Ponty and Lévinas); on the systematic side, I argue that this project not only does not have to stand in opposition to phenomenology, but constitutes an important correction of it, which the latter should assimilate.

Two notions of perception

In the very first sentence of *Le bruit du sensible*, Jocelyn Benoist expresses his dissatisfaction with the state of the contemporary philosophy of perception[2]. We are faced with a certain paradox. On the one hand, with the development of the cognitive science and the decline of linguistic philosophy, sense-experience has returned to favour as a source of knowledge in analytic philosophy. Admittedly, within the mainstream, this has been instantiated in a naturalistic reductionism. However, in reaction, there has also been a tendency which Benoist calls the phenomenological turn in analytic philosophy, represented among others by John McDowell. On the other hand, although so much has been written recently about "perception", Benoist argues that perception itself is not a real subject of discussion in the way it deserves. For, it is common to confuse perception with perceptual knowledge[3]. Philosophical analyses are not concerned with perception itself, but with ways of founding knowledge on it, as evidenced

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2   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 7.
3   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 9.

by the problem of access that is central to these discussions[4]. In fact, the problem is not new. If one reads Benoist's argumentation, it concerns both conjunctivism[5] and disjunctivism, logical empiricism and criticism of the myth of the given, classical empiricism and idealism. It also applies to classical phenomenology. What these positions have in common is the reduction of perception to its epistemic role. Perception becomes a vehicle of information about the external world. It is real only to the extent that it allows one to gain a proper view of the world. Ideally, it should remain transparent[6]. Against this background, Benoist asks whether it is possible to conceive of perception as reality *per se*.

Accordingly, Benoist proposes a distinction between two notions of perception, which correspond to a radically different approach to a phenomenon: perception taken in its epistemic function and perception as sensuality[7]. In the first meaning, perception is always a perception of something; it is defined by its object. At first glance, it seems that the 20th century philosophy owes the rehabilitation of sensuality to phenomenology[8]. However, a careful reading of Husserl indicates that the place accorded to sensuality is not autonomous: it is not considered in itself, but is caught up into the logic of reasons[9]. Thus, phenomenology does not so much unveil the inner logic of sensuality as indicate how a phenomenon can constitute a fully-fledged part of the logic of knowledge. Objectivity becomes the norm of reality. In knowledge, the sensual loses its autonomous value and gains only an instrumental one — as a vehicle of truth. Truth itself, on the other hand, is defined on formal grounds.

Benoist contrasts such an understanding of perception with one based on its sensuality as a "flesh and blood presence" (*leibhaftig selbst*)[10], following

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4   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 19.

5   In the philosophy of perception, a family of theories for which veridic and apparent perceptions (illusions and hallucinations) share a common factor, e.g. indirect realism. Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 75.

6   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 207.

7   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 10–11.

8   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 47.

9   Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 47

10 J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 11.

a suggestion from Travis. In a private conversation, Travis asked Benoist why he wanted perception to be intentional whereas, if he perceives a thing, he logically does not have to aim at it, but simply has it[11]. Benoist realised that, in order to do justice to perception, it is not enough to reform the understanding of intentionality alone (along the lines of Heidegger's being-in-the-world), but the category of intentionality itself must be abandoned. Some steps had already been taken in this direction by Merleau-Ponty, to whom Benoist regularly refers. In the context of the form of constitutive indeterminacy that characterises the sensual, he wrote: "Silence of perception = the object made of wires of which I could not say what it is, nor how many sides it has, etc. and which nonetheless is there"[12]. Interestingly, the author of *The Phenomenology of Perception* reverses the Sartrean opposition of perception and imagination at this point. For Sartre, indeterminacy characterised imagination. In perception, but not in imagination, I could count the columns of the Pantheon. Merleau-Ponty reverses this distinction: it is the actual perception that is characterised by the surplus of sense content present in regard to epistemic content. In what concerns intentionality, one could say that, according to Merleau-Ponty and Benoist himself, in the imagination, the perceived is limited to what is perceived in the epistemic sense. Sense perception, on the other hand, corresponds to the reality that transcends the content of what is known.

Ultimately, however, Merleau-Ponty himself is not consistent enough, defending a certain weak form of perceptual intentionalism[13]. Benoist concludes that a phenomenology that would genuinely do justice to phenomena must free them from *logos*; we must liberate them from the power of language, which by its very nature is objectifying. But how can this be done? How can phenomenology be liberated from language, which is not only its tool but also its medium? It seems unable to do so on its own strength. In this regard, Benoist will refer to two extra-philosophical inspirations: the psychology of the Gestalt School and art. In this sense, he

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11 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 15.
12 M. Merleau-Ponty, *The visible and the invisible. Followed by working notes*, ed. C. Lefort, transl. A. Lingis, Evanston 1968, p. 268.
13 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 13.

follows in the footsteps of Merleau-Ponty himself, who claimed that true phenomenologists are artists[14].

The turn from ideal to material phenomenology is matched by a similar shift in aesthetics itself. According to Benoist, aesthetics has to undergo a metamorphosis and become poetics, that is, not so much a theory describing works of art as the art of handling the sense matter. True to its etymology, aesthetics focuses on the spectator and her sense experience. It thus remains passive. Poetics, on the other hand, takes an active stance. It does not ask about the reception of the matter of experience, but about the way in which an agent performs on it. In this sense, following the Nietzschean route, what is needed is an aesthetics not from the point of view of the spectator or the critic, but of the artist herself[15]. The artist occupies a privileged place not because of what she creates from sense matter, but how she handles that matter.

The reform of aesthetics inspires Benoist on how to reform phenomenology itself: to move from a phenomenology built upon the notion of intentionality towards a phenomenology that does justice to sensuality as such. Poetics thus fulfils a philosophical task. It teaches how to de-epistemise sensuality: "the challenge of *poetics — to work with what we have —* would certainly lead to a much more radical contestation of the measure of the subject, or at least to *questioning* her"[16]. *Poesis* in this meaning is not a place for the manifestation of the sensual. For, contrary to a certain philosophical tradition, the sensual does not spontaneously manifest itself[17]. The role of *poesis* is a revelation, that is, the unveiling of sensuality. That sensuality which no longer refers to anything else, speaks of nothing. It ceases to be transparent and can be grasped as such.

Contemporary art breaks with representation, and ultimately with the Platonic scheme of revealing the extra-sensual truth[18]. In doing so, it draws

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14 Cf. M. Merleau-Ponty, *The world of perception*, transl. O. Davis, London–New York 2004, p. 93–94.

15 Cf. F. W. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, transl. D. Smith, Oxford 1996, p. 83.

16 J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 201.

17 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, Paris 2017, p. 298.

18 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 298–299.

attention to the very way in which things appear, making it a study of sensuality itself. The artist thus becomes the master of a properly conceived phenomenology of the sensual. The phenomenon ceases to be a phenomenon of the real and becomes a real phenomenon. It gains autonomy. The sensual ceases to be an object of a gaze which always objectifies, classifies, subjects to one norm of objectivity or another. It becomes the matter which the artist handles. In order to understand this properly, however, it is necessary to take a closer look at the opposition between classical, formal aesthetics (both as the theory and practice of art) and poetics.

The classical project of formal aesthetics

The two notions of perception and approaches to the phenomenon can be well illustrated by comparing the classical, Enlightenment project of formal aesthetics with the avant-garde art. In this section, with Benoist I analyse the foundations of Georg Friedrich Meier's and Kant's aesthetics to point out the limits of an intentional understanding of perception.

Benoist reconstructs formal aesthetics on the basis of *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften* by Meier, a pupil of Baumgarten, and Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. It is in the former's aesthetics that he sees the beginning of phenomenological thinking. In *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften*, Meier introduced the concept of "aesthetic truth". In § 91, he analysed passages from the *Aeneid* which described sunrise and sunset over the sea. If Virgil wrote that the dawn rose from the sea or sank into it, he was far from logical truth. At the same time, however, he adequately conveyed a certain aesthetic truth (i.e. a sensual truth — in the etymological meaning of aesthetics). Benoist sees here the birth of phenomenology and the doubling of reality: of the objective world and of the perceived world. The introduction of aesthetic truth represents for the French philosopher the anti-Copernican reversal that would later be so characteristic

of phenomenology[19]. According to this conception, the role of art would be to show the phenomenal world (cf. impressionists).

Benoist believes that this approach is flawed as reality is not doubled. For what would be the basis for the difference between the two perceptions of objective and sensual? He cites Wittgenstein's reflections evoked by Anscombe:

> He once greeted me with the question: "Why do people say that it was natural to think that the sun went round the earth rather than that the earth turned on its axis?" I replied: "I suppose, because it looked as if the sun went round the earth". "Well", he asked, "what would it have looked like if it had looked as if the earth turned on its axis?"[20]

Wittgenstein shows that appearance alone does not resolve in favour of either of the two competing truths. Not surprisingly, aesthetic truth is entirely relative for Meier. But by doing so it has nothing to do with reality. Visual experience alone does not speak more for one interpretation than the other. Benoist elaborates on this thought in the following manner: the sensual says nothing at all[21]. The error of all phenomenology lies in assuming the opposite: it makes the sensual speak. And this means to transcend itself and to point to something else. It deprives the sensual of its reality in favour of objectivity that is since conceived as a "more real" reality.

In that way, it is evident how Meier's aesthetics of representation corresponds to the classical phenomenological project. It is in that form that the aesthetics gains its canonical form in Kant. His aesthetics is essentially an idealist aesthetics: it cuts off the material, sensual element at the very starting point: "…the form of an object (rather than what is material in its presentation, viz., in sensation [*Empfindung*]) is judged in mere reflection on it […] to be the basis of a pleasure in such an object's presentation…"[22]

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19 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 301.
20 G. E. M. Anscombe, *An introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, New York 1965, p. 151.
21 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 304; C. Travis, *The Silence of the Senses*, "Mind" 113 (2004) no. 449, p. 57–94.
22 I. Kant, *Critique of judgment*, transl. W. S. Pluhar, Indianapolis 1987, p. 30.

Sensuality becomes the vehicle that makes aesthetic experience possible, but only as an insensitive substrate, a tool. The experience of beauty is not sensual, but purely intellectual: it results from the work of the mind, which perceives the form of experience. At the sensual level, something can only be perceived as pleasant, while formal beauty detaches itself from experience itself and is located on the side of the subject. A consequence of Kant's strongly subject-centred philosophy is a subject-centred aesthetics. Aesthetic experience is an experience of a form imposed on sense data by the mind; an experience to the measure of this mental form. For Kant, the real is that which is ideal and, as a consequence, sensuality is itself to be found at the opposite pole to the real. It becomes real to the extent that it is subjected to a subjective form.

