

ORBIS IDEARUM

European Journal of the History of Ideas

ORBIS IDEARUM



Volume 11, Issue 2 (2023)

Riccardo Campa - Thomas Beavitt - Maxim Popov
Queen Sarkar - Gianfilippo Giustozzi
Marcin Krasnodębski - Dawid Wieczorek



ISSN: 2353-3900

ORBIS IDEARUM

European Journal of the History of Ideas



Volume 11, Issue 2 (2023)



History of Ideas Research Centre
Jagiellonian University in Krakow

Institutional affiliations:



Orbis Idearum is edited by the History of Ideas Research Centre at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, and published by Genesys Informatica in Florence, Italy.



The website of the journal (www.orbisidearum.net) has been funded by the “National Program for the Development of the Humanities” of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Poland.



The journal is currently affiliated with the Institute of Sociology at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland.

@ History of Ideas Research Centre
Jagiellonian University
Al. Mickiewicza 22
30-059 Krakow, Poland

histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
ideengeschiedenis
история идей
ideengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
storia delle idee
history of ideas
HISTORY OF IDEAS
historia idei
idéhistorie
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
istoria delle idee
Ideengeschichte
historia idei
ideengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
история идей
STORIA DELLE IDEE
ideengeschiedenis
storia delle idee
HISTORY OF IDEAS
historia idei
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
history of ideas
Ideengeschichte
idéhistorie
ideengeschiedenis
historia de las ideas
storia delle idee
histoire des idées
History of Ideas
Ideengeschichte
historia idei
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
Ideengeschichte
история идей
idéhistorie

ORBIS IDEARUM

European Journal of the History of Ideas

NetMag
edition

Founder:
MICHEL HENRI KOWALEWICZ †

Editor-in-Chief
RICCARDO CAMPA

Editorial Staff
LUCAS MAZUR
DAWID WIECZOREK
OLGA O'TOOLE
ANASTAZJA ZAKUSILO

Scientific Committee

KARL ACHAM, TATIANA ARTEMYEVA, WARREN BRECKMAN, PAWEŁ DYBEL, ANTIMO CESARO, MARIA FLIS, MARIOLINA GRAZIOSI, FABIO GRIGENTI, JAROSŁAW GÓRNIĄK, VICTOR KAPLOUN, MARCIN KRÓL, JENS LOENHOFF, GIUSEPPE MICHELI, MIKHAIL MIKESHIN, ERIC S. NELSON, LUCIANO PELLICANI, GREGORIO PIAIA, RICCARDO POZZO, MARTINA RÖESNER, GUNTER SCHOLTZ, ALEXANDER SCHWARZ, SERGIO SORRENTINO, CAROLE TALON-HUGON, IRINA TUNKINA, HAN VERMEULEN, MARA WADE, LECH WITKOWSKI, WIESŁAW WYDRA, MARTINE YVERNAULT

ISSN: 2353–3900
www.orbisidearum.net



The new History of ideas research Centre was founded on the conviction that the history of ideas is of great importance not only for all academic fields, but first and foremost for culture and society. The history of ideas enables a better understanding of our present, whose culture and manners of thinking result from certain traditions and therefore are not self-explanatory. We are not Europeans neither because of the territory we inhabit nor in virtue of recently concluded European treaties, but because European culture has been shaped by particular basic ideas and attitudes. They can only be clearly comprehended and commented on via an examination of their history, which can only be explicitly appropriated and evaluated against their historical background. The history of ideas explains our mental and cultural presuppositions and thereby may lead to justified affirmation and critique – not only a critique of traditional ideas, but also a critique of our present situation that often reveals its deficiencies only in the light of prior convictions and keynotes. The increasing specialization of historical studies needs to be counterbalanced by other types of research that focus on common presuppositions and thoughts, and thereby promote interdisciplinary work. This is precisely the scope of the studies of the history of ideas, where many academic fields overlap. In order to foster fruitful research discussion in the domain of the history of ideas, the research centre decided to launch the online magazine *Orbis Idearum. European Journal of the History of Ideas*, and the book series *Vestigia Idearum Historica. Beiträge zur Ideengeschichte Europas* by mentis Verlag in Münster. The concept of the history of ideas has admittedly lost its semantic outlines. Since historical research has disproved rather than confirmed Lovejoy's research program that was based on the supposition of constant unit-ideas, the concept of the history of ideas can be applied to any inquiry in the field of the *Geistesgeschichte*.

By contrast, the new History of Ideas Research Centre attempts to restore the distinctive profile of the history of ideas. For the Centre, ideas are thoughts, representations and fantasy images that may be expressed in various forms. Ideas manifest themselves first and foremost in language, but also in nonlinguistic media, and even in activities, rites and practices. In the latter case, they do not always manifest themselves directly, but are sometimes at the basis of certain cultural phenomena before eventually receiving linguistic expression. For this reason, the history of ideas coincides neither with the history of concepts (*Begriffsgeschichte*) nor with intellectual history (*allgemeine Geistesgeschichte*). While the former is oriented towards thoughts that are expressed linguistically, and, therefore, elaborates only a part of the history of ideas, the latter is devoted to the whole mental life of humankind, which may involve even religious systems and fundamental convictions of a whole epoch. By contrast, the history of ideas always focuses on particular elements that are recognizable in thought or in culture, and whose transformation or constancy can be explored over a certain period of time by describing, analyzing, and interpreting their appearance, function, and effect. Taken in this sense, the history of ideas occupies an intermediate position: it covers a broader field than the history of concepts that could be understood as one of its subareas, but it has a more specific task than intellectual history (*allgemeine Geistesgeschichte*). Even more than in the case of the history of concepts (*Begriffsgeschichte*), one must resist the temptation to mistake the historian's interpretations for historical ideas.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FIRST SECTION: CONTRIBUTIONS IN ENGLISH

Riccardo Campa

God and His Biblical Alter Ego:

On Two Types of Monotheism and their Relation to War and Peace 11

Thomas Beavitt

Vasiliev's 'Consciousness and Things':

A Project for a Phenomenological Ontology..... 51

Maxim Popov

Authoritarian Liberalism as a Political Concept: the Evolution of Ordoliberal

Ideas in the European Integration Process 69

Queen Sarkar

Beyond Truth and Fiction: an Exploration of the Arbitrary and Inconsistent

Construction of Self in J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* 91

SECOND SECTION: CONTRIBUTIONS IN ITALIAN

Gianfilippo Giustozzi

«Un Dio per un mondo che sta iniziando». La «singolarità» teologica di

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin..... 109

THIRD SECTION: CONTRIBUTIONS IN POLISH

Marcin Krasnodębski

Technokrytyka a religia: chrześcijaństwo, ekologia a postęp

naukowo-techniczny w drugiej połowie XX wieku 149

Dawid Wieczorek

Syntetyczne szaleństwo: z najnowszej historii problemu narkotykowego 179

histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
ideengeschiedenis
история идей
ideengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
storia delle idee
history of ideas
HISTORY OF IDEAS
historia idei
idéhistorie
ideedeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideengeschichte
historia idei
ideengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
история идей
historia de las ideas
история идей
storia delle idee
ideengeschiedenis
storia delle idee
History of Ideas
historia idei
ideedeajalugu hugmyndasaga
History of Ideas
Ideengeschichte
idéhistorie
ideengeschichte
histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
storia delle idee
история идей
ideedeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideengeschiedenis
historia de las ideas
STORIA DELLE IDEE
histoire des idées
History of Ideas
Ideengeschichte
ideedeajalugu hugmyndasaga
HISTORIA IDEI
Ideengeschichte
история идей
idéhistorie

First Section

CONTRIBUTIONS
IN ENGLISH



GOD AND HIS BIBLICAL ALTER EGO: ON TWO TYPES OF MONOTHEISM AND THEIR RELATION TO WAR AND PEACE

Riccardo Campa

Jagiellonian University in Krakow

riccardo.campa@uj.edu.pl

ABSTRACT

The three Abrahamic religions have an ambivalent relationship to war and peace. On the one hand, God is viewed as a merciful peacemaker. On the other hand, peoples embracing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have often been involved in holy wars and religious persecutions. While David Hume argued that polytheism is inherently more tolerant than monotheism, here it will be argued that it is not monotheism as such which generates endless conflicts, but the specific idea of God propagated by the Old Testament. To make his point, the author addresses the issue of the ambivalence of Christianity. Yahweh asks the Israelites to exterminate non-believers and members of other ethnic groups, including women and children, while Jesus Christ exhorts his followers to avoid confrontation by loving their enemies. However, while the two aforementioned persons of the Christian godhead are apparently different, they are merged in the Trinitarian conception of divinity. The article, therefore, presents four main strategies adopted within Christianity to deal with the alleged moral discrepancy between the first and the second person of the Trinity. Finally, the author narrows the focus on the idea of the Unknown God and the related tradition of negative (or apophatic) theology, arguing that this form of monotheism is more productive of religious tolerance. A series of examples illustrate the presence of this idea in Gnosticism and Neoplatonism, as well as within early, mediaeval and modern Christian doctrines.

KEYWORDS: Unknown God, Yahweh, Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, Christianity

1. PREMISE

Organized wars against conspecifics occur in several species of the social type, such as bees, wasps, ants, monkeys, and humans. Chimpanzees (*Pan*

troglydytes) – which most believe to be peaceful animals – often engage in wars of conquest (Mitani et al. 2010). Smaller or larger groups of male monkeys compete for territories, killing any conspecific who dare to trespass borders. The goal of combatant male chimpanzees is to gain access to more resources, especially food and females. The sole fact that we share 98.8% of our genes with chimpanzees and show behaviors not too dissimilar from theirs leads us to think that our propensity for war may have a genetic substrate. Still, we certainly surpass our “cousins” for a greater ferocity and inventiveness in crafting means of destruction. Besides, our species have created sophisticated symbolic systems to justify or curb such violent activities.

Culture is no less important than genes, as it can amplify or play down instinctual behavior. We know there are more or less warlike human societies. Faced with the Sparta that went down in history for its warrior virtues, we also have records of more peaceful matriarchal populations that settled in Europe before the break-in of Indo-European nomadic peoples (Bachofen 2007). And, today, against a country like the United States of America, which sets aside more than seven hundred billion dollars a year for military spending, there is a country like Costa Rica, which abolished the army in 1949 to invest more resources in health and education. In short, there may also be a genetic propensity for war and raiding, but culture has shown to have a significant role in regulating this instinct, and, within cultural systems, religions play a special role. To put it metaphorically, there are religions that throw water on the fire, while others pour gasoline over it. More specifically, inside monotheisms, there are ideas of God that appease warlike instincts, while others provide moral justification for holy wars and religious persecutions.

As a matter of fact, today, we live in a world in which religion seems to divide humans rather than unite them, contradicting the very meaning of its etymological Latin root “*religio*” (bond, what binds together). Of course, the current situation is not unique in history. Suffice it to recall the conflicts between Pagans and Christians in conjunction with the decline of the Ancient World, those between Christians and Muslims during the Middle Ages, or those between Catholics and Protestants at the dawn of the Modern Era. Even when faith was not the main cause of a conflict, monotheistic religions have not done much to curb the warlike instinct of peoples. The massacres of World War I and World War II involved nations who, at least nominally, identified as Christian. Brothers in faith clashed with each other, while their cousins in faith, the Jews, were subject to detention and extermination.

Coming to our days, in Nigeria the Islamic fundamentalists of Boko Haram have been responsible for numerous massacres against compatriots who embrace the traditional animist cult or the Christian faith. In the Middle East, a religious war between Jews and Muslims has superimposed on the political

conflict between Israelis and Palestinians for the control of the territory, if only because on 19 July 2018 Israel officially became a confessional state by adopting a 14th law entitled “Basic Law: Israel – The Nation State of the Jewish People,” and the frame of reference of Hamas is Islam. Not only in different regions of the world are there clashes between peoples of different faiths and beliefs, but even peoples sharing the same religion are torn apart within them. Once again, in Europe, we are witnessing a war between brothers in faith and ethnicity, Russians and Ukrainians, while the Arab world is ravaged by a bloody war between two souls of Islam. The last victim of the conflict is the population of Yemen, mostly Shiite, who ended up under the bombs of their rich Sunni neighbor, Saudi Arabia.

The Catholic Church itself seems to be riddled with deep wounds of a political and doctrinal nature. The situation is certainly not comparable to actual wars, as the disagreements within the Church of Rome remain on a purely doctrinal level. However, it is peculiar that a considerable number of prelates and believers today publicly reject the ideas of the Vicarius Christi himself, Pope Francis, on issues such as ecology, immigration, the relationship with other religions, the doctrine of the family, and the role of women in the Church, even questioning the legitimacy of his pontificate. In particular, an accusation of heresy was brought against the Pope by a large group of university professors, theologians, and churchmen through a letter appeal written in many languages and published on the websites of traditionalist Catholics (Benevento 2019). In turn, Pope Francis revoked Vatican privileges to conservative Cardinal Raymond Burke (Pulella 2023). Here too, rather than uniting, monotheism seems to divide, and reciprocal accusations of heresies are endemic.

In his *Natural History of Religions*, David Hume provided an explanation for this phenomenon. Monotheism, although being in his view more consistent with reason, is inherently more violent and intolerant than polytheism. Once we admit the existence of numerous gods, it makes little sense to persecute those who prefer one or the other, or to start a holy war against a people that worship a different set of deities. These are his words: “The tolerating spirit of idolaters, both in ancient and modern times, is very obvious to anyone who is the least conversant in the writings of historians or travellers,” while “the intolerance of almost all religions which have maintained the unity of God is as remarkable as the contrary principle of polytheists” (Hume 1889, 39-40). A few lines below, the Scottish philosopher gets more explicit, calling the three Abrahamic religions by name.

The implacable narrow spirit of the Jews is well known. Mahometanism set out with still more bloody principles; and even to this day, deals out damnation, though not fire and faggot, to all other sects. And if, among Christians,

the English and Dutch have embraced the principles of toleration, this singularity has proceeded from the steady resolution of the civil magistrate, in opposition to the continued efforts of priest and bigots. (Hume 1889, 40)

Let us be clear; Hume is not saying that idolaters are inherently more pacific than monotheists. He is just saying that they are more tolerant in religious matters. It is a well-known fact that ancient polytheistic nations were systematically involved in wars. However, they waged war against neighbors to take control over more territories, food, slaves, and females, like primates do. With few exceptions, holy wars and religion persecutions are rather a specificity of monotheists.¹

In this work I will pay special attention to Christianity, as it is particularly ambivalent in this respect. On the one hand, Jesus Christ preached tolerance, altruism, frugality, and even love for one's enemies. On the other hand, Christians have constantly been involved in wars of conquest and the exploitation of other peoples' resources. One may notice that this kleptocratic and warlike attitude gained momentum in the last two centuries, as a consequence of the *secularization* of Christian societies. There is a grain of truth in this observation. However, we cannot fool ourselves. The colonization of non-European continents, the enslavement of indigenous populations, the systematic despoiling of the resources of those lands, forced conversions, and the very birth of capitalism are processes that began when the de-Christianization of Europe was still far from beginning. The oppression of the weak was perpetrated with Christian symbols and banners raised high in the sky. It is enough to notice that the populace of the United States of America is notably more religious than the European one and, from the end of the Second World War to the present day, it has been involved in more wars than the latter. The same applies to Israel and some Islamic countries.