In aesthetics itself, this primacy of form over matter corresponds to the privileging of the sketch. Benoist quotes Kant:

> In painting, in sculpture, indeed in all the visual arts, including architecture and horticulture insofar as they are fine arts, design is what is essential; in design the basis for any involvement of taste is not what gratifies us in sensation, but merely what we like because of its form[23].

This is why, according to Benoist, the revolution of the colourists diagnosed by Baudelaire was not only a break with a certain aesthetics, but with the very meaning of aesthetics. That is because for Kant, and modern aesthetics, the colour is secondary, at most a filling of the sketch, being a matter of charm, of pleasure. Ultimately, however, "even where the charm [of colours] is admitted it is still only the form that refines the colours"[24]. In both the fine arts and music (which, as Benoist suggests, is paradigmatic of Kant's aesthetics), the object of aesthetic experience is not colour patches or sounds, but the relations between them. Sensuality derives value from formalisation. The beauty of sense experience derives from its purity — and this purity, in turn, consists of homogeneity. Again, it is not the colour that

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23 I. Kant, *Critique of judgment*, p. 71.
24 I. Kant, *Critique of judgment*, p. 71.

counts, but its form. In this way, classical Enlightenment aesthetics leads to the desensualisation of sense experience. "Aesthetic" means that which is sensual minus sensuality.

From form to the matter of sound

I mentioned that the paradigmatic form of formal aesthetics for Kant was music. In this section, I look at the modern aesthetics of the musical work, and the possibilities of developing a phenomenology centred on the sensuality of sound. In the next section I present, following Benoist, how this phenomenology is realised in the poetics of avant-garde music.

In analysing the aesthetic and poetic understanding of sound, Benoist starts from Kant's passage on the beauty of violin sound. Kant contrasted simple tone (*ein bloßer Ton*) with sound and noise (*zum Unterschiede vom Schalle und Geräusch*)[25]. A few words of commentary are required on the vocabulary itself. In view of translational discrepancies, Benoist specifies that the German "*Ton*" is to be understood simply as a musical tone (formally defined), so that (in line with what was said in the previous section) Kant could call it beautiful. In contrast, *Schall* is to be understood as the corresponding physical acoustic effect — the vibration of the air. Finally, *Geräusch* means noise — not so much as something that breaks the silence, but rather the background noise[26]. Quoting a definition from the *Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*: "a sound consisting of tones of different pitches, strength and timbre", Benoist draws attention to multiplicity, variety as the essential characteristics of noise. Noise consists in the variety of pitch, force, and timbre of sounds, and as such it contrasts with the Kantian unified tone.

Benoist asks what tone actually is. If one assumes that, in classical music, a tone corresponds to a note, it might seem at first glance to be a natural phenomenon — one of many musical sounds defined by frequency.

25 Cf. I. Kant, *Critique of judgment*, p. 70.
26 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 320–321.

However, Benoist notes that pitch alone is not a sufficient determination of a note. Even if one were to seriously consider the Pythagorean doctrine of natural tones and natural consonances, it is ultimately a matter of tones remaining in specific reciprocal relations. Tone itself is not exhaustively determined by tuning. A sound of a certain frequency only becomes a tone as part of a system — in tonal harmony: octaves divided into unequal intervals. The note thus constitutes a "normative ideality"[27].

How to understand the note as a norm? First, it can be pointed out that the note determines what one hears. In classical music, one does not hear a sound as a sound, but a sound in a certain relation: melodic and harmonic to others. A sound becomes a tone as part of the system. The ability to distinguish sounds, even given absolute hearing, is limited. One would not notice a significant difference between the same note played in a slightly shifted tuning. By contrast, the same sound played as a different note will be heard as dramatically different. The moral of this is that it is the ideal system, superimposed on the matter of sounds and thus selecting tones and establishing tensions between them, that determines what one hears[28].

A note, however, is a norm in yet another sense. As Benoist notes, audible consonance is not the same as physical consonance. He argues that the note is the norm of the identity of sound. He recalls the very process of tuning instruments, which was originally — without modern measuring tools — based not on physical but perceived consonance. The tone identity constitutes a spectrum of sounds which will henceforth be treated as a single note. It is therefore not a physical characteristic of the sound, but a pragmatically accepted, ideal criterion[29]. After all, it is impossible to tune real instruments perfectly, just as there are no perfect chords between them in practice.

This analysis of the meaning of tone allows Benoist to see that, in contrast to original intuitions, Kantian tone and noise are not concepts in the same category[30]. Their difference is not a qualitative one (good vs. bad noise, sound), but they correspond to two distinct ontological categories:

27 J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 324.
28 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 328.
29 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 324.
30 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 325.

the form (norm) and the matter of sound. The former is ideal, while the latter is located on the side of sensuality. They are therefore not two types of sound, but rather two dimensions of sound. Tone is a possible determination of noise, but contrary to modern purists, it is impossible to make music without noise. Music, as a sensual being, cannot exist without its material substrate. On the one hand, the real sound is not reducible to tone. On the other, musical sound is not the mere matter of noise, but normalised noise.

Benoist notes that "beyond or rather below the silence of meaning (which is always the result), and encompassed by it, one must re-learn to hear the noise of the sensual. What is needed is a philosophy of noise"[31]. The hitherto formal aesthetics should be complemented by a poetics of materiality. A phenomenology focused on intentionality and the world of meanings (*logoi*) should be complemented by a phenomenology that focuses on the phenomenon considered in its sensual materiality.

In this project, Benoist is inspired by Lévinas's lecture *Parole et silence* delivered at the Collège philosophique on 4–5 February 1948. He finds in it a crossing of that boundary that Merleau-Ponty shied away from. For the latter, the sensual always remains at most suggested in perception. In this sense, perception always remains intentional. With Lévinas, on the other hand, sensuality "is heard outside perception, in its categorical alienation from all intentionality"[32]. In this sense, in Lévinas's lectures, the consistent phenomenological study leads to an anti-phenomenology — beyond the limits of *logos*. Towards the stranger, the Other.

As Benoist notes, it is no coincidence that Lévinas refers to the sense of hearing, breaking the sight-centred tradition of philosophy of perception which stretches back to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*[33]. Unlike visual impressions, auditory ones do not contain a perceived object[34]. In the case of visual perception, impressions are related to their object, which leads

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31 J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 189.
32 J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 190.
33 It is symptomatic indeed how, in the Western tradition, the very nomenclature, the metaphors, the illustrations, the models reveal that to know is actually to see.
34 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 192.

traditionally to the problem of the duality of reality. One asks whether a thing is its own appearance or a causally related but metaphysically separate reality. In the case of sound, there is no such problem. The sound impression is not its own object (source). It gains autonomy and so it can be considered in itself — as a matter of sensuality.

Further, noise introduces a rupture and, in this sense, opposes the dialectic of intentionality. It refers to a reality that is incomprehensible and perhaps ultimately inconceivable. In this sense, it has a purely negative meaning. It does not reveal something to come, because it does not refer to anything. It breaks, but establishes nothing in return[35]. It is pure presence. For, there is nothing absent to which noise could refer. This theme has already appeared in the criticism of Kant's formal aesthetics: sound ultimately cannot be all formalised. For it is a matter. Hence, Benoist generalises Lévinas's idea, claiming that noise is "a dimension of the sensual that does not refer to the manifestation and is therefore not part of its — intentional — form"[36].

In *L'adresse du réel*, Benoist proposes to link these themes to the question of truth — in polemic against Kant's and Meier's aesthetic truth. The proper role of the sensuality is not a manifestation of truth, but the experience of reality itself. The truth of art is not a truth in the logical sense, but performative truth — the truth of fulfilment[37]. It is a revealed truth, not a manifested truth. In this sense it coincides with Heideggerian *aletheia* and Michel Henry's concept of self-manifestation. It is a truth given directly, one which is non-relational and, in particular, non-correspondent. In order to discover sensuality itself, it is necessary to stop treating it as manifesting something else. But how is it to be done? According to Benoist, the answer must be sought not so much from philosophers — whose predilection for the word has made them deaf to the noise of the sensual — but from artists — especially the representatives of avant-garde music.

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35 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 193.
36 J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 194.
37 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 307.

Atonality, microtonality, concrete music — towards a material phenomenology

Benoist does not see art and philosophy as competing projects but rather regards the former as a very important source of inspiration, especially contemporary art. He puts this understanding of art and its importance for philosophy most accurately in a footnote in *L'adresse du réel*:

> It is not clear to me why art and philosophy should compete with each other. They are obviously different activities, even if they may concern the same things. One can benefit the other and vice versa. Contemporary art, in particular, can bring a better theoretical grasp of the concept of reality to philosophy, simply because it does something about that reality as such, and so puts us in a position where we cannot ignore it[38].

Art, therefore, does not imitate reality. Nor does it constitute its falsification or negation. It corresponds more to perception than to imagination. Contemporary art liberates philosophers from the "Hegelian paradigm," in which the vocation of sensuality is to manifest meaning[39]. In a broader sense, therefore, it would be about breaking away from a tradition dating back to Plato, in which the sensual is at most a sign of intelligible reality. In this tradition, sensuality was only real to the extent that it referred to an ideal reality. In the modern account: the sensual meant something, *nomen omen*, only to the extent that it was given a certain meaning. In phenomenology, the given was relativised by the intentionality imposed upon it. Against this, however, sensuality taken by itself is not the embodiment of any norm. Contemporary art allows us to see this by revealing sensuality as such.

An example of such a rethinking of the relationship between form and matter in a work of art, so as to make materiality itself the subject of the artist's investigation, is Arnold Schönberg's work on the colour of sound.

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38 J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 309, fn. 1.
39 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 309.

The shift from formalism to materialism in music will first be accomplished by relativising form itself. Such a basic norm in music has hitherto been a pitch. In the final section of his *Theory of harmony*, Schöneberg questions the privileging of pitch over other qualities of sound, including colour:

> The distinction between tone colour and pitch, as it is usually expressed, I cannot accept without reservations. I think the tone becomes perceptible by virtue of tone colour, of which one dimension is a pitch. Tone colour is, thus, the main topic, pitch a subdivision. Pitch is nothing else but tone colour measured in one direction[40].

As Benoist notes, colour here ceases to be what remains of a sound when we abstract from pitch, "the sonic sediment inevitably resulting from the fact that this pitch is played by this or that instrument"[41]. Schönberg reverses the hierarchy between colour and pitch. It is a colour that is fundamental, and the pitch is merely one of its dimensions. And since this is the case, it is not the norm (note) that is the measure of reality. Reality is on the side of the materiality of sound — its colour, to which various alternative norms can be applied.

Benoist points to two illustrations of how to dethrone the formal determination of music[42]. The first example is provided by Schönberg himself, for whom, the compositional reference point is not a pitch but colour. Such an attempt is made in his piece "Farben" Op. 16 No. 3. The second example shows how to replace the pitch norm with an alternative norm — rhythm. The idea is to compose in such a way that rhythm gains autonomy. Consequently, the pitch norm as a means of identifying sound loses its significance. The example cited by Benoist is Steve Reich's "Clapping Music". Both illustrations show that classical, formal thinking about music in terms of tones and harmonic tensions is not necessary at all. Moreover, if one abandons this category, hitherto ignored because non-formalised

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40 A. Schönberg, *Theory of harmony*, transl. R. E. Carter, Berkeley 1978, p. 421.
41 J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 328.
42 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 330.

aspects of sense matter can be recovered. Is it possible to go a step further and not only unlock the hitherto negated dimensions of sound, but also reveal its very materiality without further specification?

The observations from Schönberg's work on colour have important implications for Lévinas's phenomenology (anti-phenomenology?). Sound escapes full formalisation and therefore idealisation. As such, it constitutes a certain sense of externality. Consequently, one can treat music as an art of externality. Music does not represent anything[43]. As Benoist notes, this can be understood in two ways. For Rousseau, and after him for Romantic aesthetics, music does not represent its objects directly, but awakes the same feelings in the soul that are experienced in seeing them[44]. Music can therefore be said to constitute still a representation (albeit mediated by the inner life of the artist)[45]. For Lévinas, on the other hand, music is nonrepresentational in the absolute sense. It does not refer to anything. It is its own presence. At the same time, its self-centredness, and non-referentiality make sound elude all attempts to be assimilated by the agents. It cannot be domesticated, it cannot be assimilated. It always remains stranger. It resists all attempts at idealisation[46]. "Sound is the element of being as being other and yet unconvertible into the identity of the self that grasps the enlightened world as its own"[47]. It remains above the meaning that the agent tries to impose on it.

It is this characteristic of sound that is exploited by avant-garde music, which seeks to go beyond formal constraints to reveal what escapes the norms of tone and melody. Sound does not reveal the truth, it is not intentional, but reveals itself as reality. In this sense, it exemplifies the anti-epistemological turn in the understanding of perception that was our starting point. If philosophy is to make room for a full-blown realism, it should conceive of perception not in an instrumental sense — relativised

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43 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 195.
44 Cf. J. J. Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, in: J. J. Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages and Writings Related to Music*, transl. J. T. Scott, Hanover 1998, p. 327.
45 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 195.
46 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 196.
47 E. Lévinas, *Paroles et silence*, in: E. Lévinas, *Oeuvres*, vol. 2, Paris 2009, p. 90.

to the communicated truth about its intentional object — but metaphysically — as the presence of sensual reality: full-fledged and autonomous[48]. For this to happen, music, as the art of composition, must itself valorise those elements that have hitherto remained outside the formal repertoire, and thus in a sense become a-musical. Following Lévinas: to privilege non-musical moments in which "the function of flare and rupture can nevertheless prevail over aesthetics and quality"[49]. How can it be accomplished?

In *L'addresse du réel*, Benoist develops the theme suggested in *Le bruit du sensible*, giving two further examples of how avant-garde music gives the proper place to sensuality. Giacomo Scelsi's programme of microtonal music intended to explore the non-musicality. In his view, classical music "created thousands of magnificent but often empty frames, for they were the result of constructive imagination, which is very different from creative imagination"[50]. Scelsi's own project represents a reversal of Kant's aesthetics by liberation of sound matter from the primacy of form and immersion in this sensuality. According to Benoist, on the philosophical side, this corresponds to privileging of ontology: to give priority to being over norms, to sound over musicality[51].

Scelsi's compositional programme stems from the contemplation of sound matter. Sound — as physical, experienced — becomes the centre that organises the musical work, rather than being organised by the norm of one tonality or another. The use of repetition serves to achieve this effect. The repetition of the same sound, bordering on obsession, makes it possible to perceive the inexhaustible richness of the sound material, which has hitherto been reduced by the norm of tonal relations[52]. Listening to sound, contemplating it as such, opens the listener up to new dimensions. Alongside pitch and duration, its depth comes:

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48 Cf. J. Benoist, *Le bruit du sensible*, p. 203.
49 E. Lévinas, *Paroles et Silence*, p. 93.
50 G. Scelsi, *Son et Musique*, in: G. Scelsi, *Les anges sont ailleurs*, Arles 2006, p. 131, quoted in J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 331.
51 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 331.
52 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 333.

You have no idea what is hidden in a single sound! There are even counterpoints, if you like, different shifts of timbre. There are even harmonic elements that produce completely different effects, that do not just come out of the sound, but go into the middle of it[53].

Liberating oneself from the norm makes it possible to perceive an imperceptible multiplicity in a sound that has hitherto been considered in the unity given by its form. This is illustrated by *Quattro pezzi su una nota sola* (1959) — four pieces, true to their name, built in microtonal shifts around a single note.

In Benoist's view, Scelsi did not so much propose a new musical language as taught us a different approach to the matter of sound[54]. By going beyond previous norms, he broadened the understanding of what is possible in music. In fact, he gave a new experience of sound sensuality. In this sense, Scelsi's poetics takes place in two movements: (1) the demusicalization of musical sound (notes), which allows us to hear in sound all that the norm has hitherto ignored (thus made it inaudible), (2) the establishment of a new code (microtonality) as a new norm that founds a new dimension of musical experience[55].

Scelsi's research, which can be seen as a phenomenology of sound sensuality in practice (poetics), leads to concrete music as the final step in the rejection of the Kantian formalism[56]. In Benoist's interpretation, it is only this step that gives experience of the materiality of the sensual. The composer's matter is not even distinguished sounds, but the noise itself. The sound object becomes present as such. It is not something that one subjects to any conceptualisation. It is pure presence. Concrete music exhibits the reality of sensuality itself. It reveals sensuality itself, which is not mediated by anything and does not refer to anything.

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53 Quoted in J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 334.
54 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 336.
55 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 336.
56 Cf. J. Benoist, *L'adresse du réel*, p. 338.

Conclusion

In conclusion, according to Benoist, despite the revived interest in perception in both contemporary analytic philosophy and classical phenomenology, from an epistemological perspective perception has thus far been considered in a reductive way. It is necessary to balance this approach with an ontology of perception itself. To this end, Benoist argues for according a central place to the phenomenon as such and recognising its unmediated and non-derivative reality. The shift from intentional (formal) to material phenomenology corresponds to the shift from aesthetics to poetics. Its specialists are not philosophers, but artists who, free from the constraints of language, can reveal the non-conceptualizable dimensions of sensual reality. Schönberg, Reich, Scelsi, and representatives of concrete music allow us to contemplate the sensuality irreducible to any norm. This turn to the materiality of sense experience is for Benoist a warranty for realism and defends phenomenology itself from falling into idealism, according to which, it is the norm (intention) that makes the real. In this sense, Benoist's proposed corrective, inspired by the insufficiently consistent Merleau-Ponty and the phenomenology of the Other in Lévinas, is an important addition to phenomenology itself.

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Abstract

Back to sensuality itself. Jocelyn Benoist's anti-phenomenological turn?

The article presents Jocelyn Benoist's criticism of phenomenology as an epistemological project that reduces sensuality to a tool of reference to meaning, and his proposal to supplement phenomenology with an ontology of perception that does justice to sensuality itself. Following the philosopher, the parallels between formal and material phenomenology and modern aesthetics and poetics as a practice that reveals sensuality are drawn. The phenomenology of sound and the discussion of the avant-garde revolution in music (atonality, microtonality, concrete music) point to the limitations of modern aesthetics and illustrate possible directions for the development of a phenomenology of sensuality.

Keywords: phenomenology, Jocelyn Benoist, aesthetics, poetics, sensuality

Abstrakt

Z powrotem do zmysłowości samej. Anty-fenomenologiczny zwrot Jocelyna Benoista?

Artykuł prezentuje sformułowaną przez Jocelyna Benoista krytykę fenomenologii jako projektu epistemologicznego, redukującego zmysłowość do narzędzia odsyłającego do sensu, a także proponowane przezeń uzupełnienie fenomenologii o ontologię percepcji, która pozwala oddać sprawiedliwość zmysłowości samej. Wskazuje, za filozofem, na paralele między fenomenologią formalną i materialną a estetyką nowożytną i poetyką jako praktyką odsłaniającą zmysłowość.

Fenomenologia dźwięku oraz omówienie rewolucji awangardowej w muzyce (atonalność, mikrotonalność, muzyka konkretna) wskazują na ograniczenia estetyki nowożytnej oraz ilustrują możliwe kierunki rozwoju fenomenologii zmysłowości.

Słowa kluczowe: fenomenologia, Jocelyn Benoist, estetyka, poetyka, zmysłowość

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Ethical perfectiorism as one of the solutions to prevent anti-civilization activities: an analysis based on the case study of Joseph Beuys

The aim of this article is to show — in a broader practical and social dimension — an ethical stance that in the mid-50s was put forward by Karol Wojtyła (it did not, however, have much impact either on theoretical works or social life). For this purpose, we shall discuss the case study of Joseph Beuys (1921–1986), a German artist who, as we shall argue, brought about, with his actions, a collapse of civilization in a certain area dependent on him. We shall also draw on the concept of the so-called "long march through the institutions" that will additionally reveal a socially important context of events that Beuys initiated in his field.

Our purpose is to show that perfectiorism may be an important response to anti-civilization activities, both on an individual and social plane.

The article is divided as follows:

- presentation and development of the concept of perfectiorism,
- discussing Joseph Beuys and his activity,

- presenting Joseph Beuys' activities in the light of the doctrine of "the long march through the institutions",
- indicating in what way perfectiorism may be one of the pillars of counteracting anti-civilization activities,
- conclusions.

Perfectiorism

Perfectiorism both as a notion and as an ethical concept is hardly known even though it is one of the fundamental components of Karol Wojtyła's ethics[1]. Therefore, we shall recapitulate its main points so that we may later use it to interpret the case of Joseph Beuys.