This is the general picture. However, the aim of this article is to present and discuss an illuminating exception to the rule. I will bring to the surface an idea of God that finds space within different monotheistic faiths, including the Christian one, and works in favor of peace rather than war, of toler-

¹ It is appropriate, however, to point out that both motivations for waging war – economic and religious – can be intertwined. Geopolitical expert Lucio Caracciolo (2004) rightly warns against too simplistic explanations. Doctrinal issues play a role in conflicts, but are more often *used* to pursue economic and geopolitical interests. These are his words: “From the Balkans to Chechnya, from Afghanistan to the Middle East, from Sri Lanka to the Philippines, from Kashmir to Algeria, there is certainly no shortage of wars which to a lesser or greater extent reveal an ethnic and above all religious background.” And yet, “there are no purely ethnic and/or religious wars; all wars have a geopolitical background, even if only a fraction of geopolitical strife produces wars.” In a nutshell, religion is often reduced to an *instrumentum regni*. However, the fact remain that monotheistic religions are more suited to being used for these purposes, for intrinsic doctrinal reasons.

ance rather than intolerance. It is the idea of the “Unknown God” (*Agnostos Theos* in Greek, *Deus Ignotus* in Latin), often referred to as “The One” in the Greek philosophical and theological tradition – an alternative conception of the supreme godhead, deemed ineffable and unutterable, which emerged in the Pagan world and subsequently penetrated into Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

To make my point, I will proceed along the following path. First, I will clarify that it is not monotheism as such which generates endless conflicts. It is the specific idea of God propagated by the Old Testament that offers fertile ground for religious wars and persecutions. Second, I will address the issue of the ambivalence of Christianity. It is true that the figure of Jesus Christ seems very different from that of Yahweh, so much so that an irenic idea of religion emerges from the Sermon on the Mount, but the two divine persons are merged in the Trinitarian conception of divinity. I will therefore present four main strategies adopted within Christianity to deal with the alleged moral discrepancy between the first and the second person of the Trinity. Finally, I will narrow the focus on the idea of the Unknown God and the related tradition of negative (or apophatic) theology. There is certainly no shortage of studies about this tradition, but my main intent is to argue that it produces religious tolerance rather than intolerance. I will make the point presenting a series of examples showing the presence of this idea in Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, and at last – more in detail – within the orthodox Christian doctrine.

2. THE TRIBAL DEITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

There has been much discussion about the incitements to violence contained in the Quran, especially after the events of September 11th, 2001 (Abdel-Samad 2016). Still, pointing a finger only at the sacred book of Islam would be misleading. The first symbolic source of violence and intolerance, common to the three Abrahamic religions, is the Old Testament. Here, God reveals himself both as the creator of the world and a relentless warrior who leads one people into war, ordering the extermination of idolaters and peoples of different religion and ethnicity. This image of God emerges from a specific translation and a literal interpretation – the most immediate and therefore most often practiced in the course of history – of the Bible.

For many believers, the Bible is the ultimate source of *morality*. On the contrary, not few intellectuals have hurled accusations at the Bible for promoting *immorality*. Among the latter, to provide just an example, is Aldous Huxley. Pacifist and fierce critic of the military-industrial complex, the English writer contrasted Eastern wisdom and Western aggressiveness.

In his book *Ends and Means*, Huxley (1946, 203-204) states that the modern world has “taken over from the Hebrews all that was worst in their cultural heritage,” namely “their ferocious Bronze-Age literature; their paeans in praise of war; their tales of divinely inspired slaughter and sanctified treachery; their primitive belief in a personal, despotic and passionately unscrupulous God; their low, Samuel-Smilesian notion that virtue deserves a reward in cash and social position.” In the meantime, for an irony of history, the West rejected “the admirably sensible rabbinical tradition of an all-round education.”

A few pages after, he adds what follows:

Christian theologians did their best to civilize and moralize this tribal deity; but, inspired in every line, dictated by God himself, the Old Testament was always there to refute them. (...) Texts to justify such abominations as religious wars, the persecution of heretics, breaking of faith with unbelievers, could be found in the sacred books and were in fact used again and again throughout the whole history of the Christian Church to mitigate the inconvenient decency of civilized morality. (Huxley 1946, 283-284)

In Huxley’s view, there is a need for doctrinal coherence and correspondence between proclaimed principles and actual behaviors. The means must be as good as the ends, pace Machiavelli’s cynical pragmatism. What the West lacks is an intelligent morality based on acts of genuine generosity. That is why Huxley praises Indian pacifism, which finds its clearer expression in the teaching of Buddha. The following are his words: “Buddhism, like Hinduism, teaches ahimsa, or harmlessness towards all living beings. It forbids even laymen to have anything to do with the manufacture and sale of arms, with the making of poisons” (Huxley 1946, 208-209).

What is the English writer referring to when launches his heavy accusation against the “tribal deity” of the Old Testament? Since the reading of the Holy Scriptures is no longer a common habit, if it ever was, I will report some fragments that exemplify the ferocity denounced by Huxley.

In the Book of Numbers (31:14-18, NIV), we read the following:

Moses was angry with the officers of the army—the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds—who returned from the battle. “Have you allowed all the women to live?” he asked them. “They were the ones who followed Balaam’s advice and enticed the Israelites to be unfaithful to the Lord in the Peor incident, so that a plague struck the Lord’s people. Now kill all the boys. And kill every woman who has slept with a man, but save for yourselves every girl who has never slept with a man.

In the Deuteronomy (20:15-17, NIV), we find the following words:

This is how you are to treat all the cities that are at a distance from you and do not belong to the nations nearby. However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy[a] them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has commanded you.

Concerning the conquest of Jericho, the Book of Joshua (6:19-21, NIV) reads:

“All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury.” When the trumpets sounded, the army shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the men gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so everyone charged straight in, and they took the city. They devoted the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys.

In the same book, we also learn about treatment reserved for the inhabitants of Ai:

When Israel had finished killing all the men of Ai in the fields and in the wilderness where they had chased them, and when every one of them had been put to the sword, all the Israelites returned to Ai and killed those who were in it. Twelve thousand men and women fell that day—all the people of Ai. For Joshua did not draw back the hand that held out his javelin until he had destroyed all who lived in Ai. But Israel did carry off for themselves the livestock and plunder of this city, as the Lord had instructed Joshua. (Joshua 8:24-27, NIV)

Ethnic clansing is never presented as an autonomous initiative of the Israelites. As we have seen, they actually resisted the idea of slaughtering innocents, only to be rebuked by Moses. This also happens under Joshua’s command. It is the Lord himself asking the Israelites to massacre both combatant and non combatant people, in Gaza as elsewhere, as the following verse also confirm.

So Joshua subdued the whole region, including the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills and the mountain slopes, together with all their kings. He left no survivors. He totally destroyed all who breathed, just as the Lord, the God of Israel, had commanded. Joshua subdued them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza and from the whole region of Goshen to Gibeon. (Joshua 10:40-41, NIV)

Quite instructive is also the First Book of Samuel. Samuel introduces himself as the prophet sent by the Lord to anoint Saul, the first king of Israel. The Lord Almighty's message addressed to Saul is the following:

"Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys." (1 Samuel 15:3, NIV)

Saul exterminates the Amalekites, but spares the life of their king, Agag, and the livestock, allowing the soldiers to take the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs. For this reason, the Lord takes away the crown of king of Israel from Saul and gives it to someone else "better" than him. Saul's sin is that he was too merciful. Reprimanded by Samuel, Saul apologizes to the Lord and puts Agag to death in front of him, without however obtaining God's forgiveness.

This tribal deity does not spare the Israelites themselves, when they disobey his commands, despite being the chosen people. In the Book of Ezekiel (5:12-13, NIV), by appearing to the prophet, God states what follows:

A third of your people will die of the plague or perish by famine inside you; a third will fall by the sword outside your walls; and a third I will scatter to the winds and pursue with drawn sword. Then my anger will cease and my wrath against them will subside, and I will be avenged. And when I have spent my wrath on them, they will know that I the Lord have spoken in my zeal.

Terms such as "kill" and "armies" are recurrent throughout the Bible, making it a book of war rather than a spiritual tale. God himself is named *Ish Milchamah*, the Man of War, or *Yahweh Šēbā'ōt*, the God of the armies of Israel (1 Samuel 17:45, NIV). Moreover, as we have seen, war is mostly understood as ethnic cleansing. No prisoners were taken and civilians were not spared, not even old people, women, and children. Animals were also killed for no apparent reason. One may say that by condemning this conduct as patently immoral, Huxley and other contemporaries project today's morality backwards, but this is not case (leaving aside that the relativization of morality should not be invoked by those believing in eternal truths). When the Old Testament was written, there were peoples who did not kill the defeated. They took them as slaves. The Jews themselves were taken as slaves to Egypt and Babylonia, and were subsequently ruled by the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. They were not exterminated, because – unlike Yahweh – the gods of the Pagans did not order the killing of anything that breathes. This happens instead in the sacred book of the three great monotheistic religions.

3. FOUR STRATEGIES TO COPE WITH THE TRIBAL DEITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The problem of God-inspired violence is particularly thorny for Christianity because the Christian God is One and Triune. In addition to the mysterious Holy Spirit, the Trinity notoriously includes Jesus of Nazareth and Yahweh. As we said, while Jesus commands to forgive, love one's enemies, and turn the other cheek, Yahweh commands vengeance, extermination, and ethnic cleansing. Where is the moral unity, the convergence of purpose among the three divine persons, which would prove the essential unity and uniqueness of God? To put the answer delicately, it is very difficult to find.

Still, there are different ways adopted by believers and biblical scholars to deal with the apparent discrepancy between the first and the second person of the Trinity. I counted at least four main strategies emerging in the course of history and still currently in place.

The first strategy consists in admitting that gruesome biblical verses exist and can be interpreted literally, however that they are not problematic at all. This is the position of conservative or reactionary Christians. God is not essentially good, generous, and benevolent, which is a Platonic, and therefore Pagan idea. The Father is terrible and fearsome, as the Scriptures describe him. This is why religious people are also called "God-fearing." God is "just," exactly because he scares the faithful and punishes the wicked to maintain moral order. The idolaters and the apostates are wicked and must be converted or exterminated. Holy wars and persecutions are perfectly justified. Conservative Christians show a preference for the Old Testament but also find confirmation of God's harshness in the canonical gospels, for instance in the Apocalypse or in Jesus' sentences such as "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34, NIV).

The second strategy consists in pretending that those Bible passages simply do not exist. It is adopted by those believing that: (1) God is essentially good; (2) a literal interpretation of the Bible is legitimate; and (3) those passages are actually hideous. Believers rarely read the Bible. Reading the Bible, or more precisely translations different from the Vulgata, has been actually forbidden to the faithful for long stretches of the history of Christianity. Theologians and priests talk about those gruesome fragments sporadically, or possibly never. The problem is hidden like dust under a carpet. This is, however, a rather humiliating attitude, especially if implemented by biblical scholars.

The third strategy consists in postulating that only a metaphorical, symbolic, or allegorical interpretation of the Bible is legitimate. This approach has also a long history (as we will see, it was primarily elaborated by Origen

of Alexandria) and is currently dominant. To some people, this solution is fully convincing. Others think it is just a way to escape the problem, as interpretations are often very superficial. When an episode is particularly horrendous or embarrassing, allegorical interpreters resort to the category of “mystery,” which seems to be a one-size-fits-all solution. As a matter of fact, they do not tell us which is the symbolic meaning of the divine order to kill innocent children, non-virgin women, and animals. To my knowledge, no one has tried to derive the image of a peaceful, merciful, and benevolent deity specifically from the passages quoted in the previous section. It is not just a matter of nuances. One would have to turn their literal meaning upside down. Even by clutching at straws, one does not get much.

The fourth strategy consists in admitting that those passages, which exist, are actually embarrassing and difficult to be interpreted allegorically, however they do not have to be taken too seriously. This is because, while Muslims believe the Quran was *dictated* by God, Christians believe the Bible was only *inspired* by God and written by men. This implies that not everything we find in the Bible is necessarily true. Quite incisively, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Artur Sosa, to support the need for discernment and renewal, said that, “at that time, no one had a tape recorder to capture the words” (cf. Rusconi 2017). Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, president of the Italian Episcopal Conference, declared that “the Gospel is not a distillation of truth” (Cazzullo 2023). In short, that God himself could have personally ordered or perpetrated the extermination of innocent women and children could be a story invented by insufficiently inspired men to justify their own immoral conduct. This is a sound solution, but not without pitfalls. Is there a solid criterion for distilling from the Holy Scriptures what is true and abandoning what is false, which is not simply the dominant doctrinal orientation of the present?

These four strategies refer, in different ways, to the representations of God in the Holy Scriptures. However, in Christianity – and in Catholicism in particular – there is much more than the Bible. There is the so-called “Tradition,” which has been built over time through the encounter with philosophies and theologies of different origins, on the basis of an extensive interpretation of the evangelical saying “whoever is not against us is for us” (Mark 9:40, NIV). Just as others can draw from Christianity (this is the letter of the evangelical message), Christians can draw from other philosophies and religions. As a matter of fact, a large number of Christian theologians, both orthodox and heretic, since the very beginning of Christian Age, incorporated extrabiblical ideas into their faith. They actually ended giving prevalence to these ideas to any description of God found in the Holy Scriptures. One of these ideas is that God is essentially ineffable – that is, an infinite being which cannot be fully understood by our finite mind.

4. THE TALE OF THE UNKNOWN GOD

Let us start with a question. If, as it is often repeated, Western civilization has Judeo-Christian roots, why are we often shocked by the image of God emerging from the Old Testament – a God longing for gold and blood? We contrast this image with that of a pure spiritual being – a God who is infinite, absolute, far from worldly interests, incomprehensible in his essence by human reason. Where is this image of God from? The reason we have different images of God in mind is that our civilization also has Greek-Roman roots. Our civilization stands on two legs, Athens and Jerusalem. This very fact renders Western culture rich and interesting, but also potentially schizophrenic. On the one hand, since their childhood, Europeans and their descendants scattered across the Earth are told that Paganism was wrong, as it was essentially idolatrous if not diabolic; on the other hands, they later find out that Christianity incorporated not only Greek *philosophical* ideas, but also *theological* ones. Indeed, it is difficult to distinguish philosophical and theological ideas in ancient writings, whenever the focus of the writers is on “the divine things.” No doubt Ancient Greek philosophers were Pagans, and so Pagan was their idea of God.

During and after the Reformation, criticism for having incorporated too much Paganism came to the Catholic Church from the Protestants. For instance, in his *Didactica Magna*, Comenius (1896, 383) writes that “if we wish our schools to be truly Christian schools, the crowd of Pagan writers must be removed from them,” and he denounces as a shameless profanation that to “the most learned men, even with theologians, the upholders of divine wisdom, the external mask only is supplied by Christ, while the spirit that pervades them is drawn from Aristotle and the host of heathen writers.” This argument keeps recurring in theological discussions. For instance, L’uboš Rojka (2022, 738) underlines that “the concept of God in continental philosophy is inspired by Greco-Roman philosophy (the *apeiron* of Anaximander of Miletus, the absolute of Heraclitus of Ephesus, the *nous* of Anaxagoras of Clazomene, the being of Parmenides of Elea, the One of Plotinus, the supreme and perfect Good of Boethius).” He also mentions the impact of this process on Christian apophatic theology, noticing that “an extreme mysticism (Tertullian, Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius) causes the loss of meaning of words.” Rojka distances himself from this approach, stating that his preference goes to analytic philosophy and so-called “Open Theism,” exactly because less influenced by Paganism. Here, as it should already be clear, I am reversing this argument, pointing to the beneficial effects coming from ancient Greek philosophy to the monotheist faith. True, to a large extent, Christians – especially Catholics – are still “heathens,” but this is not necessarily a bad thing.