Let us start by defining the term. According to Wojtyła, perfectiorism "emphasizes becoming a better person by every good deed"[2]. In order to clarify this concept, we must explain what Wojtyła means by the terms "good" and "becoming of a person". We shall, therefore, consider the thought of St Thomas Aquinas with whom Wojtyła entirely agrees as far as the issue of perfectiorism is concerned[3]. St Thomas (and later Wojtyła) begins with the famous thought: *ens et bonum convertuntur* [being and good are convertible]. According to St Thomas, good, as the goal, is to contribute to the objective improvement of a being that is consistent with the nature of this being. This, however, brings us to the point of scholastic speculation. Wojtyła, however, anticipates the problem and points to the

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1   K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw perfekcjoryzmu w etyce*, "Roczniki Filozoficzne" 5 (1955–1957) no. 4, p. 303–317. Wojtyła explains that this is only a preliminary study that needs to be elaborated on (which has not been done so far. See K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu*, p. 303.

2   K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw*, p. 303.

3   Wojtyła refers to the following texts by St Thomas Acquinas: *Summa theologiae* I 5, 1; I 5, 4, 2; I 6, 3; I 17, 4; I 19, 4, 1; I 23, 4, 1; I 48, 1; I 62, 8; I-II 18, 1; I-II 18, 3, 3; I-II 18, 4, 3; I-II 19; *Contra gentiles* I 37; II 41; III 20; *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* 1, 1; 21, 1; 21, 2; 21, 5; 21, 6; 24, 4; *Quaestiones disputatae de malo* 2, 5, 2; *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* I d. 19, q. 5, 1, 3; I d. 19, q. 5, 2, 3; I d. 8, 1, 3; II d. 1, q. 2, 2, 2.

Additionally, Wojtyła refers to two earlier philosophers: Aristotle and St Augustine. We are, however, interested in perfeciorism in the version that he adopted from St Thomas.

important aspect of St Thomas' teaching that allows us to overcome the purely speculative scholastic categories and enter real life. Wojtyła writes: "His [St Thomas'] philosophy of being entirely took into account the whole dynamics of reality. Reality is dynamic — we experience changes in being. These changes always consist in the actualization of some potentiality which means the actual coming into being of something that previously existed only in potentiality, i.e., it did not exist in reality. Since it has started to exist and does exist, then it is the perfection of a given being […]. Thus all perfection, i.e., good, consists in existence"[4]. Further on we read: "we say that a given being is good only to the extent that we find in it the fullness of existence appropriate to it. That is when not only its substance exists (*ens simpliciter*), but when all its necessary accidents exist as well (*entia secundum quid*)"[5].

The above quotations clearly show that Wojtyła, with St Thomas' teaching, refers to a human being, and not to some abstractions: he refers to a fully formed being (*ens simpliciter* + *entia secundum quid*). Only the actually (currently) existing being can be this kind of being. Moreover, this kind of existence appertains solely to individual beings in their actual existence, that is, in this context, an acting individual[6].

However, in their freedom, human beings may turn to both what improves them as well as what degrades them. This is what Wojtyła clearly indicates[7]. Thus, apart from our will, it is our reason that is an indispensable and essentially important element in the whole structure of our actions.

Thanks to his/her reason, an acting agent can recognize the nature of things and choose a goal — i.e., good — that will improve him/her. Likewise, he/she can choose a goal — i.e., an evil — that will degrade him/her[8].

Do we encounter the problem of individualism in this mode of thinking? Definitely not. Significantly, Wojtyła emphasizes that according to St Thomas perfectiorism should be understood as "teaching about a human

4 K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw*, p. 307.
5 K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw*, p. 307–308.
6 K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw*, p. 309.
7 K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw*, p. 309.
8 K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw*, p. 304.

being that perfects himself in accordance with his rational and social nature both in the natural and supernatural order"[9].

Summing up two essential aspects of the above-quoted definition (man's becoming better with every good deed of his), i.e., "good" and "becoming of a person", we should emphasize that good is understood as closely related to being in three ways:

- as a trait of existence, i.e., if something exists, it means it is good
- as the actualization (coming into being) of potentiality that results from the nature of a given being i.e., the improvement of a given being in a way determined by his/her nature
- as a relationship with the Supreme Being. This relationship does not allow, among others, to reduce the perspective of improvement to a closed individualism[10].

In this light, "a good deed" is one that objectively improves a person morally if he/she acts in freedom. This can be done only when it realizes a potentiality that results from the nature of a being in the perspective of a broader good, i.e., a community good.

As for "becoming of human beings", thanks to their will guided by the light of reason, they can perfect themselves by realizing the potentialities that result from their nature, or they may not recognize them or, despite having recognized them, act against their nature, i.e., degrade themselves. Thus, according to Wojtyła, "the becoming of a human being" means becoming morally good or evil due to one's own choices. To use a metaphysical expression, it is about contributing to — or inhibiting — the growth of the nature of a given being.

If we take into account the community context, the above conclusion expressed in metaphysical terms has vital consequences: morally good actions enrich a community, i.e., enrich its existence with something that is in accordance with its "nature", while morally bad actions impoverish a community. This impoverishment does not have to refer to the here and

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9   K. Wojtyła, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw*, p. 309.
10 Because of the character of this analysis, we do not elaborate on this issue and only point out its vital presence.

now; while discussing the case of Joseph Beuys, we shall see that it may have far-reaching effects.

Despite its concise character, the above proposition is very demanding in practice. Nonetheless, in part 4 of this paper, we shall argue that perfectiorism is an adequate response to the anti-civilization, morally and metaphysically evil actions exemplified by the case of Joseph Beuys.

Joseph Beuys

The German artist Joseph Beuys was the originator of an intriguing combination of revolution, politics, and art. Some people described the latter in terms of prophetic genius and total revolution, while others accused it of being inspired by Nazism, intensely conservative and conformist in character[11]. Notwithstanding various opinions and their justification, the activity of Beuys became a model of creativity in certain milieus. Beuys won acclaim as "an avant-garde star" and was recognized around the world — even by people not interested in art[12].

In 1946, Beuys became a student of monumental sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts (hereinafter: the Academy) in Dusseldorf. At first, he learnt in the studio of the artistically conservative Joseph Enseling. After three terms he moved to the class of Edward Matare who was more artistically experimental. Here Beuys felt much better. It is crucial for us to stress that all three sculpture professors at the Academy at that time (Enseling, Matare and Joseph Mages with whom Beuys had no contact) taught traditional methods of sculpting.

After graduating, Beuys freelanced and exhibited his works from time to time. He suffered from a deep depression for two years that he overcame

11   B. H. D. Buchloh, *Beuys: The twilight of the Idol. Premiliary Notes for a Critique*, "Artforum" 1980 no. 18, p. 35–43 (http://www.neugraphic.com/beuys/beuys-text9.html).
12   *Beuys* [a movie], directed by A. Veiel, 2017, Germany, specific time: 00:08:20 — 00:08:41.

with the help of his friends as well as the patron Franz Joseph van der Grinten. He got married[13].

With such experience, Beuys, who was being more and more recognized in the milieu, returned to the Academy in 1961 as a teacher of sculpture. During these 11 years, he taught in a completely different way than his predecessors. Unfortunately, in the Academy archives, there are no program plans of his nor any notes describing his teaching. When we take into account the meticulousness with which the archive collects and orders documents related to the Academy, we may reasonably agree with Brigitte Blockhaus and Miriam Mulle who worked there that Beuys never submitted such plans[14]. This, however, would be in line with his method of working: any formal or organizational requirements equaled unnecessary oppression that hindered creativity. We know from the accounts of his students, from various discussions and photographic documentation, etc., that Beuys' mode of teaching was spontaneous and experimental to the extent that at times both his confused students and Beuys himself did not know what to do next[15].

Beuys emphasized how crucial it was for students to master the skill of drawing. At the same time, his opinion on the traditional study of form was radically pejorative. He focused on bringing out one's subjective creativity and sensitivity[16]. He also insisted that students must be adept at sculpting at the same time suggesting (though not demanding) that each student makes at least one head out of clay[17]. As a result, after a few years of didactic transformations, the main trait of his teaching was discarding traditional sculpting expertise and focusing on "criticism". Consequently, during his classes, a wide range of topics was subjected to criticism, from

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13 J. Kaczmarek, *Joseph Beuys. Od sztuki do społecznej utopii*, Poznań 2001, p. 17.
14 Information obtained at the turn of June and July 2023.
15 P. Richter, *Beuys: "To be a teacher is my greatest work of art!"*, De Witte Raaf 1994, p. 3.
16 I.e. elements that are important for an artist. However, without artistic expertise, they may become infantile.
17 This does not suffice to shape one's sculpting skills. In order to have a decent sculpting expertise in clay one needs to make several dozen or several hundred sculptures (depending on one's talent).

the issue of the borders and the role of art, through political, social, and economic problems, to the notion of freedom and ecology[18].

It is not easy to reconstruct Beuys' ideas because his statements and actions were often vague or contradictory[19]. How can we interpret, for example, his candidacy for the Bundestag and European Parliament at the same time from two ideologically opposed parties: AUD (Aktionsgemeinschaft Unabhängiger Deutscher) and the Greens, i.e., from a right-wing and a left-wing party?[20]

As for Beuys' ideas, one can undoubtedly consider "utopia" to be the central notion that is present in all his mature work. According to Beuys, "utopia is simply a way of saying how the future should be, a long-term plan you have to realize in your daily life, a plan that makes sense over the next ten or twelve years"[21]. Thus utopia is simply an action whose aim is to implement some plan. The classic trait of unattainability and the elaborate character of utopia are removed. Instead, we are left with the impression that it is possible to implement ideas of a given utopian project.

This interference in the common scope of meaning results from the precept that was important and persistent in Beuys' thinking and that he consistently implemented. He expressed it best in the slogan: "The transformation of concepts should precede the transformation of reality"[22].

When we bear in mind the field of Beuys' activity, we may obviously assume that this transformation may also, or perhaps primarily, refer to the notion of art. It was indeed the case. As a representative of the concept of total art[23], Beuys considered the field of his activity to have no boundar-

18 P. Richter, *Beuys*, p. 2–10.

19 A. Saciuk-Gąsowska, *Joseph Beuys. Na obrzeżach Europy*, in: A. Saciuk-Gąsowska, K. Jurecki, *Joseph Beuys. Obrzeża Europy*, Bielsko-Biała 1997, p. 13.