The idea of the Unknown God has a long history, which has already been object of scholarly research.² As regards secondary literature, the most influential work on this topic is Eduard Norden's book *Agnostos Theos*. Published more than a hundred years ago, the book has been the subject of intense debate and has attracted both criticism and praise. The work is certainly impressive and, in terms of size and quantity of information, still unmatched. Norden initially centers his analysis on a well-known fragment of the *Acts of the Apostles*, in which St. Paul mentions the presence in Athens of an altar consecrated to an "Agnostos Theos." From here Norden starts to reconstruct the genealogy of this expression and the concept it underlies. First of all, he argues that the Gospel story takes up a recurring theme in Pagan literature. In particular, he argues that the story is in a dependent relationship to a similar one found in the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* by Flavius Philostratus, which in turn depends on an older work written by Apollonius' assistant Damis. The difference is that, according to Philostratus, the inscription on the Athenian altar is dedicated to the "unknown gods," in the plural. This would also be supported by other sources. Therefore, the first conclusion reached by the German philologist is that the idea of *Agnostos Theos*, in the singular, indicating a mysterious and primordial God who precedes all other gods and worldly creatures, is not primarily Greek. To find the origin of the Unknown God we must move back in time and towards the East, in pre-Christian Gnosticism, in the Jewish writings, in the religiosity of the Persian Magi and in the cults of other Semitic populations of the Middle East, such as the Babylonians.

Here, my intent is not to endorse or reject this reconstruction. Norden starts from the *Acts of the Apostles* to move backwards in time and towards the East, while I – with respect to that episode – will move forward in time and towards the West, as I am more interested in the impact of that idea on Christianity. Besides, I will recall only a few episodes of that history, with the aim of emphasizing its intrinsically peace-friendly character. Norden (2002, 204) does not seem particularly interested in these developments, so much so that he dismisses the figure of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in a few lines, presenting him as "a forger" who revels in "the phantasmagoria of unbridled mysticism" and the author of a poor text that merely takes up ideas of Proclus and other Neoplatonists.

However, a few words on the genealogy of this seminal idea cannot be avoided, as it is a matter of controversy. The most lucid, systematic, and influential elaboration of apophatic theology and the idea of the ineffability of

² The most extensive study of negative theology in the Platonic tradition, to my knowledge, extending from the 5th century BC to the 9th century AD, was published by Deirdre Carabine (1995).

God is to be ascribed to Plotinus. Therefore, even assuming that Norden is correct in believing that the Athenian altar to the Unknown God is a red herring, it remains to understand what the deep roots of Neoplatonism are. No doubt, one of these roots is Plato's original thought. Norden discusses the cosmogony presented in the *Timaeus*, noticing that goes close to the idea of *Agnostos Theos* as different from the figure of the Creator, the Demiurge, but he dismisses the equivalence between The One and the Unknown God. The Neoplatonists had a different understanding of the *Timaeus* and other Plato's dialogues. As a matter of fact, Plotinus appeals to Plato's authority in this matter by quoting *Parmenides* 142: "Then the one has no name, nor is there any description or knowledge or perception or opinion of it... And it is neither named nor described nor thought of nor known, nor does any existing thing perceive it."

To this we must add that Plato, in addition to being the main source of this idea, was a staunch pacifist in a world perpetually immersed in war. In his ideal Polis, all citizens were to have a military education and a permanent class of armed guardians had to keep internal order and external security, but the purpose of these institutions was purely defensive (Shuster and Howes 2016).

True, one cannot understand Plato without paying attention to the pre-Socratics and, in particular, to figures such as Pythagoras, Parmenides, and Xenophanes. The Mysteries, Gnosticism, and Neo-Pythagorean philosophy must surely be added to the Platonic roots, and perhaps Persia and India should remain in the sight. Norden is therefore right in underlining the role of Christian and pre-Christian Gnosticism, as well as mentioning a figure such as the neo-Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana. He may be wrong, however, in looking for the Judaic and, more generally, Semitic roots of the idea of *Agnostos Theos*. Norden was mainly a classical philologist and, as such, more interested in the history of the forms of religious discourse. A genealogy can take very different paths if one looks for the exact wording of a phrase or, alternatively, for the related philosophical concept, even if conveyed by different expressions.

As Irish classical philologist Eric Robertson Dodds (1971, 310) notices, it is perhaps true that the actual phrase "Agnostos Theos" occurs in no writer of purely Hellenic culture, however, as regards Plotinus, this is irrelevant "for the phrase, so far as I know, occurs nowhere in the *Enneads*." The Irish scholar adds that the phrase is "frequent in Gnostic writings, and Norden produces good reasons for regarding it as specifically Gnostic," but then the search for the concept itself takes us in different directions. According to Dodds (1971, 313), Norden is deceived by words and commits "the common fallacy of arguing from coincidence of language to identity of thought." Brief, in his view, there is no reason to hypothesize the importation of this

and other related Neoplatonic ideas from the Middle East, as they can all be found within the circle of Hellenic speculation.

It is true that a certain interpretation of the Judaic Scriptures is often invoked by Christian Platonists to support the reconcilability of the two ideas of God, Neoplatonic and Biblical. Yahweh is not, properly speaking, an "unknown god." Nonetheless, he is a "hidden god," a *deus incertus*, whose name cannot be pronounced and whose face cannot be seen. This reference to invisibility and namelessness can be and has been used to support the idea of God's ineffability, and the idea that the Holy Scriptures and Greek philosophy speak of the same god.

Still, as regards God's alleged invisibility, the message of the Bible is quite ambiguous if not patently contradictory. It is true that in *Exodus* 33:20, the Lord tells Moses: "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live." So, God can be heard but not seen. However, this sentence surprisingly comes right after the following one: "The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend" (*Exodus* 33:11, NIV). In *Exodus* 24: 9-11, we also read what follows: "Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky. But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank."

Yahweh also confirms to Moses that he is the same being who revealed himself to Abraham as El Shaddai. Concerning that encounter, in *Genesis* (18: 1-5, NIV), we read what follows:

The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground. He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant." "Very well," they answered, "do as you say." So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three seahs of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread."

After this encounter, Abraham tries to convince the Lord that it is not morally justifiable to kill all the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorra, without distinguishing the righteous from the sinner. Abraham seems to be more merciful and morally sensitive than the Lord himself. How far is this visible being who walks, washes his own feet, eats bread, and plans to exterminate the inhabitants of two cities, from the ineffable divine darkness, inaccessible

not only to senses but also to human reason, of which the Gnostics, the Neoplatonists, and the Christian mystics speak?

Let us examine the problem in detail. As Norden did, I will start from the *Acts of the Apostles*, but to move forward rather than backward. Given the limited parameters of this work, I will select only one example for each type of doctrine or period to illustrate the presence of the idea of the Unknown God in different religious movements or ages, always with a careful eye on the problem of religious tolerance.

5. THE UNKNOWN GOD IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

When St. Paul visited Athens, he entered the Synagogue and discussed faith issues with the Jews and the Pagans who believed in God. Later, by walking the streets of Athens, he noticed an altar with an inscription dedicated to the *Agnostos Theos*. Quite interestingly, he equated the Unknown God with the Christian one. The circumstance is reported as follows:

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship – and this is what I am going to proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'" (Acts 17: 22-28, NIV)

God created the nations and set their borders. Here, one may see an implicit reference to Elyon, the Most High, who does this in Deuteronomy 32:8-9. Even more significant is the fact that Paul clarifies what is the essence of God by referring not only to the Old Testament but also to Pagan writers. In the last two sentences, he quotes respectively the Cretan philosopher Epimenides and the Cilician Stoic philosopher Aratus. The Unknown God is therefore understood, from the very beginning, as a meeting point between different religions. It is a concept that allows Paul to connect Judeo-Christian religiosity with the spirituality of the Gentiles.

It should be noted that the circulating translations of the Acts differ considerably. In the version of the Italian Episcopal Conference, in Acts 17:17, we read that in the Synagogue Paul speaks with "the Jews and the Pagans who believe in God," a phrase which suggests that one can believe in God while remaining Pagan. In the New American Bible version, however, we read that Paul speaks "with the Jews and with the worshipers." Every reference to the Pagans disappears, together with the logical sense of the phrase: weren't the Jews perhaps also worshipers? In other English versions of the Bible we find the expression "God-fearing Gentiles." It is not clear, however, whether the feared God was the Jewish one or a God in the generic sense of the word. Furthermore, in the King James version, Acts 17:22, Paul addresses the Athenians saying: "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." It is very unlikely that the Apostle would have used such a harsh expression, as it would have immediately alienated any sympathy by the listeners. In many other translations, we read: "I see that in every respect you are very religious." You will notice that a very different concept is expressed here. The possibility of a Pagan religiosity is admitted, which cannot be reduced to idolatry alone. The only fact that Paul's explicitly refers to the image of God elaborated by Epimenides and Aratus gives major value to the translation by the Italian Episcopal Conference.

If Paul was interested in introducing Christianity into the hearts of the Athenians through the concept of the Unknown God, we are more interested in understanding how the Unknown God of the Gentiles entered Christianity, bringing in it tolerance toward other religions.

6. THE UNKNOWN GOD IN CHRISTIAN GNOSTICISM

Among religious studies scholars, there is a broad consensus on the fact that Catholic orthodoxy was not born immediately with, or immediately after, the preaching of Jesus of Nazareth, but was built over time through the drafting of the Pauline letters, the writings of the real and self-proclaimed disciples, the selection (and a continuous modification) of the canonical gospels, the exclusion of the apocryphal gospels, the fight against heresies, and, finally, the transformation of the Church into an institution protected and favored by the State, having therefore political functions. At the beginning there was a spiritual melting pot in which Christian sects with very different orientations flourished, some more Judaizing and others closer to Indo-European (Greek, Roman, Persian, and Indian) spirituality, but still oriented towards the search for syncretic syntheses. In this melting pot, a rather important role is played by "Gnosticism," a term-and-concept used to indicate a vast set of esoteric circles and religions which includes, in addition to Gnostic and Christian-

Gnostic sects properly, also the Marcionite heresy, the Hermetic tradition, and Manichaeism. In spite of the differences, which are sometimes notable, that characterize these religious phenomena, common elements can be outlined. In addition to the aforementioned aptitude for syncretism – involving, in particular, Pythagorean and Platonic Paganism, Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and religions of the Far East – in Gnosticism, understood in a broad sense, there is a tendency to distinguish the true God from Yahweh, and to stress the ineffability and unutterability of the true God.

The available information on Christian Gnosticism largely comes from heresiologists, such as Irenaeus of Lyons, Tertullian, and Epiphanius of Salamis. Therefore, it is not always reliable, as the Church Fathers were mainly animated by polemical intentions, and not by the disinterested will of knowing which constitutes the fundament of the scientific ethos.

Although most of the original Gnostic writings have been lost, thanks to the testimonies of heresiologists, the original writings in Greek that have miraculously survived, and the Gnostic codices in Coptic fortunately found in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945, we can now have a better understanding of this spiritual phenomenon (Grant 1978). The authors of the Gnostic writings are sometimes identified as historical figures, whose real existence is confirmed by other sources, while in some cases they are mysterious figures hidden behind pseudonyms. For example, the author of a famous Gnostic gospel found in Nag Hammadi introduces himself as the apostle John, son of Zebedee, but we know nothing about his true identity. Naturally, this also applies to the authors of the canonical Christian gospels. In any case, there is no doubt that the idea of the Unknown God is the cornerstone of the Gnostic gospels. In the Apocrypha of John, the true God, the One, is described as perfect, boundless, unsearchable, immeasurable, invisible, external, internal, eternal, ineffable, unnameable, flawless, impeccable, incorporeal, inscrutable, and beyond time (cf. Jacobs 2016).

Many religious leaders can be associated, more or less strictly, with Christian Gnosticism, and they often stand in a master-pupil relationship. For instance, proto-gnostic Simon Magus was the teacher of Menander, who in turn passed his knowledge to Saturninus and Basilides. Paul of Tarsus, who is seen as a master by both Gnostics and Catholics, supposedly taught Teudas, who in turn instructed Valentinus, who later formed a school. Among the pupils of the latter, one finds Ptolemaeus, Secundus, Marcus, and Colarbasus. Tertullian indicates Certo as the master of Marcion of Sinope, who in turn is the master of Lucan and Apelles. Having to choose one single example, I will briefly mention the doctrine of Valentine, in the form systematized by his pupil Ptolemaeus (or Ptolemy). This choice is due to the fact that Valentinus was close to becoming the Bishop of Rome, an event that would have perhaps changed the history of Christianity. A Greek-

speaking Egyptian theologian and philosopher, Valentinus was indeed the most notable representative of Christian Gnosticism. Deacon under Pope Hyginus, his attempt to become bishop having failed, he ended founding his own religious school. In 143 A.D., Pope Pius I excommunicated him.

As mentioned above, Gnostic Christians escaped the problem of divinely inspired violence, by clearly distinguishing the figure of God from that of the biblical "tribal deity." Let us see how heresiologist Irenaeus of Lyons summarized the Valentinian system, as codified by Ptolemaeus. The incipit of Chapter I of his book *Against the Heresies*, gets straight to the point. By assessing the creed of the Valentinians, he writes what follows:

They claim that in the invisible and unnameable heights there is a certain perfect Aeon that was before all, the First-Being, whom they also call First-Beginning, First-Father, and Profundity. He is invisible and incomprehensible. And, since he is incomprehensible and invisible, eternal and ingenerate, he existed in deep quiet and stillness through countless ages. (St. Irenaeus of Lyons 1992, 23)

So, in their cosmogony, at the beginning of all things, there existed the First Being who, after ages of silence and contemplation, through a process of emanation, gave life to the Pleroma (the divine world), formed by thirty Aeons grouped in pairs (syzygies) masculine and feminine. Each Aeon is indeed androgynous. Even the primordial godhead is both male and female, father and mother. The feminine side of Profundity is Silence (a feminine noun in Greek). The flux of emissions from the First Being downwards follows the path of Pythagorean theogony ("Thus these four constitute the first and principal Pythagorean Tetrads, for there are Profundity and Silence, then Mind and Truth").

After a series of emissions, the Pleroma emanated the Aeon Jesus, perfect fruit generated by all the Aeons. His syzygy, the female twin divine Aeon, was Sophia. While the Aeon Sophia is part of the divine world, her passion known as Sophia Achamoth wanders outside of it, because she wants to achieve direct knowledge of the First Being, the original divinity, which however is intrinsically unknowable. In this process, without the contribution of the paired masculine Aeon, Sophia Achamoth generates the Demiurge who in turn creates the earthly world. The Demiurge also creates, in his likeness, hylic and psychic human beings, which are respectively the idolaters and the Christians. These are both considered spiritually inferior to pneumatic human beings, namely the adherents of Gnosticism. The biblical Yahweh is identified precisely with the Demiurge, of which Plato's *Timaeus* also speaks. He created the earthly world believing to be God but without being so. This explains the presence of evil in the world. Quite interestingly, Jesus

is not the son of Yahweh, nor his father, but precedes him in the emanation process and is also hierarchically superior to the biblical god. Thus, continues Irenaeus (1992, 34):

Demiurge imagines, they assert, that he made the totality of these things by himself, whereas he made them inasmuch as Achamoth [his Mother] emitted them. He made the heavens without knowing the heavens; he fashioned man without knowing Man; he brought the earth to light without understanding the Earth. In like manner, they assert, he was ignorant of the images of the things he made, even of his Mother herself.

It is worth noting that Ptolemaeus was a “moderate” Gnostic (Bultmann 1951, 113). He does not identify Yahweh Sabbaoth (Yaldabaoth) with evil, and therefore with the Devil himself, as other Early Christian writings seem to imply.³ In the *Letter to Flora*, a document preserved by Epiphanius of Salamis (2009, 216-221), Ptolemaeus explains that the God of the Old Testament is neither good nor evil, but rather “just.” As is well known, his rule of justice is a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, a burn for a burn, a wound for a wound, a stripe for a stripe. It cannot be said that this retribution for the evil committed is patently unjust and, nevertheless, it is not consistent to an idea of God as perfect goodness, as it transforms the judge into a murderer himself. In this type of justice lies a shadow of injustice.

³ For example, in the epistle of Barnabas, which is not included in the canonical Gospel, we read that the practice of circumcision was imposed on the Jews by an “evil angel,” and we know that in Genesis 17 it is Yahweh himself who requests it (Carleton Paget 1994). The idea that Yahweh is actually the Devil, and the Son of God came among us as Jesus of Nazareth to open our eyes to this fact, is still alive today. To understand how alive this idea is, one can have a look at some Youtube channels, as the quantity of views and likes, and the quality of comments, gives us a measure of its popularity. As a sociologist, I think this aspect is quite important. For instance, Bobby Collier (2017) emphasizes that many teachings given by Jesus expose the evil nature of Yahweh. In particular, Collier notices that the Tetragrammaton YHWH was revealed to Moses, but Jesus never uses the term “Yahweh” to refer to God. He always calls him “Father,” implying that he is a merciful and benevolent entity, different from Yahweh. Jesus says: “See that you do not despise one of these little ones” (Matthew 18:10, NIV); while Yahweh says: “The people of Samaria... will fall by the sword; their little ones will be dashed to the ground, their pregnant women ripped open” (Hosea 13:16, NIV). The bestselling author Paul Wallis (2021) also claims that Jesus exposes Yahweh as the evil one. He notices that Jesus says “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?” (Luke 11:11, NIV). Why did he come up with that image? According to Wallis, he is referring to a famous verse of the Old Testament: “they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, ‘Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!’ Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died” (Numbers 21:5-6, NIV). Thus, through these symbols, Jesus is trying to instruct us that Yahweh *is not* God the Father.

The Lord of the Old Testament is an intermediate creature between the God of the abyss and inscrutable depths that stands above the spiritual worlds, on the one hand, and the Devil, or the evil incarnated that rules over the material world, on the other hand. For this reason, he is actually called *The Intermediate*. The First God, the Ineffable One, is beyond the Heavens; Yahweh the Demiurge dwells in the heavenly place, that is, in the Hebdomad; while the Devil reigns over the Earth. Still, because of his ignorance and arrogance, Yaldabaoth is anyway, ultimately, also the father of the Devil.

In relation to our discussion, what really matters is that the Gnostics tended to be peaceful. In the *Letter to Flora*, Ptolemaeus says that Law of God itself is divided into three parts, the first of which confirmed by the Savior, the second one destroyed by him, and the third one to be intended only allegorically. The third part of the law includes the rituals of Judaism, such as the sacrifice of animals or the circumcision of male children. Here, Ptolemaeus invokes the authority of Saint Paul to state that the law is definitively repealed. Particularly interesting is what he says in relation to the first and the second parts of the Law.

Thus even the Law which is acknowledged to be God's is divided into three—into the part which is fulfilled by the Savior (for “Thou shalt not kill,” “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” and “Thou shalt not bear false witness” are included in his prohibition of anger, lust and oaths). And also into the part that is annulled altogether, for “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” which is intermingled with injustice and itself contains an act of injustice, was annulled by the Savior through its opposites. But opposites have the property of canceling each other: “For I say unto you that ye resist not evil by any means, but if a man smite thee, turn to him the other cheek also.” (cf. Epiphanius of Salamis 2009, 220)

The Gnostics were politically apathetic. They took very seriously the Sermon on the Mount. There was nothing farer from their intentions than imposing their religious creed through a secular arm, persecuting the members of other cults, or becoming a state religion in order to wage war against foreign nations populated by infidels.

7. THE UNKNOWN GOD IN NEOPLATONISM

We have already seen that Pre-Socratic philosophy and subsequent Platonic elaborations could be the original sources of the idea of *Agnostos Theos*, at least in the Western World. We have also seen that the Christian-Gnostic sects, not surprisingly indebted to Platonic mysticism, postulated the ineffa-

bility of the First Being, who remains unknown to the Aeon Sophia (Wisdom) itself. Still, it is Neoplatonism that, in the 3rd Century, elaborates the philosophical fundaments of apophatic theology, which in turn will be later incorporated into Christianity.

The founder of Neoplatonism was Ammonius Saccas (175 – 242 AD), Alexandrian philosopher and apostate of the Christian faith. Porphyry says that as soon as he came into contact with Plato's philosophy, he once again became a Greek from being a Christian. The episode is reported by a dubious Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History* (1998, 209). Since he left nothing written, we can only speculate what his ideas were by looking to those of his disciples, the most important of whom were Plotinus and Origen – a fellow Pagan and a Christian.

If one considers that Origen was twenty years older than Plotinus, one cannot exclude that it was the former to influence the latter rather than the other way round. After all, Origen wrote his masterpiece *On First Principles* around the year 220 AD, while Plotinus wrote his first treatise in 254, and his complete works, *The Enneades*, were edited and compiled after his death by his pupil Porphyry of Tyre, in the year 270, that is, half a century later. On this issue, however, there is no consensus among historians. According to Swiss philologist Hans-Rudolf Schwyzer (1951, 480), co-editor with Belgian theologian Paul Henry of Plotinus' works, "it is *a priori* improbable that Plotinus would have studied the writings of Origen." This hypothesis is instead considered credible by Hermann Langerbeck (1957). Anyway, Porphyry (2018, 19) insists on the fact that Plotinus, Origen and Herennius, "had made pacts not to reveal the doctrines that Ammonius expounded in his lectures." This is why Plotinus waited a long time before writing down his ideas, after having disclosed them in oral form for years to the initiated. He started disseminating his ideas in written form only when realized that Herennius and Origen had violated the pact. In any case, it seems that Ammonius was more crucial than anybody else in developing these ideas, but we cannot but quote his pupils.

Given the uncertainty, I will begin with Plotinus, also in consideration of the greater systematic nature of his work on apophatic theology. In the *Enneads*, Plotinus (2018, 569) states that "the One is, in truth, ineffable, for whatever you might say about it, you will be saying something." Then, he specifies that "to say 'transcends all things and transcends the majesty of Intellect' is, among all other ways of speaking of it, the only true one, not because that is its name, but because it indicates that it is not 'something' among all things, it having itself no designation." Afterwards, the Neoplatonist master adds that God can only be reached by following the *via negationis*: "In fact, if we do not have knowledge of it, does it follow as well that we do not have it at all? But we have it in such a way that we can speak

about it, though we cannot speak it. For we say what it is not..." (Plotinus 2018, 570).

Plotinus places the One at the top of the ontological hierarchy of the universe. Everything flows, emanates from it as the light from the Sun. The One, of itself, cannot say anything other than: "I I" or "am am." These expressions are very close, though not exactly equivalent, to "I am that I am" or "I will be what I will be" – the famous phrase pronounced by Yahweh when interrogated by Moses about his name (Exodus 3:14). We can exclude the equivalence, and therefore the direct influence of Judaism on Plotinus, because the only possible version of the Bible accessible to the Egyptian master was the Septuagint, that is, the Greek version of the Holy Scriptures. In the Septuagint, the expression אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה ('ehye 'ăšer 'ehye) is translated as ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν (Ego eimi ho on), "I am The Being." This is something the Ineffable One would not say.

We do not know if Plotinus wanted to remark the difference between his supreme deity and the one of Hellenic Judaism, however, right after, the author of *The Enneads* explicitly specifies that the first hypostasis cannot say "I am this," if "this" is something different. This is something that only the second hypostasis can say. Indeed, below the Ineffable One there is the hypostasis of universal Intelligence, which Plotinus calls "Logos" and that already belongs to the sphere of the multiple. Plotinus writes that Intelligence, having entered a dual dimension, of itself, in an instant of self-awareness, can say: "I am being" – which is exactly the phrase we find in the Septuagint. Similarly, for Christians, the Logos is the second person of the Trinity.

Below Intelligence there is the hypostasis of the Soul, or of life, which represents one more step into multiplicity. Finally, one step below is Matter, which – according to Plotinus – cannot be considered a hypostasis of being. This is consistent with the ancient Greek idea that anything that changes has no real ontological consistency. It is not a being in the full sense of the word. However, it is appropriate to clarify that Plotinus does not completely devalue matter, nor identifies it with absolute evil, as it is not the antithesis of the One. The material world is, in any case, emanated from the One and therefore, despite being imperfect due to its distance from the primordial and unknown source of being, besides being intertwined with evil (understood as lack of goodness), still contains beauty and goodness in every of its smallest and apparently insignificant aspects. Matter receives its forms and its movement from the superior hypostases, so much so that the ascent and return towards the One, the process of transcendence which should be the ultimate meaning of our existence, can also begin, as Plato said, from the contemplation of the beauty of human bodies. On this precise aspect he argues several times with the Gnostics. In his view, the latter would have uselessly and absurdly multiplied the number of hypostases (their Aeons), would have dis-

tanced themselves excessively from the Greek masters, would arrogantly consider themselves ontologically different from other human beings, and would have excessively devalued the sensible world.

The second hypostasis, Intellect or Intelligence, can be seen as the Platonic hyperurantium, that is, the set of perfect forms. The Logos in its pure state is the self-reflecting mind of The One. This level contains not only every possible truth, all human knowledge, past, present and future, the entire knowledge, but also all the images of God developed by all the religions of the world. It is precisely this idea that turns Neoplatonic monotheism into a source of religious tolerance. Typically Neoplatonic is the idea of the "Unified Olympus." Neoplatonism in its purest form is a philosophy-religion for initiates only. However, traditional religions are seen as good because they allow even less spiritual people to get closer to the godhead. The myths of tradition, the divinities represented in temples, and propitiatory rites are, in any case, only allegorical and metaphorical representations that try to translate into the understandable language of symbols what is fundamentally ineffable and unspeakable. In consideration of this fact, one should never fight to give pre-eminence to some symbols over others. All Western and Eastern deities should be brought together in one single ideal temple. We find this idea both in a proto-Neoplatonic thinker like Plutarch and in an exponent of mature Neoplatonism like Proclus.⁴

Such is the refusal of violence among Neoplatonists that Porphyry also campaigns against the killing of animals, especially in religious rituals, and follows Pythagoras in promoting vegetarianism. In particular, he is amazed by the fact that the Jews – who he defines as "a people of philosophers" who suffered intolerable outrage to their traditions from the Romans – sacrifice animals in such a bloody way. Indeed, "they do not feast on the sacrificed animals, but burn them in their entirety, at night, pouring over them much honey and wine; they used up the sacrifice quickly, so that not even the All-Seeing should be a spectator of this terrible act" (Porphyry 2000, 65). This

⁴ Historian of philosophy Mario Vegetti (2018) explains that "Plutarch works on a theological system in which the great deities of Egypt, such as Isis and Osiris, are integrated into the old Greek Olympian religion; and Proclus, who brings this system to completion, finds in it a space for all the gods, be they Greek, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, or Persian. But here there is a very close parallel between the metaphysical system and the theological system: the gods are "names" and symbols that designate the philosophical objects that populate the metaphysical universe of Neoplatonism; this universe in turn constitutes an immense unified Olympus, in which all religions find their place and their rational justification." In a popular science book, Ubaldo Nicola (1999: 162) attributes this idea to Plotinus, writing that "he called for the foundation of a unified Olympus in which all the forms of the Divine invented by all religions are brought together: the Greek Zeus can coexist with the Egyptian Osiris and the monstrous-looking oriental gods because they are all representations, names of the unknowable One, a human attempt to describe the unimaginable."

non-violent sensitivity applies also to Plotinus who, according to Porphyry (2018, 17), “would not agree to take medicines derived from wild animals either; he did not, he said, want to derive nourishment from the bodies even of domesticated animals.”

Besides being crafted by Ammonius, Plotinus, and Porphyry, these ideas were then taken up, disseminated, reworked by other Pagan philosophers of the Neoplatonic school, such as Iamblichus, Proclus, and Damascius, to be then absorbed by Abrahamic religions. In particular, the influence exerted on Christianity by Proclus’ *The Elements of Theology* is difficult to overestimate.

It is worth noting that Plotinus’ theological ideas also deeply penetrated into Islam, thanks to the translation of the *Enneads* into Arabic provided by the al-Kindi’s circle. Curiously, “long sections of this translation went under the title *Theology of Aristotle*. The attribution of the work to Aristotle helped the text to become an influential source of Neoplatonic ideas in the Arabic-speaking world” (Adamson 2022).

The relationship between Neoplatonism and Christianity is ambivalent. The two theological schools were rivals but, at the same time, capable of building a mutually enriching dialog. The exchange of ideas happened in spite of the many controversies that divided the two movements. The Neoplatonists could never accept the idea of God becoming flesh and being experienced by senses, but this fact did not prevent a convergence on the level of morality. Philosopher Giovanni Reale (2006, ix) reckons that Porphyry was angry with the Christians, rather than with Christ. Indeed, according to Porphyry, “the gods have proclaimed that Christ was a most pious man who became immortal and that they remember him with great praise. Of the Christians, however, the gods say that they are corrupt and involved in error, and they use many injuries of this kind against them.” Note that Porphyry (2000, 70) mentions the gods, in the plural, but, as any good Platonist, he recognizes the existence of the One transcending the world of gods and men, with the following words: “The first god, being incorporeal, unmoved and indivisible, neither contained in anything nor bound by himself, needs nothing external, as has been said.”

A note is in order at this point. It is important to clarify that it would be erroneous to see the recognition of the fundamental unknowability of God as an irrationalistic drift of Hellenic philosophy. The search for the Archē by the pre-Socratics certainly generated logical paradoxes, but this does not mean that those philosophers left the confines of rational thought. Xenophanes denounced the limits of the human intellect, to affirm that only God has perfect knowledge of itself and nature, but he always did so using rational arguments. Socrates knows he knows nothing, but with this admission he does not fall into irrationalism. He rather clarifies that rational research be-

gins precisely when the limits of one's knowledge are admitted. If chimpanzees were able to communicate their thoughts and told us that they are not able to understand certain mental processes of homo sapiens such as quaternion algebra or quantum mechanics, would we conclude that they have slipped into irrationalism? Similarly, if computer scientists admit that the machines they designed can make calculations that exceed human possibilities, are they *ipso facto* victims of irrationalism? Perhaps we can even reverse the argument and conclude that those who think they can know everything, including the essence of God, are taking a dangerous slope. In theological matters, a certain degree of "mysterianism" is always in point, as preaching the perfect knowability of God can qualify as a sin of presumption.

It is time to turn our attention to mysterianism in orthodox Christianity. Since there is a legion of Christian mystics who preach the ineffability of God, I will limit myself to providing just a few examples. I will divide the authors into three groups, based on their belonging to three classical historical periods, that is, Early Christianity (Antiquity), Medieval Christendom (Middle Ages), and Renaissance (Modernity). Some of these authors were at some point convicted of heresy, but they have been subsequently rehabilitated and must therefore be considered orthodox.

8. THE UNKNOWN GOD IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

In Early Christianity, the idea of God's ineffability can be found in the theological works of Theophilus of Antioch, Tertullian, Origen of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, Synesius of Cyrene, and Augustine of Hippo, among others.⁵ The degree of mysterianism varies in different authors, as the degree of their religious tolerance. Apologetic intentions are preponderant in the works of these authors, who are often involved in polemics against Pagans or alleged heretics. However, the desire to defend and define the canons of the Christian faith does not prevent them from adopting ideas coming from their adversaries. It is precisely apophatic theology that represents the point of contact between Neoplatonic philosophers and Christian mystics. Of course, one should not establish this relationship too closely either, because there are many paths that lead to the Ineffable One. For instance, Theophilus (*Ad Autolycum*, 1, 3-4) confers on God "the attributes of ineffability, inexpressibility, immutability, inconceivability" (cf. Sodano 2006, 10), but his theology is clearly a form of Hellenized Judaism, as he

⁵ An in-depth study of the idea of the Unknown God in the 4th century AD was recently published by Tomasz Stępień and Karolina Kochańczyk-Bonińska (2018).

mainly draws from a literal interpretation of the Septuagint, a version of the Bible already imbued with Greek concepts (Grant 1947).