20 J. Kaczmarek, *Joseph Beuys*, p. 38.

21 *Joseph Beuys: Polentransport 1981. Opere di Joseph Beuys dal Muzeum Sztuki di Łódź* [cat. exh.], Milano 1993, p. 60.

22 J. Beuys, *Aufruf zur Alternative*, 1980, https://pinakothek-beuys-multiples.de/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Aufruf-2.jpg.

23 For total art anything may be the "material" of processing, including man, social phenomena, political or economic space, etc. See, for example, performance art by Julita Wójcik "Obieranie ziemniaków" [Peeling Potatoes] from 2001.

ies: art encompasses everything and everyone. At the same time, according to the idea of Social Sculpture that he formulated[24], the activity of an artist should focus on "carving within a society" with any methods. The objective is to transform society in order to implement a utopian vision of a community that, as Beuys adds, must be built on the basis of love. To Beuys, this love is Christ, the central figure of reality[25]. Alas, Beuys does not explain who Christ is to him nor the way he understands love.

Since elaborating on the nuances of Beuys' artistic vision is not the aim of this article, to those who would like to learn more on this topic we recommend the orderly, systematic and synthetic study by Jerzy Kaczmarek[26].

The art of the 20th century expressed the idea of the permanent revolution in various ways that we can also observe in Beuys' activity. The enormously strong utopian trend that is central to his thought was not the idea he himself came up with. Neither was the radical character of his actions and the attempts to entirely re-evaluate existing patterns and models[27]. What connects Beuys with various trends of the 20th-century avant-garde is also the belief that we are capable of achieving or constructing an ideal social form. Also, one must not overlook in his work the occult elements that artists of that period were widely interested in[28].

A certain climax in the history of Beuys' influence took place on the 10th of October 1972, when, on his initiative, the work of the Academy's secretariat was (again) stifled[29]. A similar occurrence took place in the previous academic year[30]. Beuys demanded that those rejected in the standard recruitment process be also put on the list of admitted students. In his eyes, "every human being is essentially a creative being if only he/she is given

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24 J. Kaczmarek, *Joseph Beuys*, p. 31.

25 R. Rappmann, *Der soziale Organismus — ein Kunstwerk*, in: *Soziale Plastik: Materialien zu Joseph Beuys*, Achberg 1976, p. 21.

26 J. Kaczmarek, *Joseph Beuys*, p. 24–37.

27 J. Kaczmarek, *Joseph Beuys*, p. 121.

28 J. F. Moffitt, *Occultism in avant-garde art: the case of Joseph Beuys*, Michigan 1988.

29 D. Schönhoff, *Mit Beuys Durch Dusseldorf*, Doste Verlag 2018, p. 134.

30 D. Schönhoff, *Mit Beuys*, p. 134.

opportunities to be creative. This is the question of equal opportunities in education"[31] .

Those 46 people rejected in the recruitment process were allowed into his class — Beuys taught them on an equal footing with students officially admitted to the Academy. However, the Academy's authorities did not approve of this. Their decision met with Beuys' radical reaction — he occupied the secretariat office. Consequently, Richard von Weizsaecker, the then Secretary of State, issued a letter clearly stating that Beuys' illegal action was unacceptable[32] .The problem was finally solved with the help of police troops. Beuys was dismissed from the post he had held since 1961[33].

However, this dismissal did not mean the end of Beuys' impact on the Academy. On the contrary. It was the culminating point of a certain process that found its symbolic breakthrough in this situation. In fact, due to its peculiar character, it was the beginning of a certain barrage that the provocateur initiated despite the fact that formally he was no longer a member of the Academy. The aftermath of these events was growing.

Teaching how to "produce" (one can hardly evade this problematic term) true art[34], deepening one's outlook of reality as well as sensitivity in order to contribute to the healthy growth of an individual, a community, etc. — all this should be implemented within the horizon of fundamental values: truth, beauty, and good. Moreover, it is a complex process based on the transfer of knowledge and skills from the master to the disciple. Under favorable circumstances, the latter, if he/she is gifted and hard-working, over time turns into a master himself/herself and passes on his/her skills to the next generation. These skills constitute a complex amalgamate of both, knowledge that can be articulated and the practical one — which arises from a long, demanding work with material under master's guide. In time, with the help of this knowledge, a talented disciple creates his/her own language and technical methods. However, one cannot reach this

31 *Beuys* [a movie], specific time: 00:53:20.
32 *Beuys* [a movie], specific time: 01:03:40 — 01:47:18.
33 *Beuys* [a movie], specific time: 01:02:20 — 01:05:05.
34 True i.e. fulfilling its task of contributing to the growth (perfection) of its creator and the art receiver.

point without one's own initial, proper, and comprehensive education that ensures proficiency of actions in a given material.

Beuys' "didactics" meant, above all, hindering the mechanism of transferring skills, a phenomenon of huge consequences not only in the artistic field. This mechanism takes place in every sphere of our lives and is vital for civilizational development in general[35].

In order to grasp these consequences, we must have a closer look at what in essence happened at the Academy and what impact it had on it, as well as partially on other institutions of this kind and the world of art in general. Devastation of the craft and students' traditional skills of sculpting lay at its core.

Employed in 1961 as a sculpture teacher, Beuys introduced changes to the teaching process. We know for sure, that there were dramatic changes in teaching[36]. Working with a given material (clay, wood, stone, etc.) with the help of traditional tools of processing (hands, chisels, burins, knives, saws, etc.) as well as methods of reproduction/production using negative/casting methods—all these were given up. Beuys strongly disapproved of traditional expertise and "traditional" sculpting objects[37]. During his sculpture classes, the traditionally understood scope of sculpting craft was abandoned.

Instead, the focus was on discussions and, to be more precise, on the criticism of social, political, and economic issues as well as possible means of influencing a society with artistic activities. Thus, performance art, provocations, installations, etc. became their tools, and sometimes, as the exhibition DOCUMENTA 5 shows, they did not employ even such means and relied on strictly political activities[38].

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35 K. Karoń, *Historia antykultury. Podstawy wiedzy społecznej. Wersja robocza*, Warszawa 2018, p. 466.
36 In her interesting work on Beuys, Cornelia Lauf analyzes the school and academic education of Beuys himself. She tries to find motives for his own pedagogical activity during his work at the Academy. Cf. C. Lauf, *Joseph Beuys: The pedagogue as persona*, Columbia University 1992.
37 *Beuys* [a movie], specific time: 00:51:48.
38 *Beuys* [a movie], specific time: 00:22:00–00:22:32.

As a result of this peculiar mode of Beuys' "teaching", his students did not have an opportunity to learn the traditional sculpting craft. As K. Karoń[39] points out, these young people could not familiarize themselves with traditional sculpting expertise and thus it disappeared from the civilizational resource of the field occupied by Beuys. For over a decade Beuys "educated" plenty of "sculptors" who lacked sculpting expertise and who could not transfer the techniques of their craft further on as it was impossible to describe them in textbooks.

The above conditions, nuances, and personal rotations do not alter the basic fact that while teaching sculpture at the Academy, Beuys violated the mechanism of continuation (transfer of skills) by not giving his young students a chance to get to know and master the traditional sculpting skill. This, in turn, meant that because they were devoid of the skill of sculpting but wanted to fulfill themselves as artists, they had no choice but to resort to performance, installations, etc. In other words, to activities that do not require traditional expertise.

Had this kind of "teaching" taken place in a closed system, i.e., one that has no external inflow of traditional sculpting skills, the latter would have disappeared from the artistic and civilizational resource within a generation.

The long march through the Institutions and Joseph Beuys' activity

It is common to attribute the expression the "long march through the institutions" to Antonio Gramsci. It would be difficult to change this association, however, we must note that despite the fact that it sufficiently renders the

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39 K. Karoń, *Historia antykultury*, p. 465. Let us not that Karoń is too harsh and one-sided while describing the issue. Devastation occurred within the institution but it was not so radical as at the same time other teachers transmitted sculpting arcana to students. After Beuys, in 1976, Luise Kimme was employed and she taught, among others, traditional methods of sculpting. See, for example, *Zweihundert Jahre Kunstakademie Dusseldorf*, Dusseldorf 1973, p. 216; *The Kimme Musuem of Art And Sculpture*, http://www.luisekimme.com/bio.html.

essence of his thinking, Gramsci is not its author. The expression appeared for the first time in a statement by Rudi Dutschke, a well-known German Marxist leader of the student revolt of the 1960s. It seems that while coining this metaphor he was mainly inspired by the works of Gramsci and the Chinese "long march" (or "great march") that is the march of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army from Jiangxi Province in southeastern China to northwestern China from October 1934 to October 1935. Of all the participants, the 10% who survived the march under the leadership of Mao Zedong (whose leadership ultimately strengthened during this march) became key members of the Chinese Communist Party. The ultimate success of this march (that continues to this day) means that communists and neo-communists consider it to be a very positive event and at the same time a slogan that buttressed their hope for victory in other fields during other "long marches"[40].

As for Gramsci, instead of talking about "the long march", he spoke about the necessity to conduct the war of position and not the war of maneuver.

> The same [i.e., the change of paradigm in the military — Authors] refers to knowledge and politics, at least when it comes to industrialized countries in which civil society has become a very complex structure that is resistant to a catastrophic breach of the front line by a direct economic factor (crises, depressions etc.). In a civil society, the superstructures are like a system of trenches in modern warfare. During the last war [World War I – Authors], it

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40 During a panel discussion in Hambourg on the 24th of November 1967, Dutschke said: "This process of transformation goes this way [...] a long march through existing institutions during which by making [people] aware systematically and with direct actions, the transformation of awareness of subsequent minorities within and outside the University becomes possible" (R. Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch: Reden, Schriften und Tagebücher aus zwanzig Jahren podstaw*, Hamburg 1980, p. 15, transl. by Authors). Cf. R. Rożdżeński, *Ateistyczne korzenie ponowoczesności*, Kraków 2023, p. 61. Cf. also H. Diefenbach, *Der lange Marsch durch die Institutionen — und warum er nicht dorthin führen kann, wohin man wollte*, 11.03.2020, https://sciencefiles.org/2020/03/11/der-lange-marsch-durch-die-institutionen-und-warum-er-nicht-dorthin-fuhren-kann-wohin-man-wollte/.

seemed at times that a fierce artillery attack had completely pulled to pieces the enemy's defense system, while in reality it had only destroyed its external surface. As a result, during their assault, the attackers unexpectedly encountered a still effective defense line. It is the same in politics during huge economic crises. Due to a crisis, the attacking army does not organize itself quickly in time and space, nor does it acquire the spirit of belligerence. Similarly, the side under assault does not become demoralized nor does it give up defending itself even in the midst of devastation, nor does it lose faith in its strength and future. This state of affairs will surely undergo further changes. However, it undoubtedly turns out that what was missing was the factor of speed, a faster pace of action, and the gradual, decisive push forward[41].