Here, as a way of example, we will focus on the work of Origen because the latter, in addition to being devoted to the Unknown God, defuses the charge of violence coming from the Old Testament through a completely allegorical interpretation of the same. Origen is one of the first authors, if not the very first, within Christian orthodoxy, to follow this path. Furthermore, he also developed a method of interpretation that would have a notable impact on the history of theology.

To start, there is no doubt that Origen (2017, 29) subscribed to theological mysticism, as he wrote that, "having refuted, then, as best as we could, every notion which suggests that God be thought of in any bodily way, we assert that, according indeed to truth, God is incomprehensible and immeasurable."

We need, however, to clarify the meaning of an expression such as "bodily way," or – to put it in other terms – what is the theoretical premise to this conclusion. In his treatise *On First Principles*, he recommends allegorical interpretation of both the Old and the New Testament based on a well-argued criterion. Origen (2017, 484-561) states that three different levels of interpretations are possible, according to the "body" (or the "flesh"), the "soul," and the "spirit" – to say literal, allegorical, or moral. Many of the events described in the Old Testament, if interpreted in a literal sense, are "impossible" or "unachievable." Therefore, they must be read allegorically in order to become comprehensible. Some passages contain literal truths and others are rather symbolic messages that require a sophisticated exegesis.

By applying his method, Origen criticizes both the Jews who refused to welcome Jesus Christ as the Son of God (or the Messiah), and the heretics who distinguished the true God from Yahweh, the Demiurge of whom the Holy Scriptures allegedly speak. The Jews rejected the idea that Jesus is the Savior sent by God the Father because the signs that were announced by the prophecies did not occur. The Alexandrian theologian recognizes that the announced signs did not materialize, but maintains that the objection does not hold up precisely because the prophecies must not be interpreted literally. On the other hand, for the same reason, the heretics (the reference to Gnostics and Marcionites is implicit) who postulate the existence of two distinct deities, in order to exorcise the possibility that the true God may have done evil, wander in a world of fanciful fantasies. Origen (2017, 487) claims that phrases such as "A fire has been kindled in Mine anger," "I the Lord am a jealous (God), visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation," "it repents Me that I anointed Saul to be king," "I am the Lord, who make peace and create evil," "There is not evil in a city which the Lord has not done," "Evils came down from the Lord upon the

gates of Jerusalem,” and “An evil spirit from the Lord plagued Saul,” are not to be taken literally. They are allegories, metaphors, and symbolic representations of hidden and mysterious messages that the human mind cannot fully comprehend. Therefore, it is not necessary to sharply distinguish the creator of the material world, the Lord worshiped by the Jews, from the incarnated Logos, the Perfect being that entered the world as Jesus Christ.

More generally, Origen interprets almost all the events concerning the Jewish people symbolically and not historically. The tales of adulteries, incest and murders are symbolic, even if their meaning is not always clear to us. For instance, the incest of the biblical patriarch Lot who gets pregnant his two daughters, one of which was still a child (Genesis 19), and other similar stories, “were certain mysteries, and forms of spiritual things, but that we are ignorant of what nature they are.”

Equally, the stories about the escape from Egypt, the wars of conquest of the Holy Land, and the Babylonian captivity are all allegorical tales. None of these events can really have happened, because the Jews, when they rejected Christ and crucified him, demonstrated that they were not truly the chosen people. Therefore, the Bible was not written for them. It must be assumed that “Israelites” is a term that indicates the people of God, the Christians, even though they are in fact mostly Gentiles. The Gentiles who converted to Christianity are the true Israelites. All the nations mentioned in the Bible are just symbols, not real places or peoples. The descent of the prophets into Egypt symbolically represents their descent into this world, into the Earthly City. When the Bible talks about Israel or Judea is not talking about a place on Earth, but about the heavenly Jerusalem, the City of God. The Promised Land is not a piece of land “from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates” (Genesis 12:7), but life beyond death. These ideas will have a notable influence on the doctrine of Saint Augustine. Thus, the problem of a God who should do good, and instead does evil, is resolved.

By an irony of fate, the anti-heretical doctrines of Origen and those of his followers will be declared heretical themselves by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553, called by Emperor Justinian. Two ideas of the Origenists, both of Platonic ancestry, aroused scandal in particular, namely the idea that the soul is eternal and therefore pre-existing the birth of human beings, as it is a spark of divinity itself, and the idea that an essentially good God cannot condemn anyone to eternal damnation in a place called Hell. The restoration of creation to a condition of perfection and the salvation of all the creatures, a doctrinal truth known as Apocatastasis, is the only destiny that can be conceived by a God understood as infinite and absolute Goodness.

Although Origen, even in modern documents, is often labeled heretic by virtue of the condemnation inflicted on him under Justinian (cf. Edwards 2014), the current tendency of the main Christian churches is to consider him

orthodox. For instance, this is the position of the Catholic Church, explicitly expressed by Pope Joseph Ratzinger during a General Audience. Benedict XVI (2007) calls Origen of Alexandria a “maestro” and remarks that he “truly was a figure crucial to the whole development of Christian thought.” According to the Roman pontiff, Origen impressed an “irreversible turning point” upon the history of theology and Christian thought precisely by virtue of his allegorical approach to the Holy Scriptures. Benedict XVI (2007) underlines that “his field of interest extended from exegesis to dogma, to philosophy, apologetics, ascetical theology and mystical theology.”

The posthumous excommunication inflicted on him by the Council of 553, after his theological work had been considered in conformity with the doctrine of the Church for three hundred years, is, therefore, to be considered repealed. Origen not only can but must be read and accepted by Catholics. Benedict XVI’s final words leave no doubt about this: “I invite you – and so I conclude – to welcome into your hearts the teaching of this great master of faith.”

9. THE UNKNOWN GOD IN THE MEDIEVAL CHRISTENDOM

As regards the Middle Ages, the idea that God is fundamentally unknowable is found in the works of notable theologians, such as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Scotus Eriugena, Robert Grosseteste, Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler, Albertus Magnus, and St. Thomas Aquinas, just to mention a few. It is worth noticing that Aquinas, though mainly associated with the incorporation of Aristotle’s rational philosophy into the Christian doctrine, also absorbed the ideas of the Areopagite and dwelled to solve the riddle of the knowability and unknowability of God with ingenious solutions (Hill 1971).

Given the parameters of this work, here I will focus only on the work of Pseudo-Dionysius, as he is universally recognized as the most influential of the Christian apophatic theologians. As is well known, the author of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* was not the Athenian converted by Saint Paul in the Areopagus, as it was believed for more than a millennium, but a Syrian theologian who lived in the fifth or sixth century AD. Still, the fact that he was believed to be the convert of St. Paul gave him enormous authority in the Middle Ages, comparable to that of the Gospels themselves and the writings of St. Augustine.

Pseudo-Dionysius sets out to accomplish an “impossible mission,” that is, to identify the invisible, unknowable and unutterable God of Neoplatonic theology with the revealed and therefore visible, knowable, and utterable God of the Judeo-Christian tradition. To return to the One, the God of the Neoplatonists, it is necessary to free ourselves from sensory data, transcend

the material world, first by using abstract reasoning and then making a final leap beyond reason itself, through ecstatic contemplation. The Judeo-Christian God, instead, reveals himself precisely to human senses, sometimes to hearing alone and sometimes also to sight and touch. This applies to both Yahweh – the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as described in the Old Testament – and Jesus of Nazareth, as presented in the tales of the New Testament. Dionysius resolves the issue by saying in his main writings, the *Mystical Theology* and the *Divine Names*, that there are two ways, both legitimate, to reach God, namely, *cataphatic theology* (or the positive way) that tells us what God is, and *apophatic theology* (or the negative way) that tells us what God is not. There is little doubt that Dionysius' preference goes to the negative way, centered on philosophical reasoning and mystical intuition. In a private letter to Gaius Therapeutes, he clearly states that "if any one, having seen God, understood what he saw, he did not see Him, but some of His creatures that are existing and known" (Dionysius the Areopagite 1897, 141). In short, Abraham and Moses did not see God, but creatures of God.

However, in his published works, he does not deny the legitimacy of the cataphatic way based on the exegesis of the Holy Scriptures. Of course, it is also legitimate to ask whether he could have denied the validity of the Scriptures at all. Let us look at the historical context. On February 27, 380 AD, the emperors Gratian, Theodosius I and Valentinian II issued the Edict of Thessalonica (*Cunctos populos*). Pagan cults were banned and the Catholic religion became mandatory throughout the Empire. The edict established that the imperial authority, which claimed coming from the heavenly Judge himself, would have condemned any violators. Two years later, in 382, Theodosius issued a decree of death for all Manichaeian monks. Augustine of Hippo converted to Christianity from Manichaeism on April 24th, 387 AD, Easter day, being baptized by the Bishop of Milan Ambrose. This means that he resisted the conversion for five years to the risk of his own life. With this we do not want to cast doubt on the sincerity of the Saint's conversion, but the fact remains that had he not been baptized he would have become a Pagan martyr rather than a doctor of the Church. This is why, though recognizing the ineffability of God, Augustine could not make room in his theology for the idea of the plurality of the languages of God preached by Symmachus or Themistius (cf. Campa 2014). It was illegal.

Between 391-392, Theodosius I promulgated a series of decrees, which regulated the practical implementation of the Edict of Thessalonica. Those who refused to convert to Catholicism were heavily fined (they had to pay from 15 to 30 libras of gold), lost the right to family inheritance, lost civil rights and, in some cases, put to death. Pagan temples were destroyed and practitioners often killed.

In 416, the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius II issued a new edict, establishing that only Christians could hold public office, serve as judges, and join the army. This entailed the immediate dismissal of all judges, civil servants, and army officers who still adhered to Pagan and heretic cults. Under Justinian also, in 527, all heretics and Pagans lost their state offices, honorary titles, teaching qualifications, and public salaries. In 529, Emperor Justinian decided to eradicate from the European continent the last direct contact with ancient philosophical thought, by closing the Platonic Academy, which outlived its founder and lasted for about nine hundred years. The decision was justified based on the fact that the Academia of Athens taught "Pagan and perverse doctrines." Besides, as we already saw, under Justinian, Origen was also posthumously excommunicated. At that time, in Athens, Constantinople, and Asia Minor, Neoplatonists were still quite numerous, in spite of the many anti-Pagan decrees and persecutions. By the mid-sixth century, they were all forced to become Christians.

Pseudo-Dionysius lived in the fifth or the sixth century AD. He is believed to be a pupil of Pagan philosopher Proclus, who taught him theology. Being Syrian, Dionysius probably lived in the Eastern Roman Empire. This is to say that he did not live in a climate of religious freedom where one could openly reject the authority of the Scriptures. Moreover, he clearly was a high-ranking person who defended social hierarchies and even the institution of slavery. From his letters, we understand he was perfectly integrated into the imperial system, as he was not affected by any of the above-mentioned decrees. Even in this case, we have no elements to doubt the sincerity of the Pseudo-Areopagite's Catholic faith. To establish with certainty whether those who converted were sincere or not, we would need to have a time machine and the ability to access people's minds and hearts, something that no historian of ideas can do. However, the historical-social context cannot be ignored, if we really want to understand why certain ideas spread and others disappeared. Certainly, Dionysius showed no small courage in giving preeminence to the apophatic theology of obvious Neoplatonic origin, over the cataphatic theology of apparent Judeo-Christian origin, at a time when the Platonic Academy was closed and the Neoplatonists persecuted.

Having clarified these aspects, we can now come to the theological ideas of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. First of all, following the Neoplatonists, he calls God "the One, the Unknown, the Super-essential self-existing Good," and he often talks of "the Emanations of the Goodhead." Needless to say that no Christian would currently call God "The One" or resort to the concept of "emanation," together or in alternative to that of "creation."

In *The Divine Names*, Dionysius (1920, 53) writes that the "the One which is beyond thought surpasses the apprehension of thought, and the

Good which is beyond utterance surpasses the reach of words.” Still, he adds that “many of the Sacred Writers thou wilt find who have declared that It is not only invisible and incomprehensible, but also unsearchable and past finding out, since there is no trace of any that have penetrated the hidden depths of Its infinitude.” In other words, he stresses the compatibility between the God of the Philosophers and the God of the Prophets.

Indeed, Dionysius draws primarily from the theology of Plotinus and Proclus, but he also tries to show that this wisdom is not opposed to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. For instance, to illustrate how a believer can be lifted up to the radiance of the divine darkness which is beyond being through the voiding of all knowledge, Dionysius (1920, 193-194) mentions the mysterious encounter between “the blessed Moses” and God on Mount Sinai. He implicitly refers to the episode of the burning bush, when Moses hears the voice of God but does not see him, or to the episode where Moses asks God to show him his glory and the latter responds that no one can see his face. The Syrian theologian underlines that “nevertheless he meets not with God Himself, yet he beholds – not Him indeed (for He is invisible) – but the place wherein He dwells.” He takes this episode to signify “that the divinest and the highest of the things perceived by the eyes of the body or the mind are but the symbolic language of things subordinate to Him who Himself transcendeth them all.” In other words, the Scriptures would confirm the ideas that God cannot be perceived by senses and, therefore, the revelation is symbolic. Obviously, Dionysius chooses the most favorable episodes to support his thesis, and without quoting directly the Bible.

In any case, the Syrian theologian makes it clear that, even when we are moving along the path of affirmative theology, we have to recognize that some statements are truer than others. In his *Mystical Theology*, Dionysius (1920, 198-199) writes that “it is truer to affirm that God is life and goodness than that He is air or stone, and truer to deny that drunkenness or fury can be attributed to Him than to deny that we may apply to Him the categories of human thought.” Brief, a furious god is not God. Saying that God is good is more correct than saying that God is evil. Still, the Ineffable One is not “goodness.” This statement must be understood in the sense that our human conceptualization of “goodness” can never be adequate enough to express the ultimate essence of the Godhead.

Given this theological view, what can we infer about Dionysius’ attitude to war and peace, tolerance and intolerance? In the *Divine Names*, Chapter XI is about Peace. God is presented as the Fount of Very Peace and of all Peace. Dionysius also address a letter to Demophilus Therapeutes, where harshly rebukes the receiver for having used violence against an impious man and a priest who had forgiven him. He tells him to be kind, tolerant, to respect hierarchies, and to mind his own business.

Demophilus is deeply convinced to have providentially preserved the things sacred, which were about to be profaned, and tells the Pseudo-Areopagite that he is still keeping them undefiled. Dionysius (1897, 153) warns him with the following words:

But thou, as thy letters testify, I do not know how, being in thy senses, hast spurned one fallen down before the priest, who, as thou sayest, was unholy and a sinner. Then this one entreated and confessed that he has come for healing of evil deeds, but thou didst not shiver, but even insolently didst cover with abuse the good priest, for shewing compassion to a penitent, and justifying the unholy.

Quite interestingly, even in this letter, Dionysius (1897, 150) refers to Moses as an example, noticing that the Jewish Prophet “was deemed worthy of the Divine manifestation on account of his great meekness.” He remarks, once again, that “the histories of the Hebrews (...) at any time they describe him as being excluded from the vision of God,” however, “they do not cast him out from God for his meekness.” Once again, he disregards uncomfortable biblical passages, such as the fact that the first thing Moses does after meeting Yahweh on Mount Sinai is to put thousands of Jews to death on charges of impiety, for having manufactured the Golden Calf. As we read in *Exodus* 32:28, “the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell.”

It is worth noticing, however, that other coeval Christians did not see anything wrong in killing impious people. Dionysius tends instead to stress the goodness and mercifulness of God and the necessity to imitate him in this respect.

10. THE UNKNOWN GOD IN MODERN CHRISTIANITY

The Platonic perspective suffered a decline in the Late Middle Ages, when Aristotelian philosophy became hegemonic in Catholic circles. However, it is back in vogue in the Renaissance. Once again, many names can be associated with these ideas, such as German Catholic cardinal and scientist Nicholas of Cusa (1401 – 1464); Italian scholar and Catholic Priest Marsilio Ficino (1433 – 1499); Italian Renaissance nobleman and philosopher Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463 – 1494); Spanish Carmelite nun and religious reformer Teresa of Ávila (1515 – 1582); and her coeval Discalced Carmelite John of the Cross (1542 – 1591).

With regard to this period, we will briefly touch upon Nicholas of Cusa, also referred to as Nicolaus Cusanus. I choose him as an example of this period by virtue of his vigorous attempts to overcome the doctrinal divisions

that tormented the Church internally and the conflicts with other religions, even if not always with the desired results.

In 1432, Cusanus took part in the Council of Basel, which was supposed to settle numerous issues within the church, in particular the Eastern Schism occurred in 1054. Cusanus initially sat among the ranks of the conciliarists. He conceived in this context his first great work, *De concordantia catholica*, published in 1433. He also helped organizing the great council of Ferrara and Florence, which started on January 8th, 1438, and ended proclaiming the reunion between the Greek and Latin Churches, an agreement that lasted until the capture of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire, in 1453. This council is particularly important because Emperor John VIII Palaeologus, invited by Cusanus himself, embarks for Italy bringing with him Neoplatonic philosopher Georgios Gemistos Plethon (ca. 1355 - 1452). This fact is crucial to our discussion, because Plethon gave a notable boost to Cosimo de' Medici's Platonic interests and inspired the foundation of the Platonic Academy led by Marsilio Ficino. The latter translated the works of Plato, Plotinus, Proclus, Hermes Trismegistus, and Dionysius the Areopagite into Latin.

In 1440, Nicholas of Cusa published *De docta ignorantia*, a work that put him in the footsteps of Dionysius. The starting point of Cusanus's epistemological reflection on the absolute maximum is that every research is comparative, in that it uses proportion as a means. Therefore, the infinite as infinite, escaping every proportion, is unknown. A finite mind cannot fully understand the infinite, so God as infinite is essentially unknowable. Nicholas of Cusa (1990, 25-29) defines Dionysius as "the greatest seeker of God," and underlines that "the great Dionysius says that our understanding of God draws near to nothing rather than to something."

The Catholic Cardinal thinks that the awareness of our ignorance of divine matters must precede any theological discussion, as the latter is placed on a lower level than the reality it speaks of. Positive theology is irremediably caught between the limitations of human intellect and language. Then, Cusanus (1990, 45) explains what negative theology is, by writing the following:

Sacred ignorance has taught us that God is ineffable. He is so because He is infinitely greater than all nameable things. And by virtue of the fact that [this] is most true, we speak of God more truly through removal and negation—as [teaches] the greatest Dionysius, who did not believe that God is either Truth or Understanding or Light or anything which can be spoken of.

Many disagreements among Christians, and even more between Christians and other Abrahamic monotheists, are triggered by the Trinitarian dogma. Apophatic theology solves this problem by positing that the Trinity

must be understood symbolically and that, ultimately, is dis(solved) in the ineffability of the One. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit can be understood as synonyms of Unity, Equality, and Union. From the *One* (Unity, the Father) emanates the Logos (Equality, the Son) who is equal to the Father ("I and the Father are one," John 10:30, NIV). Equality can be predicated of *two* entities (I and the Father), but the doubling of the One (if we are allowed a bold biological metaphor, one can think of the process of cellular reproduction by mitosis) also produces a *third* element, which is the relationship, the Union, between the first and second persons of the Trinity. This is the Holy Spirit. As one can see, the stories of the Holy Scriptures are here understood as mere allegorical representations of a philosophical truth that one primarily finds in the writings of the Neopythagoreans and the Neoplatonists. These philosophers expressed the concept in "mathematical" language rather than in a "mythological" one. In addition to Plotinus' *Enneads*, one may think of *The Theology of Arithmetic* by Iamblichus (1988), or the *Elements of theology* by Proclus (1963).

This approach implies that God, understood as the incomprehensible infinity, "is neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Spirit" (Nicholas of Cusa 1990, 46) – a strong statement that could have made an illustrious judge of the Inquisition raise his eyebrows, if Cusanus had not been such a skilled debater as to keep himself away from any possible accusation of heresy. This theological conclusion is, however, fundamental for seeking conciliation not only with non-Catholic Christians but also, and above all, with any other religion of the world.

The problem of conciliation arises, above all, after the fall of Constantinople. May 29th, 1453 is indeed an ominous date for Christianity. The capital of the Eastern Roman Empire and spiritual center of the Greek Church, falls into the hands of the Turks led by Mehmed the Conqueror and is sacked. Added to the bloody aspects that characterize every war of conquest are religious persecutions. The Hagia Sophia, the Byzantine church known as the Church of God's Holy Wisdom, is transformed into a mosque. Christians are left with only three possibilities: escape, martyrdom, or conversion to Islam. The Latin West, which had previously tried to barter the overcoming of the Eastern schism and the submission of the Greek church to the Roman one in exchange for military aid, decides to react – albeit belatedly – by organizing a crusade. Of a different opinion is however Nicholas of Cusa, in the meantime appointed cardinal for his merits by Pope Nicholas V in 1448 and prince bishop of Bressanone two years later. Constantinople was a city to which he had personally gone before the Islamic conquest, with the aim of reconciling the two Christian churches. After the terrible event of the fall, Cusanus reached the conclusion that it was necessary to aim even higher and to reconcile, in the name of the Unknown God – in the name of faith,

wisdom, and learned ignorance – all the religions of the world. To this end, he wrote the work *De Pace Fidei* (On the Peace of Faith).

The Unknown God is the pivot on which he articulates his speech, aimed at convincing believers of all religions to see themselves as part of a single universal faith. Rites, myths, and beliefs divide nations, but they are in reality all united in their ignorance in the face of what is essentially incomprehensible.

Nicolaus of Cusa (1995) addresses God directly with the following words: “You, therefore, who bestow life and existence, are that one, who seems to be sought differently in the diverse rites and is named with diverse names, since You as You are remain unknown and ineffable for all.” And, again, he asks God to intervene, to help men overcome the superficial differences that push them to hate each other, to draw their swords and kill each other in his name.

If You consider it worthy to act thus, the sword and the envy of hatred and every evil will cease. Everyone will know in what way there is only a single religion in the variety of rites. Indeed, one will not be able to annul this difference of rites, or in any case this will not be beneficial to do, since the diversity may bring an increase in devotion, if every region bestows the most vigilant effort upon its ceremonies, which it holds to be, as it were, the most pleasant to You, the King; however, at all events, just as You are only one—there ought to be only a single religion and a single cult of adoration of God. (Nicolaus of Cusa 1995)

We have seen that the Neoplatonists had already worked for the foundation of a unified Olympus, a syncretic temple in which different rites could be officiated, different images of God of the many religions exhibited, and different names of God invoked, but with the awareness that these are only differences in habits and customs, different ways – in any case inadequate – undertook by believers to approach the incomprehensible. These were, however, Pagan authors. Within Christianity, by simply putting the issue in these terms, to slip inadvertently into heresy is an imminent risk. Nicholas of Cusa is perfectly aware of this, so much so that his speech immediately focuses on the Trinity. It is necessary first of all to assure the Pope and his co-religionists that the entire discussion moves within Christian orthodoxy, even if the ultimate goal is ecumenical and syncretistic.

The bishop of Bressanone imagined a celestial interreligious and intercultural council, in which sages representing all religions and nations, led by Peter, Paul and the Word himself, contribute in the undertaking of valorizing what all faiths have in common. However, much of the writing is resolved in an attempt to convince a Greek, an Italian, an Arab, an Indian, a Chaldean, a Jew, a Scythian, a Frenchman, a Persian, a Syrian, a Spaniard, a Turk, a

German, a Tartar, an Armenian, a Bohemian, and an Englishman that they all believe in the triune nature of God, understood however in the allegorical sense already explained above.

When the Indian notices that "It will, however, be very difficult to achieve agreement from all sides in respect to the triune God," the Logos answers that "God, as Creator, is three and one. As infinite He is neither three, nor one, nor anything that can be stated. The names which are attributed to God are taken from creatures, since He Himself is ineffable in Himself and is above all that can be named or stated." Indeed, long sections of the book are to make clear that the Trinity is not primarily a Christian dogma, but a universal philosophical truth.

When the Arab, notoriously suspicious of anything that reminds polytheism, asks the Logos "How should those who revere several gods concur with the philosophers in reverence of a single God?," the Logos replies that also polytheists are welcome to join the unified universal religion because "all who at any time worshiped several gods, presupposed the divinity to exist." The divinity is understood as the prime cause of the universe, and as such it is one, behind and before any plurality of forms it may assume. The Logos clarifies this concept by mean of the following analogy: "as there is nothing white without whiteness, so there also are no gods without the divinity" (Nicolaus of Cusa 1995).

Coming to our days, it is worth noticing that Pope Francis' initiatives aimed at overcoming distrust and conflicts between different religions move in the wake of these theological reflections, all falling within orthodoxy, even if they have sometimes scandalized not a few conservative spirits. I will provide just an example. When the Pontiff visited Athens to meet the President of Greece and other political and ecclesiastic authorities, on December 4th, 2021, he pronounced the following words:

From this place, humanity's horizons expanded. I too feel invited to lift my gaze and let it rest on the highest part of the city, the Acropolis. Visible from afar to the travellers who over the millennia have arrived here, it inevitably bespoke the presence of the divine, the call to expand our horizons to what is on high. From Mount Olympus to the Acropolis to Mount Athos, Greece invites men and women of every age to direct their journey of life towards the heights. Towards God, for we need transcendence in order to be truly human. (Francis 2021)

At the center of the Acropolis is the Parthenon or Temple of Athena, the goddess of Reason. Mount Olympus was the home of the twelve Hellenic Gods. Mount Athos is an Orthodox spiritual center since 1054, the year of the Great Schism. How is it that a Catholic Pope celebrates all this? There is

no scandal in seeing the presence of the divinity in any religious symbols, once one deeply understands the principles of apophatic theology.

11. CONCLUSIONS

We have thus reached the end of our journey into the search for the Unknown God and the time has come to sum up the discussion. Apophatic theology, understood as an additional way of searching for God that completes and surpasses cataphatic theology, offers by far a more refined and complex vision of the divine than popular religiosity. The latter is not to be denigrated, as it anyway helps to approach the divine, but it can hardly satisfy the religious needs of deeply spiritual people. Besides that, the cult of the Ineffable One, to the extent that it is shared by the various religions of the world, offers the added advantage of making religious conflicts senseless. Indeed, apophatic theology prevents the possibility that the sense of belonging of religious communities is reinforced in contrast to other religious identities. Once believers understand that what they say about God is just a clumsy human attempt to talk about an ultimately incomprehensible reality, there is no longer need to quarrel. Nothing prevents believers from saying something more about The One – or whatever name they want to call God – but in doing so they *ipso facto* leave the perimeter of the deepest truths, to enter that of superficial speculation and allegorical imagination. It is like the difference between our naked human body and the way we dress it. Garments are important, in most cases even indispensable, but ultimately we are not the clothes we wear.

Holy wars and religious persecutions have been brought on by the assertion that one knows God and his will with certainty, along with the conviction that there is only one god. Less likely to wage war for religious reasons are those who assume that there are many gods or, if god is one, he is beyond human comprehension.

It is important to stress that, as strange as they may appear to those having a popular understanding of faith, these ideas fall within doctrinal orthodoxy. As Dr. Jonathan Sozek (2023) put it, “this is not some kind of obscure fringe corner of Christianity; this is the teaching of at least the Catholic Church, but it is not often conveyed adequately to people that are learning that tradition.”

To conclude, all religious people – regardless if they believe that God is one or triune, single or multiple, personal or impersonal, immanent or transcendent – are anyway brothers in faith, as these and other dichotomies cannot help but lose meaning when faced with the Absolute. The mystics are perfectly aware that, to many people, this assertion is quite difficult to digest.

That is why Dionysus (1920, 64) started his speech with a warning which I propose here as a closing formula.

Thou, therefore, O good Timothy, must guard these truths according to the holy Ordinance, nor must thou utter or divulge the heavenly mysteries unto the uninitiate.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdel-Samad, Hamed. 2016. *Islamic Fascism*. New York: Prometheus Books.
- Adamson, Peter. 2021. "The Theology of Aristotle." In: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/theology-aristotle>
- Bachofen, Johann J. 2007. *An English Translation of Bachofen's Mutterrecht (Mother Right) (1861). A Study of the Religious and Juridical Aspects of Gynecocracy in the Ancient World*, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston.
- Benedict XVI. 2007. *General Audience: Origen of Alexandria: life and work*, St Peter's Square, Wednesday, April 25th. https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20070425.html
- Benevento, Maria. 2019. "Letter signed by more than 1,500 accuses Pope Francis of the 'canonical delict of heresy'." *National Catholic Reporter*, May 1st.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. 1951. *Theology of the New testament*. New York: Charles Scribner's Son.
- Campa, Riccardo. 2014. "Le origini pagane dell'idea di tolleranza religiosa nella pubblicistica dell'illuminismo." *Orbis Idearum. European Journal of the History of Ideas* 2 (1): 19–60.
- Carabine, Deirdre. 1995. *The Unknown God. Negative Theology in the Platonic Tradition: Plato to Eriugena*. Louvain: Peeters Press.
- Caracciolo, Lucio. 2004. Conflitti etnici e religiosi, in *Treccani: Enciclopedia del Novecento III Supplemento*.
- Carleton Paget, James. 1994. *The epistle of Barnabas: outlook and background*. Tübingen: Möhr.
- Cazzullo, Aldo. 2023. Il cardinale Zuppi: "Anche per mio padre io ero Don Matteo. Chi salva i migranti non va criminalizzato." *Corriere della sera*, December, 23rd.
- Collier, Robert. 2017. "Jesus Exposes Yahweh as the Evil One." In: *Good God*, April, 1st. <https://youtu.be/MrqnxW5V7rg?si=wpEmEbtCwYlHueDL>
- Comenius, Johann A. 1896. *The Great Didactics*. London: Adam and Charles Black.
- Dionysius the Areopagite. 1897. *The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite*, translated by Rev. John Parker. London and Oxford: James Parker and Co.
- Dionysius the Areopagite. 1920. *On the Divine Names and The Mystical Theology*, translated by Clarence E. Rolt. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- Dodds, Eric R. 1971. "The Unknown God in Neoplatonism." In: Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*. Oxford University Press.