With his metaphor of "a long-term trench war of position" — as opposed to "the brief, effective war of maneuver", Gramsci significantly changed the thinking and plans of politically engaged Marxists[42]. He was the first to understand why the communist revolution — even though stunningly successful in backward Russia — after its temporary victory following World War I, suffered a devastating defeat in Western Europe in all the countries where it was initiated (Germany, Hungary and Italy). Moreover, in other Western countries, any attempts to induce it failed.

The success in Russia was, as it were, the success of the war of maneuver — one main thrust, seizing power in the center of a great empire. The communists were able to take power and maintain it due to the structure of the Russian Empire. Its chief organizational strength turned out to be its main weakness: it was enough for the communists to seize central power[43].

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41 A. Gramsci, *Pisma wybrane*, transl. by B. Sieroszewska, Warszawa 1961, p. 584n. One cannot overlook that Gramsci sees great potential in defenders with well-developed positions during a war as well as in a state and society, which is naturally an asset and the foundation of hope for his ideological opponents, including us. We should also emphasize that what he calls "a superstructure" is in fact the core of civilization, its base. This, of course, the Marxists will not admit as for them it is the production relations, or more broadly, economic relations and the power structures that follow them that are the basis of social structures.

42 A. Gramsci, *Pisma wybrane*, p. 587.

43 A similar mechanism of the communist takeover and maintenance of power can be seen in vast areas of China, which additionally justifies our analysis.

However, Gramsci saw that in the West the situation was quite different. Here, apart from the structures of the state and its central authorities, there were many institutions of civil society. Not only did they have a significant impact on the formation of society, but they also had their share in political power. In particular, this referred to democratic political parties that ceaselessly competed with each other, thus not allowing any of them to turn into a totalitarian dictatorship. It was also about Christian Churches which exercised, as it were, spiritual power over the vast majority of society. While writing about the system of trenches and bunkers that cannot be won even after a long and intense artillery attack, Gramsci was referring to the institution of a democratic society, especially the Catholic Church which he thought to be his main enemy[44].

That is why he was the first one to point out that in order for the revolution in the West to be successful, "a long-term war of position" (or, in line with the later nomenclature "a long march through the institutions") should be initiated. In the course of such a war, various outposts of social and cultural life will be gradually won so that education, culture centers and communication media will be taken over step by step[45]. The aim is to take control of the theater and cinema, the radio and press, schools and universities according to the rule: *Culture first.* If possible, influence within the Church should also be gained by sending "our people" to the seminaries[46].

Thus, social awareness will gradually be changed by supplanting democratic and Christian "content" with communist and atheistic ones. However, one should not use brutal or revolutionary measures. Instead, one should hide under the veil of a broadly understood social democracy or the left. Thus, crypto-Marxist parties may win the approval of more and more voters, have a parliamentary majority and form their own government[47].

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44 Cf. D. Rozwadowski, *Kościół w obliczu rewolucji. Marksistowski marsz przez instytucje Kościoła katolickiego*, Warszawa 2021, p. 139–144.
45 Cf. P. J. Buchanan, *The death of the West*, New York 2002, p. 66–67.
46 Cf. B. V. Dodd, *The school of darkness*, New York 1954.
47 Cf. D. Rozwadowski, *Marksizm kulturowy. 50 lat walki z cywilizacją Zachodu*, Warszawa 2018, p. 20–31 and R. Rożdżeński, *Ateistyczne korzenie ponowoczesności*, pp. 68–69. Augusto del

A society that has been transformed and manipulated or even intimidated and stultified will not pose a threat. On the contrary, it will accept drastic changes in culture and law, in the political and economic system which only a while ago it would have rejected as criminal absurdity. However, after proper cultural manipulations, it will accept the changes as an obvious necessity. One must, therefore, with all one's might strive patiently and gradually to achieve cultural hegemony. Beuys' "artistic" activity was part of the implementation of such a plan. We must emphasize that there are no unequivocal sources that would settle whether he intentionally or by default became part of the broader plan of seizing power that Gramsci and his successors outlined. However, there is no doubt that Beuys' activities and concepts that we have discussed (e.g. Social Sculpture) when read through the prism of "the march through the institutions" become clearer. K. Karoń hits the nail on the head when he writes:

> What could a teacher at an art academy teach students if he himself had no talent or even modest expertise, building his academic, social, and material status on his incompetence? The answer is simple: such a teacher [...] could not teach his students anything that he himself did not know. The only thing he could do was to train them in critical destruction[48].

Activities of this kind in the field of art and the whole culture contribute to a gradual overrun of society and its institutions by Gramsci's followers or people who are ideologically close to him. This indeed has taken place because it is much easier to degrade a man and a whole society than to educate and raise someone so that they become beings with a fully realized, human dignity who independently think, feel, decide, and love. That is why

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Noce, however, points out that Gramsci also in his cultural disguise is not an objective thinker but a hard, decisive and ruthless communist leader who often in his thinking, method and totalitarianism resembles Italian fascists. Cf. A. del Noce, *Gramsci, czyli samobójstwo rewolucji,* transl. by A. Schymalia, Warszawa 2023, p. 42–133 and S. Krzemień-Ojak, *Antonio Gramsci — filozof kultury*, in: *Filozofia współczesna*, ed. Z. Kuderowicz, Warszawa 1990, p. 61.

48 K. Karoń, *Historia antykultury 1.0. Podstawy wiedzy społecznej*, Warszawa 2019, p. 459.

an expert in the thought of the Italian communist stated: *Marxism died in the East because it realized itself in the West*[49].

However, Gramsci argued that it is neither easy nor simple to usurp the area with many enemy fortifications. The enemy can defend himself for a long time or even counterattack and finally win this civilizational clash. We argue that Karol Wojtyła's perfectiorism may be a useful tool in the struggles for the shape and future of civilization and a man who lives according to this civilization.

Perfectiorism and anti-civilization activities: the case of Joseph Beuys

The profile and activity of Joseph Beuys, discussed and analyzed above, allow us to put forward a thesis that his abandoning of the traditional teaching methods, substituting them with, among others, political discussions, as well as a partly realized attempt at totally egalitarian academy admissions were anti-civilization activities. In subsequent paragraphs, we shall argue that adopting a perfectiorist attitude both by the participants of these events as well as their heirs made it possible — and still does — to prevent degenerative tendencies that are its result.

It is necessary to explain how we understand the term "civilization", which will help us grasp the notion of anti-civilization — and why we consider Beuys' activity to have a "degrading" impact.

Aware of the lack of clarity and unambiguity regarding the term "civilization"[50], we use it the sense that seems to be in line with St Thomas Acquinas and Karol Wojtyła. Thus, following Feliks Koneczny, we understand civilization to be a method of organizing collective life[51] that covers both the community and the individual. A close connection between

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49 Cf. A. del Noce, *Marxism Died in the East Because It Realized Itself in the West*, 16.01.2020, https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/marxism-died-in-the-east-because-it-realized-itself-in-the-west/.
50 B. Działoszyński, *Cywilizacja. Szkice z dziejów pojęcia w XVIII i XIX wieku*, Warszawa 2018.
51 F. Koneczny, *O wielości cywilizacji*, Warszawa 2015, p. 205.

Koneczny's proposal and the philosophies of St Thomas and Karol Wojtyła results directly from Koneczny's writings[52], as well as his notion that it is spiritual elements that are most important — they fundamentally organize social life, especially society's attitude toward good and truth understood in a classical way[53].

This understanding of civilization will be helpful while characterizing the notion of anti-civilization[54].

Let us note that the above understanding of civilization is very close to perfectiorism as it is built on the same foundation i.e., a specific attitude toward the issue of good and being, reason and man understood as a substantial unity of body (matter) and soul (form). What is more, to Koneczny, the issue of good is the expression of ethical norms, i.e. in practice, the relationship between human beings. In order for this relationship to be consistent with a human nature, the latter must be adequately recognized. This falls into the second of the fundamental spiritual categories: truth. The attitude toward the above two categories largely determines the shape of a given civilization: whether it is a place of human growth and development or his degradation and fall.

We must add that it is especially perfectiorism that pays attention to these two categories. It is consistent with what Koneczny characterized as "Latin civilization"[55].

The above paragraphs show what we understand by anti-civilization activities: those that are contrary to man's (and society's) improvement and growth consistent with his nature.

Let us now be more precise about how we understand the term "degradation". Since a morally good activity improves and develops the agent, then each contrary activity, i.e., activity that is morally evil or indifferent, whenever there is a missed opportunity to act morally well, will be

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52 F. Koneczny, *O wielości cywilizacji*, ch. IV.
53 F. Koneczny, *O wielości cywilizacji*, p. 181–182.
54 More on civilization in Koneczny's thinking in: F. Koneczny, *O wielości cywilizacji*; F. Koneczny, *Rozwój moralności*, Warszawa 2020; F. Koneczny, *Prawa dziejowe*, Warszawa 2020, part II.
55 F. Koneczny, *Cywilizacja łacińska*, Warszawa 2020.

a degrading activity. This degradation, just like improvement and growth, takes place on two planes: it not only degrades an individual who is an agent but, to some extent and to some degree, it also degrades a given community. Degradation of a given individual is quite clear, but degradation of a given community needs to be explained. In the light of perfectiorist assumptions, we shall distinguish two essential modes of degrading:

- not-bringing-into-being,
- depriving of existence.

These two modes are strictly rooted in the metaphysical assumptions that we have already put forward. Not-bringing-into-being means that despite an opportunity to bring a potentiality into being, we do not do it. In line with the expression *ens et bonum convertuntur*, it is about a lack of existence, i.e., a lack of certain good. According to classical thinking, lack of good is evil on the metaphysical plane. Here it is also a moral evil for this shortage results from the agent's decision that is not morally indifferent. On the plane of a community, not bringing certain good into being deprives, as it were, other members of a given community of a chance to experience this good, which is degrading for them.

As for "depriving of existence", if each existence is good in itself, then ridding of this existence is evil. If this depriving of existence is accidental or there is a case of double outcome, then we can speak solely of metaphysical evil. However, if this depriving of existence is intentional, then we can also speak of moral evil as a given deed was the outcome of a free will.