- Edwards, Mark J. 2022. "Origen." In: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. <https://plato.stanford.edu/Archives/win2022/entries/origen/>
- Epiphanius of Salamis. 2009. *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, Book I. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Eusebius. 1998. *Ecclesiastical History*. Claremont, CA: Hendrickson.
- Francis. 2021. *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis*, Presidential Palace in Athens, Saturday, December 4th.
- Grant, Robert M., ed. 1978. *Gnosticism: a source book of heretical writings from the early Christian period*. New York: AMS Press.
- Grant, Robert M. 1947. "The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66 (2), 173-196.
- Hill, William J. 1971. *Knowing the Unknown God*. New York: Philosophical Library.
- Hume, David. 1889. *The Natural History of Religion*. London: A. and H. Bradlaugh Bonner.
- Huxley, Aldous. 1946. *Ends and Means. An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods employed for their Realisation*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Iamblichus. 1988. *The Theology of Arithmetic. On the Mystical, Mathematical and Cosmological Symbolism of the First Ten Numbers*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Phanes Press.
- Jacobs, Alan, ed. 2016. *The Gnostic Gospels*. London: Watkins.
- Langerbeck, Hermann. 1957. "The Philosophy of Ammonius Saccas." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 77, Part 1: 67-74.
- Mitani, John C., David P. Watts, and Sylvia J. Amsler. 2010. "Lethal intergroup aggression leads to territorial expansion in wild chimpanzees." *Current Biology* 20 (12): R507-R508.
- Nicholas of Cusa. 1990. *De docta ignorantia (On Learned Ignorance)*. Minneapolis: The Arthur J. Banning Press.
- Nicola, Ubaldo. 1999. *Atlante illustrato di filosofia*. Colognola ai Colli: Demetra.
- Nicolaus of Cusa. 1995. *Toward a New Council of Florence: "On the Peace of Faith" and Other Works*, translated by W. F. Wertz. Washington: Schiller Institute.
- Norden, Eduard. 2002. *Dio Ignoto. Ricerche sulla storia della forma del discorso religioso (Agnostos Theos. Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede, 1913)*. Brescia: Morcelliana.
- Origen. 2017. *On First Principles*. Oxford University Press.
- Plotinus. 2018. *The Enneads*, edited by Lloyd P. Gerson et al. Cambridge University Press.
- Porphyry of Tyre. 2018. "On the Life of Plotinus and the Order of his Books." In: Plotinus, *The Enneads*, 17-37. Cambridge University Press.
- Porphyry. 2000. *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Proclus. 1963. *The Elements of Theology*. Oxford University Press.
- Pulella, Philip. 2023. "Pope strips conservative US cardinal of Vatican privileges, Vatican official says." *Reuters*, November 28th.

- Reale, Giovanni. 2006. Prefazione, in Porfirio, *Vangelo di un pagano*. Milano: Bompiani.
- Rojka, L'uboš. 2022. "La necessità del male particolare nella teodicea dell'*Open Theism*." *Gregorianum* 103 (4): 733-754.
- Rusconi, Giuseppe. 2017. "Padre Sosa: Parole Di Gesù? Da Contestualizzare!" *Revisita Panorámica*, February 19th.
- Schwyzler, Hans-Rudolf. 1951. "Plotinos." In *Paulys Realenzyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, XLI, 477-481. Stuttgart: Metzler-Verlag.
- Shuster, Amy L., and Dustin E. Howes. 2016. "The Pacifism in Plato's Republic." *History of Political Thought* 37 (3): 438-460.
- Sodano, Angelo R. 2006. "Introduzione." In Porfirio, *Vangelo di un pagano*. Milano: Bompiani.
- Sozek, Johnatan. 2023. "God beyond God: Meister Eckhart." In: *Labyrinths*, February 21st. <https://youtu.be/jUIxrkrWyrA?si=Y9femTrzyfzCwrxK>
- St. Irenaeus of Lyons. 1992. *Against the Heresies*, Volume I, Book I. New York: Paulist Press.
- Stępień, Tomasz, and Karolina Kochańczyk-Bonińska. 2018. *Unknown God, Known in His Activities. Incomprehensibility of God during the Trinitarian Controversy of the 4th Century*. Berlin: Peter Lang.
- Vegetti, Mario. 2018. *Filosofia e saperi della città antica*. Milano: Hoepli.
- Wallis, Paul. 2021. "Jesus vs Yahweh | God vs Zero Point." In: *Paul Wallis*, August, 11th. https://youtu.be/L_GOZ0o4MoA?si=rPP-XmUrctpAyrbG



VASILIEV'S 'CONSCIOUSNESS AND THINGS': A PROJECT FOR A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY

Thomas Beavitt

Institute of Philosophy and Law of the Ural Branch
of the Russian Academy of Sciences
tommy@globalvillagebard.org

ABSTRACT

In his influential 2014 book *Consciousness and Things*, Vadim Vasiliev, Professor of History of Foreign Philosophy at Moscow State University, establishes a significant new direction in contemporary philosophy. Since a published English translation of this book is absent, a detailed review of its main ideas is presented here to an international audience for the first time. Proceeding according to the conceptual analysis method developed in analytic philosophy, Vasiliev's project for a phenomenological ontology assumes the necessity of our causal belief (that nothing happens in the world without a reason) and existential belief (that we expect from all things given in the senses that they will not disappear merely due to the cessation of our perception of them). The "local interactionist" position articulated in the conclusion appears to have relevance in fields beyond "consciousness studies" and philosophy of mind.

KEYWORDS: Local interactionism, Phenomenological ontology, Conceptual analysis, Global supervenience, Existential belief, Causal belief, Mind-body problem

INTRODUCTION

Published in 2014, *Consciousness and Things: Sketch for a Phenomenological Ontology* (Васильев 2013) by Vadim Valerievich Vasiliev has already acquired an almost classic status in contemporary Russian philosophy, especially for its clear style of argumentation, which is mainly carried out in non-technical language, and for its articulation of a distinct position on the mind-body problem, referred to by the author as "local interactionism".¹ In the face of the current tendency – especially pronounced in analytic philosophy

¹ Локальный интеракционизм

– to consider that philosophy “should be built on the model of experimental knowledge and generally become an assistant to empirical science” (p. 5), the author’s advocacy and instantiation of “armchair philosophy”² has gained him many appreciative readers.

Born in Barnaul, Siberia, in 1969, Vasiliev graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy of Moscow State University in 1993, going on to become Professor of History of Foreign Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of Moscow State University. For his Candidate of Philosophical Sciences (1995), he defended a thesis on *Deduction of Categories in Kant’s Metaphysics*; for Doctor of Philosophy (2002), *The Doctrine of the Soul in 18th-c. Western European Philosophy*. He is a Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

In addition to the subject of the present review, Vasiliev is the author of the monographs *Foundations of Kantian Metaphysics* (Васильев 1998), *History of Philosophical Psychology in 18th-c. Western Europe* (Васильев 2003) *The Hard Problem of Consciousness* (Васильев 2009), *Philosophical Psychology in the Age of Enlightenment* (Васильев 2010), *In Defence of Classical Compatibilism. An Essay on Free Will* (Васильев 2017), and *David Hume and the Enigmas of his Philosophy* (Васильев 2020), as well as over 80 articles published in Russian and foreign journals. In addition to his native Russian, he knows English, French and German; his published translations from German and English include *Kant: from the Manuscript Heritage* (КАНТ 2000), *Observations on the Human Spirit and its Relation to the World by A. Kolyvanov* (КОЛЫВАНОВ 1790/2005; Васильев 2014), *From Fichte to Nietzsche by F. C. Copleston* (КОПЛСТОН 1963/2004), *Lesley Stevenson: Ten Theories of Human Nature* (СТЕВЕНСОН & Васильев 2004)³.

A number of Vasiliev’s theoretical papers have been published in English. In particular, *The Hard Problem of Consciousness and Two Arguments for Interactionism* presents a condensed version of the key arguments that structure the subject of the present review (Vasiliev 2009). In *Philosophy of Mind, Past and Present*, he advocates a revival of conceptual analysis by treating it as a clarification of the relations among our natural beliefs (Vasiliev 2013). In a recently published discussion paper, Vasiliev’s refutation of the local supervenience of the phenomenal on the physical is presented along with critical responses to his refutation, as well as his replies to the criticism (Vasiliev et al. 2021). Despite his prominence on the current Russian philosophical scene, however, English translations of Vasiliev’s longer works are largely absent. The present review therefore sets out to introduce what may

² Кабинетная философия

³ Васильев Вадим Валерьевич | Философский факультет. (n.d.). Retrieved 10 June 2023, from <https://philos.msu.ru/node/111>

be his most important full-length philosophical work to a non-Russian readership on the basis of a research translation carried out by the reviewing author.

PROJECT FOR A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY

The central question considered in the book is addressed at the intersection of *causal belief with our belief in the correspondence of the past and the future*: “When something happens, we invariably seek to attribute a cause. Such attempts presuppose our certainty that nothing happens in the world without a reason.” This apparently universal conviction is connected to what Vasiliev calls *existential belief*, i.e., that we expect from all things given in the senses that they will not disappear merely due to the cessation of our perception of them (pp. 39–40).

Vasiliev grounds his project for a phenomenological ontology in a genealogy of ontology, showing that the concept emerged from Aristotelian *first philosophy* or metaphysics, from which it was later distinguished to include an analysis of basic cognitive principles. While the universal applicability of such metaphysical concepts as causality might once have seemed self-evident, Hume’s scepticism punctured such ontological confidence: while we may all believe in causality as constituting a universal law of nature, we can neither verify its *a priori* nor its *a posteriori* truth (p. 10).

Whether advanced on the basis of scientific data or everyday experience, the construction of hypotheses about the nature of existence is validated by the “rich seam of ontological theories in contemporary analytical philosophy [...] especially when framed by the relationship between physical and mental”, referred to here as the *mind–body problem*. As Vasiliev shows, the activity of generalising from existing data generally involves “the tendency of our imagination to transfer past experience to the future”. Considering this tendency in more detail, we find that it already contains a certain ontological picture – namely “the image of regularity and order among things”. Such a belief in a certain arrangement of the objects of experience “can be considered independently of arguments about its truth”, whether considered in itself or in the context of its possible consequences (p. 15).

Concluding his genealogy, Vasiliev plausibly asserts that “...if any kind of ontology is possible, then a phenomenological ontology should also be possible. If we interpret its principles as providing a foundation for the hypothetical per se, “a phenomenological ontology starts to look as if it might have a more fundamental character” (p. 16). However, in order to advance his project, Vasiliev first needs to demonstrate that a merely descriptive ap-

proach to phenomenological analysis will not be sufficient to clarify our natural beliefs – or *ontological attitudes*.⁴

In terms of its pragmatic exhaustion of everything we can discuss, Kant's characterisation of "the class of objects of possible experience" implies that conclusions drawn about this class will be sufficiently universal to bear ontological significance, since "things can become an object of our experience only if they arise for a reason". Since it is the transcendental ego that sequentially synthesises sense data into experiential perception, it can be assumed to do so according to certain *a priori* rules laid down in its own structures. Thus, at the same time as representing a necessary condition for the possibility of making empirically verifiable statements, "the *a priori* concept of causality may include a rule for ordering certain data by our cognitive abilities in order to transform them into objects of possible experience" (p. 11).

The apparent failure of Kant's transcendental deduction of categories to demonstrate a *necessary* correspondence between the objects of possible experience and the basic concepts of reason led to Husserl's less grandiose project of phenomenological analysis, which is primarily based around a descriptive approach (p. 13). Accordingly, our judgments about things as such (even as objects of possible experience) should be replaced with statements about how we imagine things, which image is naturally formed by our cognitive abilities, i.e., the conceptual schemes we necessarily impose on experience. However, even this lacks a secure ontological foundation, since "our cognitive abilities do not necessarily prescribe a particular view of the general properties of such things" (p. 14). Moreover, while the structures of our consciousness may be described by casting a reflexive glance at them, such descriptions are not sufficient to clarify the ambiguities by which our ontological attitudes are characterised (p. 17).

For this reason, an inferential approach will be required, which is no longer merely descriptive, but constitutes "a movement of thought linking the results of various descriptions". Although the content for making inferences is still supplied by descriptions, the inferences themselves are "demonstrations that allow us to achieve the desired clarification" (p. 19). Then, in order to achieve a real clarification of our ontological attitudes, "we should not limit ourselves to descriptions, but should also have recourse to inferences and proofs". Since our reasoning unfolds in phenomenological space,

⁴ Although their content may be particular to an individual person, ontological attitudes are beliefs that are universal in the sense of being characteristic of all people, either "aimed at all things, or which constitute large regions of existence, such as the physical or the mental" (pp. 17-18).

such inferences and proofs can be referred to as “phenomenological deductions” (p. 20).

The project for a phenomenological ontology will be based, then, on the use of phenomenological deductions to analyse the relationships between our ordinary ontological attitudes. Since the project consists in an ontology of the real, which sketches a schematic diagram of the structure of our actual world, things in general will be discussed not in terms of “that which cannot be unthought of in being”, but rather “in terms of what cannot be divorced from our natural beliefs about actual things in existence” (p. 23). Here Vasiliev’s phenomenological ontology distinguishes itself not only from traditional ontology, purporting to represent a science of being as such, but also from Kant’s transcendental ontology, which claims the status of *a priori* knowledge about objects of experience. Although phenomenological ontology advances less ambitious claims, “such modesty can bring all sorts of benefits.” Perhaps less modestly, “one of these turns out to be the very rigour unsuccessfully sought by previous ontologies of the real” (p. 66).

Vasiliev’s tentative combination of phenomenological and analytical programmes of consciousness research seems to encounter no fundamental obstacles; moreover, there appear to be potential benefits to both programmes. “By taking an argumentative rather than purely descriptive approach, the phenomenological toolset is enriched; conversely, this is just the area in which analytical philosophy can adequately use its favourite method” (p. 73). However, for reasons connected with the radically different styles of discourse, Vasiliev considers a more thoroughgoing attempt to unite the continental and analytical traditions to be “utopian” (pp. 73–74).

THINGS IN GENERAL AND PHYSICAL OBJECTS: THE MIND–BODY PROBLEM

Since, when something happens, we invariably seek to attribute a cause, such attempts presuppose our universal belief that nothing happens in the world without a reason (pp. 39–40). However, defining causality in terms of a minimum sufficient condition for the accomplishment of an event is problematic (p. 41). For example, there can be different kinds of minimum sufficient conditions, such as the movement of a ball due to its being hit by another ball, or else in terms of its non-fixedness to the floor (p. 42). While such an objection may seem merely semantic rather than relating to causality itself, a stronger objection rests in the point that, in accepting the idea of a minimum sufficient condition,

We fail to fully describe the complex event *A*, which is minimally sufficient for the accomplishment of *C*. Therefore, the ‘cause’ of event *C* will be considered to be the minimally sufficient event *A*, i.e., such an event whose

repetition in any medium in our world is guaranteed to cause the event *C*, despite the fact that any reduction of its components will lead to event *C* not being brought about if there are no other possible causes at this point in time.

Here, the components of the event *A*, many of them having a background character, will be referred to as "components of the cause of the event *C*". Nevertheless, against this relatively stable background, "sometimes a special, 'active' component can be distinguished, which introduces noticeable changes to the overall fixed picture" (p. 42).

Vasiliev pre-emptively defends his thesis against a confusion that may arise when attempting to describe subject-object relationships without taking into account the medium that necessarily intermediates between them. Since sensory perception invariably consists in a specific act related not only to the concrete human senses of vision, hearing, etc., but also to factors pertaining to the external medium such as the presence of light, vibrating air particles, etc., needlessly abstract statements such as "I perceive an object" falsely imply that there can ever be a real situation in which there is nothing but the sentient Self and the considered object. A more concrete statement such as "I see a ball" already assumes the salience not only of the object ("a ball") and the subject ("I"), but also the specific act of visual apprehension. Here, the verbal element ("see") in the statement can be understood as referring to the perceptive medium, since, "in the act of sensation, we are given not only the sentient Self and the object, but also the medium mediating these two poles" (pp. 52–53). Here, it is emphasised that our sense organs, neural pathways, etc. can also be considered as part of the medium. Therefore, while dependence on these qualities can be described in terms of subject-dependence or *subjectivity*, this is not the same thing as dependence on a mental subject. Accordingly, while some qualities of things can be called subjective, this does not necessarily imply that they should be referred to in purely mental terms (p. 54).