In light of this perspective, let us analyze the case of Joseph Beuys. We shall conduct this analysis within the framework set out by the perfectiorist outlook.

As we have said in Part 2, it is difficult to determine unequivocally Beuys' views. No wonder, as he accepted contradiction and had deeply rooted irrationalism that expressed itself in, among others, prioritizing intuition over reason in practical activity. Fortunately, we do not intend to reconstruct his views. We want to understand how and why his activities (on the basis of which we could attempt to reconstruct the views) impacted their participants and the community.

We have said that good in perfectiorism is what objectively perfects a given being. Let us begin with this while analyzing Joseph Beuys' activities. Thus, let us ask: what and who did his activities improve? Let us start with his students.

His actions as a sculpture teacher were, primarily, to educate sculptors or at least to transfer practical skills. The skill of sculpting which, to some extent, almost anybody can acquire, means bringing into being the potentiality that, after coming into being, is an accident (*entia secundum quid*). It is more or less peripheral to what is essentially necessary (*ens simpliciter*) or to accidents that are more fundamental. We may draw a conclusion that with his didactic activity, Beuys did not create conditions for the students to grow, students that were capable of bringing into existence the potentiality of being sculptors. Also, he convinced people devoid of this potential to become sculptors. Despite the fact that he convinced them that they could be sculptors, he did not create the appropriate conditions so that he could fulfill his promise.

Thus what we have here is the first case of degradation — not bringing into being. However, we may also say that in a way we also have the second case here. For if we assume that before Beuys took the post of a sculpture teacher, the space (understood metaphorically) he occupied at the Academy had been adjusted to help bring into being the potentiality of students, then due to Beuys' decisions, it ceased to exist — this space was not transformed but it ceased for it began to serve other goals. Thus we can already see that the case we are analyzing degrades both the individuals and the institution.

If we do not notice — or do not want to notice — the possibilities and limitations that result from the nature of a given being and his/her unique conditions, then it is indeed difficult to find arguments against total egalitarianism that Beuys postulated. We have already said that a goal a given being is heading for in his growth, if it is consistent with his/her nature, is good. Should we leave out the issue of nature, we could not determine if a given goal was good even if it were consistent with the nature of the agent. Perfectiorism strongly emphasizes the rational-volitional aspect of human action. Without objective, rational recognition of good that — with the help of our reason — we choose to be the goal of our action, we cannot

speak of moral good, even if we accidentally improve ourselves by this or that bringing-into-being of some potentiality. Thus perfectiorism applies only to rational beings, whereas the metaphysical order of good is appropriate to all beings. We can, therefore, say that Beuys' didactic process was at most morally indifferent, which means that in the perfectiorist perspective it was degrading.

Accordingly, we can see that an important part of Beuys' didactic activity was, from the perfectiorist perspective, plainly anti-civilizational. Let us then discuss its consequences. Beuys educated hundreds of people as "sculptors", many of whom were not familiar with the craft and could not create works of art. However, at least some of them were representatives of Social Sculpture. We should reflect on whether a community was improved by educating such Social Sculptors. The fundamental task of an artist is to create beauty for beauty is the basic trait of art. A work of art, of course, can convey something more than esthetic values. But if a given work of art serves only or primarily to transmit content/qualities other than esthetic, then it ceases to be art. Art that transmits beauty is crucial for every community. This fact is not undermined even by such reductionist trends as, for example, evolutionism[56].

If, as Beuys claimed, everything is art and the basic objective of art is social change, then is it still art? It seems not. And if it is the case, a community is deprived of art and those who could create it.

Let us note that due to Beuys' activities, the potentiality of being a sculptor-artist of many people who showed aptitude to perfect themselves in this field was not brought into being. Also, many people who had no such aptitude nor a predisposition to engage in political activism were deprived of an opportunity to bring into being other potential talents they had.

What about the question of depriving of existence? Beuys' postulate of egalitarianism reveals that he could not (or did not want to) recognize what is the objective good for a community and for its individuals. Thus we can say that he attempted to deprive of existence certain conceptual contents

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56 See e.g. D. Dutton, *The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution*, New York–Berlin–London 2009.

that were important for the community and substitute them with *a priori* devised constructs. It is, at best, a morally indifferent action that from the perfectiorist perspective is degradation.

As for individualism, we can say that Beuys' actions were in line with it[57]. In the perfectiorist perspective, in order for one to act for the good of the community, it is necessary to recognize the actual needs of the community as well as the human nature. Also, one must want to improve or perfect the community and human nature. We have already said that Beuys did not adequately recognize either of them. From the perfectiorist perspective, without this rational-volitional aspect, one can only speak of individualistic actions.

Hence, during his academic activity and afterwards, Beuys' action was degrading for his students, the Academy community, and certain broader social milieus. Degrading means anti-civilizational, which apart from the meaning mentioned earlier, translates into "violating the method of collective life". We conclude that Beuys' action did violate this method as otherwise it would not have met with such a decisive reaction of the Academy community and state authorities.

Let us now proceed to defend the thesis that perfectiorism is an adequate attitude to practically defend an individual and a community against anti-civilizational activities. We have already demonstrated this theoretically. However, we would like to emphasize certain practical aspects that may be very relevant nowadays. For this purpose, let us imagine the situation we outlined in point 2, however, with a different attitude of Beuys' students. Having recognized the good of bringing into being the potentiality of being a qualified sculptor, his students *en masse* change their teacher or report to the Academy authorities that Beuys does not lead them toward

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57 To prove this thesis, it suffices to refer to the project *7000 Eichen – Stadtverwaldung statt Stadtverwaltung*, to which one can hardly ascribe ecological or educational goals. Instead, the project shows a kind of self-admiration that we think was typical of Beuys. See *Beuys* [a movie], specific time: 00:23:10–00:25:40; Joseph Beuys, *7000 Oak Trees* [project], 1982, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/beuys-7000-oak-trees-ar00745.

this specific goal[58]. Or, they try to change Beuys' stance and demand that he teach them sculpting skills. It seems that his anti-civilization activities would have been nipped in the bud. This example, however, reveals yet another practical problem. How can young people have the ability to recognize objective good if nobody has taught them how to do it?[59] When they go to such a respectable institution as the Academy, they expect that its renown guarantees a certain educational level thanks to which objectively good goals will be set and achieved. In other words, they believe that Beuys' methods will lead them somewhere. On the other hand, some of his students must have noticed that without any special expertise, one can still function as a famous artist. If they give up aspirations to achieve objective good, they contribute to the anti-civilizational trend set by Beuys.

Let us take into account that some of Beuys' students engaged in Social Sculpture later became teachers of sculpture at academies around the world[60].

What if Beuys himself had wanted to adopt a perfectiorist attitude as well? Then all his and his students' anti-civilizational activities might not have occurred. Instead, we might have gained great sculptors.

The above analyses show that the components constituting what, after Wojtyła, we call perfectiorism may be one, though not the only, pillar of counteracting anti-civilizational activities, i.e., activities that degrade man and the community he/she lives in. The example of Joseph Beuys is very helpful to show how in practice such anti-civilizational activities take place and how they could have been hindered. Our argumentation also gives certain solutions that refer to the present situation (that in many areas is not much different than the case of Beuys) and the future.

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58 In fact, there were such students, though there were few of them, for example, Norbert Tadeusz who thought that Beuys' activities did not have much in common with didactics. See P. Richter, *Beuys*, p. 3.

59 We leave aside the question of brilliant individuals or people who were taught in this field at home.

60 See, for example, the careers of Lothar Baumgarten (Universitat der Kunst in Berlin, 1994–2001) or Peter Angermann who taught in Reykjavik, Kassel, Frankfurt am Mein and Nuremberg.

Finally, let us reflect on the role of institutions. If Beuys had stood in the market square in Düsseldorf and from there preached his ideas to random people, he may not have won such acclaim nor exerted such influence as he did thanks to the validation of his action by the Academy. We do not claim that he purposefully wanted to "educate" young people so that they become political activists who would take positions in other institutions, transforming the concepts they would find there, and putting forward Beuys' ideas. We do not have enough data to say as much. However, we may say that ideas "accompany" people, ideas that improve and those that degrade. Even when the "march through the institutions" is not deliberate, ideas may gain legitimacy, may be adopted and then transmitted further on by people who trusted these institutions. That is why it is so important that ideas be based on perfectiorism that objectively improves human nature, and not on some proposals that degrade it.

The case of Joseph Beuys makes it possible for us to underline certain difficulties related to the reception of the concept of "the march through the institutions". This concept is usually associated with some covert, organized activity of better or worse coordinated individuals or groups. We do not claim that there is such activity. However, a nonorganized and "spontaneous" takeover of institutions by people who act within them in an anti-civilizational manner, may also be considered as "the march through the institutions". The actions of many such individuals may not be coordinated and lead to various ideological directions. That said, their anti-civilizational character will gradually weaken "the defensive lines" on one or other section of the front of the civilizational struggle (for example by paralyzing the functioning of institutions). Such actions cannot be described as a frontal anti-civilizational attack. Rather, they resemble a guerilla sabotage attack. This, however, does not diminish their potential to degrade.

Conclusions

The aim of the above analyses was to show that perfectiorism is one of the adequate elements of response to anti-civilization activities that we encounter in various ways every day.

The analysis of the case of Joseph Beuys helps us discern that institutions operating in accordance with ideas that morally and metaphysically improve a human being, are crucial for the growth of society and individuals. Grounded in rational-volitional premises, perfectiorism allows us to fully understand human nature, and shows how to cherish and improve it. Thus, it fits deeply into two ideas that are close to Christian thought:

1. institutions should, above all, serve people (or society) and not, for example, utopian ideas

2. people should serve others, and not only themselves

As we have demonstrated, Beuys activity did not respect any of the two ideas. He used the Academy to promote his own anti-civilizational ideas and there are grounds for claiming that his non-teaching activities were to a large degree tainted with an individualistic approach. The solutions that we have outlined strengthen our thesis that perfectiorism is one of the crucial pillars of responding to activities that degrade a human being and destroy civilization.

The context of Gramsci's philosophy and the concept of "the march through the institutions" additionally underline how important for society and the individual the role of institutions based on ideas shared by society is. Also, they show the significance of the relationship between an institution and society that is expressed in the affirmative attitude of members of society toward a given institution (as opposed to institutions imposed on society by, for example, ideological organs of this or that authority).

Summing up, we have demonstrated that, both on theoretical and practical planes, perfectiorism is the right way to preserve and develop civil society. Moreover, it is an adequate response to anti-civilizational attempts — whether intentional or not — to appropriate institutions and the social sphere by individuals or groups that degrade civilization and men who live according to it.

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Abstract

Ethical perfectiorism as one of the solutions to prevent anti-civilization activities: an analysis based on the case study of Joseph Beuys

The article uses case studies of Joseph Beuys to show that the ethical perfectiorism developed by Karol Wojtyła is an adequate response to anti-civilizational actions, and that Beuys' actions as a lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldorf were precisely anti-civilizational in nature. In addition, the influence of the concept of "marching through institutions" was pointed out, which strongly

influences civilizational struggles in societies — especially democratic ones. On this basis, it was shown that perfectiorism is one of the key concepts that can play a key role in civilization struggles on the ground of institutions.

Keywords: perfectiorism, Karol Wojtyła, ethics, Antonio Gramsci, Joseph Beuys, philosophy in practice, marching through institutions, utopia, marxism

Abstrakt

Perfekcjoryzm etyczny jako jedno z rozwiązań zapobiegających działaniom antycywilizacyjnym: analiza na podstawie studium przypadku Josepha Beuysa

W artykule wykorzystano studium przypadku Josepha Beuysa, aby pokazać, że perfekcjoryzm etyczny rozwijany przez Karola Wojtyłę jest adekwatną odpowiedzią na działania antycywilizacyjne, a działania Beuysa jako wykładowcy Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Düsseldorfie miały właśnie charakter antycywilizacyjny. Ponadto zwrócono uwagę na wpływ koncepcji „marszu przez instytucje", która silnie oddziałuje na zmagania cywilizacyjne w społeczeństwach — zwłaszcza demokratycznych. Na tej podstawie wykazano, że perfekcjoryzm jest jednym z kluczowych pojęć, które mogą odegrać kluczową rolę w zmaganiach cywilizacyjnych na gruncie instytucjonalnym.

Słowa kluczowe: perfekcjoryzm, Karol Wojtyła, etyka, Antonio Gramsci, Joseph Beuys, filozofia w praktyce, marsz przez instytucje, utopia, marksizm

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A triumph of science or a paradigm blowing its own trumpet?

A book review: Dennis Dutton, *Instynkt sztuki. Piękno, zachwyt i ewolucja człowieka* [*The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution*], transl. by J. Luty, Copernicus Center Press, Kraków 2019

Dennis Dutton's book charmingly entitled *The Art Instinct* was published in Polish for the first time in 2019. However, market requirements led to its second publication (a reprint) in 2021. What is there in this philosophical book on art by a New Zealand philosopher of art that its first edition sold out within two years? I hope that my review will give at least a preliminary answer.

Dutton's work is rooted in one premise: in principle, our need for beauty (or beauty as a phenomenon) may be entirely explained with the paradigm of the theory of evolution. Dutton places his thesis in the context of certain controversies and discussions held by the supporters of the evolutionary paradigm. Regardless of his position in these discussions, due to his preliminary assumption, Dutton tries to prove two fundamental theses:

1. There is only one human nature[1].

2. "No philosophy of art can succeed if it ignores either natural sources or its cultural character"[2].

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1 D. Dutton, *The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution*, New York 2009, chapter 2.

2 D. Dutton, *The Art Instinct*, p. 31.

It must be admitted that Dutton's aim is worthy of attention and respect. We also take our hat off to him for the abundance of examples that he discusses to prove his theses. Alas, the very fact that he interprets these examples within the evolutionary paradigm sows doubt in an attentive reader (one that is not seduced by Dutton's examples and his effortless narrative).

Let us start with the first thesis on human nature. Unfortunately, Dutton does not say anything particularly revealing. He merely states that since we are able to show linguistic universality and the so-called linguistic abilities of the human mind (in which he follows Steven Pinker)[3], then we may transfer this argument to art. Consequently, with a plethora of examples from various parts of the world, we can declare that there is also universality in art. Interestingly, starting from this peculiar extrapolation of Pinker's theses, Dutton also extrapolates his own opinion regarding Pinker's findings and claims that their universal character is indisputable[4]. We can hardly agree with him since Pinker's thesis, a variant of the hypothesis on universal grammar, has met with strong counterarguments that have debunked his claims. To overlook them is an evident mistake[5].

Even if Pinker was right, then dogmatically declaring that the issue — before and after extrapolation — is indisputable reveals problems that Dutton must have encountered. The rest of Dutton's book proves my point. We may even claim that beginning from Chapter 2, Dutton's standpoint is an example of what Karl Popper called, though in different circumstances, "metaphysical determinism"[6]. Even though in places there are a few cases of Dutton's dogmatism getting weaker, they do not impact the main arguments of the author.

3   D. Dutton, *The Art Instinct*, p. 29n.
4   D. Dutton, *The Art Instinct*, p. 29.
5   See a discussion between the proponents of the idea of universal grammar and its opponents: A. Nevins, D. Pesetsky, C. Rodrigues, *Pirahã Expectionality: a Reassessment*, "Language" 85 (April 2007) no. 2, p. 355–404, https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.0.0107; D. Everett, *Pirahã Culture and Grammar: a Response to some Criticisms*, "Language" 85 (June 2009) no. 2, p. 405–442, https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.0.0104.
6   See K. Popper, *The Open Universe: An Argument for Indeterminism*, Routledge, 1988.

No matter what counterexample we might put forward, or what thesis from philosophical anthropology we might formulate, according to Dutton, every element of human nature boils down to the statement: "Well, this is the fruit of evolution". Thus, he looks for the foundations of art not in art itself, but in the cognitive abilities of a human being. Consequently, he falls into the reductionist paradigm that is characteristic of the theory of evolution in its multiple variants. Nonetheless, we must do justice to Dutton and admit that he does consider the problem of "where" aesthetic qualities lie and he agrees that at least some answers point to the cognized object.

However, here we come across yet another flaw of Dutton's *magnum opus*. He shows ignorance when it comes to the rich tradition of philosophical reflection on art and beauty. We do not demand (on second thoughts, why not?) that an English-speaking scholar should know about the studies of prominent Polish aestheticians who discuss in detail the dispute between objectivism and subjectivism in aesthetics[7]. Nonetheless, it seems that a scholar who attempts to explain the foundations of philosophical aesthetics should know the concept of a layered construction of the work of art and its consequences, especially since it has been available in English for a long time[8]. Alas, the bibliography and most of the references and contexts of the main text show that Dutton adheres to the evolutionary paradigm and does not even try to discuss classical approaches. It seems to be a significant flaw in his argumentation. Also, in places he happens to be imprecise. Let us quote the first sentences of Chapter 9: "Immanuel Kant, a man with a capacious and hungry intellect, regarded himself as a modern, eighteenth-century cosmopolitan […] Although he never left his hometown Königsberg"[9]. Well, it would be hard for Kant to give private

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7   See for example S. Dziamski, *O subiektywizmie w wersji psychologicznej w polskiej myśli estetycznej XX wieku*, Poznań 1968.

8   See R. Ingarden, *The Literary Work of Art*, transl. by G. G. Grabowicz, Evanston 1979; R. Ingarden, *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art*, transl. by R. A. Crowley, K. R. Olson, Evanston 1979.

9   D. Dutton, *The Art Instinct*, p. 203.

lessons outside Königsberg if he had never left it. And yet, he did teach privately and earned his living in this way from 1748 to 1754[10].

Leaving such nit-picking aside, we shall now return to the first problem: in what sense does Dutton speak of human nature? Above all, in the sense of biological nature and a common evolutionary past. If, from the perspective of philosophical anthropology, aesthetics, or the philosophy of art such considerations have any philosophical significance at all, they are partial and reduced to the adopted paradigm. What do we get as a response to the problem of common human nature? At most, arguments against racial segregation, but surely not a justification of the phenomenon of art.

Does the second thesis regarding both nature and culture save us from paradigmatic blindness? Unfortunately not, since Dutton falls for the *ignotum per ignotum* fallacy: in his book the phenomenon of culture is even more vague than the phenomenon of art. This, however, does not prevent him from reducing both to a peculiar superstructure for "nature". Again, no matter what counterarguments and examples the critics of Dutton may use, to him the whole human world is the product of evolution.

In several places, however, Dutton puts forward arguments that transcend the evolutionary paradigm. While discussing issues related to forgery in art — a thread he knows much better — he remarks that while encountering a forgery we are moved by emotions that are hardly explicable by means of evolution[11]. Having made this accurate observation, Dutton "repeats his mantra" and tries to adapt the observation to his paradigm.

Admittedly, Dutton's work contributes to the field by revealing something new or, simply, something valuable, even though that is only in relation to details and secondary matters. In more fundamental issues that he set before himself, it is not, unfortunately, a triumph of science but rather a work in line with the thesis of the reductionist paradigm. Bearing in mind Dutton's venerable attitude to the principles of the theory of evolution, we

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10 Cf. M. Kuehn, *Kant: a Biography*, Cambridge 2001, pp. 94–98. To make things worse, the Polish translation says Kant was a 19th century cosmopolitan.
11 D. Dutton, *The Art Instinct*, chapter 8.

may admit that it is a case of the paradigm blowing its own trumpet or, to use more academic language, a *petitio principii* fallacy.

Why is the book so popular? I do not mean my answer to be complete or final. However, I must admit that Dutton scientizes reality, a trend very fashionable among contemporary intellectuals. It is quite easy to see that this trend falls into a trap that postmodernism has set for science. Postmodernism abandoned "grand narratives" whose weak point for contemporary readers consisted in their complexity and profundity not being attainable to everyone. Consequently, "simple narratives" were proposed that pass off as "grand narratives." I do not mean to say that science that deals with evolution is simple. Yet, it is Dutton's solutions that are simple for he wants to resolve one of the most complicated philosophical issues with one basic argument: "it is due to evolution". Unfortunately, such "simple narratives" attract many followers. For it is much easier to exclaim "evolution!" than to study the history of philosophy. Also, it is easier to read one light book by Dutton than hundreds of volumes on aesthetics and the philosophy of art. Is this the only reason for the book's popularity? I guess one of many, but it is symptomatic enough to make one shudder at the thought of "simple narratives" gaining ground.

How then should the book be evaluated? Rather positively, for even though we have Dutton's reductionism at the very center, the book does broaden our understanding. His viewpoint should be subjected to substantive and detailed revision. This, however, is a long theme for a whole book.