To advance the project of a phenomenal ontology, it is necessary to account for the apparent influence of the mental on what does, in reality, happen. If the mind is merely an epiphenomenon of the physical brain, then private mental states such as desires, memories, etc. will not take an intentional form; at best, such states will merely *accompany* what happens anyway, irrespective of their content. However, rather than attempting to categorically refute the various approaches to accounting for causality without reference to private mental states, such as superdeterminism, Vasiliev neatly sidesteps them. If we are to speak of a phenomenological (or any other kind of) ontology per se, then the principle of correspondence between the past and the future prohibits the unnecessary multiplication of entities. Such a correlation

between the principles of simplicity and correspondence arises from the need to be able to predict the development of events: the fewer the assumptions a prediction requires, the more reliable the predictive system generally becomes.

Thus, even though they are not directly given to us, we *necessarily assume* the existence of mental states in other people. Here we note an important difference between mental givens and physical objects: “physical objects, i.e., spatial things that exist independently of our perception, can, as we believe, be directly given to many people, whereas their mental counterparts can only be given to one person. This means that they are private” (p. 90). Considering the problem of other minds in this light, we will see that “the assumption of countless causally ineffective mental states in other people and living beings of different kinds” would directly violate the principle of simplicity (pp. 99-100).

LOCAL INTERACTIONISM – GLOBAL SUPERVENIENCE

Vasiliev’s local interactionism refers to a view of the mental, which, while recognising the influence of the physical on the mental, also assumes the causal significance of mental states in relation to behaviour. While an externalist interactionism does not allow real behavioural differences to be observed in (hypothetical) physically identical people, its internalist counterpart permits physically identical organisms to produce behaviour whose differences can be grasped in direct experience. Therefore, only an internalist – or qualia – interactionism can adequately explain the real influence of mental states on human behaviour (p. 126).

Causal belief implies that past (already non-existent) series of events influence the development of actual current events. In order to avoid an apparent contradiction, such non-existent series of events can be substituted with actual mental states such as memories. While, in performing such a substitution, it turns out that the components of the causes of the oncoming events cannot be given in our immediate experience, again seemingly contradicting causal belief, this difficulty can be circumvented: the no-longer-existent series of events that affect the course of actual events can be replaced not only by private mental states, but also by “certain physical realities that express the differences between the world in which events will develop in one way and the world in which they would develop in some other way” (p. 136).

Since mental states are directly combined in experience with the physical aspects of various systems, they should be defined as *local*:

The locality of mental states is best demonstrated not by a direct indication of their adjacency with certain spatial givens but by reference to the founda-

tion of the adjacency-generating relation: mental states are local with respect to the material system P , formed by objects adjacent to each other in space $O_1...O_n$, if these states are generated by this material system. (p. 140)

While experience justifies belief in the autonomy of event series, this justification cannot be generalised to all series. In particular, it is doubtful that behavioural series can be characterised in this way. If behavioural series are neither autonomous nor local, however, their associated private mental states will become epiphenomenal, raising the possibility that they might not exist at all. Meanwhile, the assumption that a non-local physical impact on behaviour is incompatible with the idea of the autonomy of event series is due to the fact that, when considering behaviour locally, it turns out to be determined (among other things) by private mental states. Therefore, in the absence of private mental states (or in a situation in which their presence would not affect behaviour), "we would also forfeit the grounds to allow the implementation of non-local causality", since "experience generally testifies in favour of local causality" (pp. 141-142).

Contemporary discussions on the mind-body problem can be interrogated according to the local interactionism paradigm with a view to obtaining its possible solution. When analysing these discourses, however, it is important to note that their participants typically

proceed from an assumption – apparently implicit to themselves – that the mind-body problem can be solved, so to speak, in one fell swoop. Thus, they apparently believe that if we, for example, argue that consciousness is generated by processes in the brain, or, conversely, that it is fundamental, then this is the solution to the mind-body problem. (p. 146)

It seems clear that no solution based on such an assumption will be forthcoming, either in the immediate future, or at any other time.

Although intentionality is often asserted to be a key property of consciousness, intentional states of consciousness such as desires and beliefs are a poor starting place for a working definition of consciousness, since the fundamental possibility of their purely physical or behavioural interpretation has, in Vasiliev's view, been satisfactorily demonstrated. Instead, he proposes to use mental images or representations as examples of the givens that make up consciousness: "Imagine something, say, an orange. As we imagine it, the image of the fruit dwells in our imagination. An imaginary orange is a given. This reality will serve for us as a model of what we will call consciousness" (p. 151).

The thesis that the brain generates consciousness naturally raises the clarifying question as to whether the mind is supervenient on the brain.⁵ In other words, “is it possible to talk about the natural necessity that an accurate physical reproduction of a certain brain will lead to an accurate reproduction of the mental givens associated with this brain?” (p. 152). Here, it is important to distinguish the physical as “something that can be given in public experience”, while the mental is understood as “something private” (pp. 153–154). From the *unverifiability* of the thesis about the identity of the mental (qualitative states) and the physical (neural states or processes in the brain) follows the “inconsistency of the thesis of identity and the thesis that consciousness as a set of qualitative states is something physical” (p. 154).

The main problem with the principle of verification is the lack of clarity concerning how to use it when something is not immediately apparent. By defining a certain position as verifiable if and only if it can be deduced from a certain set of empirical observation positions, we forfeit the possibility to verify general statements such as “every event has a cause” due to the lack of an appropriate set of observations. This, in turn, undermines the principle of verification as such, “which was advanced largely in order to isolate the provisions of natural science, such as the law of causality, from meaningless metaphysical statements” (p. 155).

In responding to such questions, supporters of the verification principle distinguish between strong and weak verification. “Strong verification occurs only when a statement can be deduced from a finite set of observation positions”; e.g., a statement that someone is doing something in this room “is highly verifiable, since it may be a trivial consequence of the observed facts. However, it is just such a scheme of strong verification that is inapplicable to

⁵ For example, while physical interactions can be described without such a description necessarily implying the existence of biological life (apart from that of the describer), the existence of biological life in the absence of underlying physical and chemical processes is harder to imagine. Such an ontological hierarchy can be described in terms of supervenience: for example, biology supervenes on chemistry and physics since any difference in biological processes must also be reflected in differences occurring at the molecular and atomic levels. According to Harold Kincaid, “most contemporary philosophers have given up the positivist tenet that the special sciences are strictly reducible to their lower-level counterparts. Mental predicates, for example, seem unlikely to match up neatly – as traditional accounts of reduction require – with the kinds of neurophysiology, and much the same holds for biological and social predicates vis-a-vis those of chemistry and psychology, respectively. Nonetheless, it is generally agreed that such irreducibility does not entail that higher-level phenomena described by the special sciences are somehow autonomous, for they can supervene upon and be realised in the appropriate lower-level phenomena – ultimately the physical – even if higher-level theories are not reducible to those at a lower level. While we may never be able to define biological predicates, for example, in chemical terms, we can still hold with good reason that the chemical facts fix the biological facts and that every biological event is brought about by or realised in chemical phenomena.” (Kincaid 1988, p. 251).

general theses.” As for weak verification, it is only necessary that the verified statement make some changes to the visual manifestation of the expected course of events. From this point of view, general statements like “every event has a cause” turn out to be fully verifiable: “without the assumption of this principle, we cannot expect to find stable correlates in events; however, with its assumption, we can and do expect this.” The problem that arises here is that the weak verification principle “is so weak that any proposition at all is verifiable in its terms.” In any case, assuming verifiability, the thesis about the identity of the mental and physical should also refer to directly verifiable statements and “if its direct verification is impossible, it can be discarded as meaningless or false” (p. 161).

By adding a thesis about the identity of mental and physical givens, the structure of our expectations changes: we will assume their strict correlation. Moreover, while the identity thesis certainly does imply strict correlation, “identity is something more than such a correlation”. Thus, from the thesis about the identity of the mental and physical, not only their rigid correlation, but also some additional observable consequences should follow, “just as from the thesis about the identity of the Morning Star and the Evening Star, it follows not only that they are correlated, but also the fact that, with continuous observation of the Evening Star, it will take the place of the Morning Star.” However, “... due to the fact that no observable consequences other than their rigid correlation follow from the thesis of the identity of the mental and physical, this thesis is not directly verifiable. Since it nevertheless looks meaningful, we will have to recognise it as false.” And from this it follows “that the mental is really different from the physical” (pp. 161-162).

Since a contradiction would arise if a certain physical object were to be unrelated to these mental components in exactly the same material world, a refutation of the local supervenience of the mental on the physical does not contradict the assumption of global supervenience, which does not deny the possible existence of identical physical objects having different mental states in worlds in which the same laws of nature apply. Moreover, and perhaps because of this, global supervenience does not rule out the existence of such objects in the same world: “for example, in our world I could have a physical double who had different mental states.” All it precludes is that, “if this actual double did not possess the mental states that he now possesses, but instead had other mental states, then the world in which he existed would not physically differ from our world” (p. 171).

Because mental states are correlated with behaviour, on the one hand, and with past physical states of the world, on the other, without the global supervenience of the mental on the physical, “the world would have to be such that it could come to its present state, including physical givens and our

private givens, in different ways, as well as changing in different ways in the future.” After all,

The existence in it of the mental states of other people not directly given to me in experience, which could be very diverse with the same physical composition of this world, could not but be accompanied by changes in its future development and in its history due to the already-established correlation of private mental states and human behaviour.

Meanwhile, the principle of the correspondence of past and future “prescribes to us the belief that the world available in direct experience can come to its present state and develop in time along a single path.” Therefore, “we have little choice but to accept the thesis of the global supervenience of the mental on the physical” (pp. 171-172).

From the thesis about the global supervenience of the mental on the physical, it follows that a complete reproduction of the physical aspect of the world *must* be accompanied by the reproduction of its mental aspect. Therefore, such a reproduced world is no different from the world in which the considered mental event occurred.

Let’s assume that a certain mental event *C*, which happened at some point in time, is considered by us as having no physical cause. Since the cause of the event *C* is the event *A*, whose repetition is always accompanied by a repetition of *C*, then in this case we would have to believe in the possibility that an exact reproduction of the physical world at the time preceding this event would not lead to its fulfilment.

It follows from the principle of correspondence of past and future experience that “the next state of this world should not differ from the state that followed it in the past. Therefore, we cannot believe that an exact reproduction of the physical state of the world that preceded the mental event *C* would not lead to its fulfilment.” (p. 173) In this connection, the most important consequence of the global supervenience of the mental on the physical is that “it gives us every right to talk about the existence of law-like relations between them” (p. 175).

Causal belief requires us to recognise that all physical events have physical causes. However, since we cannot assume the existence of entirely physical causes of behaviour in the brain, “we must assume that behaviour is at least partly influenced by non-local physical factors.” Conversely, if we accept that all behaviour is ultimately explained by physical causes, “it turns out that we still cannot talk about the direct influence of mental states on behaviour, i.e., interactionism in the strictly understood sense.” Therefore, in order to be able to talk about interactionism at all, “we must remain within a

local consideration of the material system that produces behaviour.” For this reason, it is logical to refer to the considered scheme of the influence of consciousness on behaviour as “local interactionism”. The scheme of *global supervenience – local interactionism* “preserves the principle of causal closure of the physical, which is a natural consequence of causal belief” (p. 177-178).

Through its preservation of the causal closure of the physical, local interactionism can protect itself from some of the problems traditionally associated with interactionism (i.e., interactionist dualism). In particular, a denial of the causal closure of the physical undermines the assumptions underpinning the natural sciences, which require physical phenomena to have physical explanations: “Since it is hard to deny the findings of contemporary science, interactionism may seem like a deliberately obtuse position. However, local interactionism, as we can see, avoids criticism of this kind” (p. 178).

Interactionist dualism can be rightly criticised for assuming the reality of mental causality and proclaiming the direct influence of consciousness on behaviour, but failing to explain the mechanisms of such influences in any way. Conversely, while the limiting mechanisms of the effects of some things on others may not be fully revealed by the natural sciences, at least their purview is generally limited to a consideration of homogeneous phenomena. When it comes to the mind–body problem, on the other hand, “we are apparently dealing with completely different categories.” In recognising that “behaviour has real causes that are physical in nature”, local interactionism also resolves this difficulty (p. 178).

Vasiliev emphasises that local interactionism cannot be equated with a kind of global epiphenomenalism. Although, on a global scale, mental states do not have a direct impact on behaviour, and therefore lack causal *efficacy*, they nevertheless retain causal *relevance*. A recognition of the causal relevance of qualitative mental states is associated with our belief that physical events must have local explanations: “the assumption of non-local physical causes of events is possible only if they are duplicated by some local, albeit non-physical, factors.” However, such duplication does not imply overdetermination, which might lead to the conclusion that “non-local physical causes would produce their effect even in the absence of corresponding mental states.” On the contrary, mental states are “necessary conditions for the realisation of non-local physical causality” (pp. 178-179).

While the mental turns out to be a necessary ontological condition for the realisation of nonlocal physical causality, this does not imply an independent causal factor: physical factors constitute “sufficient conditions – i.e., causes – of a particular behaviour.” However, due to the *global* supervenience of the mental on the physical, it “cannot be regarded as an independent

causal factor: its presence does not deprive physical factors of the quality of sufficiency” (p. 179).

Thus, Vasiliev has demonstrated the necessary connection of the idea of local interactionism with the phenomenistic nature of our consideration of the mind–body problem and other ontological issues. Although “we cannot know how things really are”, if we consistently “follow our natural beliefs”, which present to us “an image of the world in which we cannot but believe”, then “we necessarily arrive at local interactionism when thinking about the relationship between the mental and the physical” (pp. 180–181).

Invoking the ideas of Thomas Reid, founder of the “Scottish School of Common Sense”, Vasiliev reveals that his entire research programme has been aimed at clarifying “basic common-sense principles”. The combination of common-sense attitudes thus assembled includes the beliefs that “we perceive things in themselves as they are, that things exist independently of our perception, that the physical world is explicable in physical terms, that other people are conscious, that nothing happens without a reason, that our desires and feelings can influence the behaviour that we can produce, that ideas can be independently reproduced by volitional effort, and that we are responsible for our own actions.” (p. 201) Such a philosophy responds to a need to “eliminate sceptical and metaphysical illusions that obscure from us the reality about which our common sense informs us in one way or another”, and, in leading us to reality itself, “helps us to live not a fictional, but a real life” (p. 202).

CRITICAL RESPONSES TO VASILIEV’S THESIS OF LOCAL INTERACTIONISM

In the decade since the publication of *Consciousness and Things*, critical responses to the thesis of local interactionism and refutation of local supervenience (of the mental on the physical) have appeared in a number of Russian-language publications. For example, in defining local interactionism as a “model of mental causation that justifies the causal efficacy of consciousness at the level of local events”, Anton Kuznetsov sets out to show that this concept can only be challenged by conceptual rather than empirical means, observing that the most challenging aspect of applying the theory is how to “find more concrete definitions of local and nonlocal events which don’t make the concept relative” (Кузнецов 2015). Dmitry Volkov, the successful entrepreneur and co-director of the Moscow Centre for Consciousness Studies (MCCS), attempts to refute Vasiliev’s thesis by showing that mind is supervenient on brain both locally and globally (Волков 2015). Alexey Safonov, another MCCS alumnus who combines philosophy with a successful business career, sees Vasiliev’s reasoning as “aimed at overcoming the re-

spective one-sidedness of the analytical and phenomenological approaches". Noting that, by ultimately coming down on the analytical side, Vasiliev's theory "fails to accomplish the requisite synthesis of the two approaches", Safronov interprets local interactionism to refer to "a theory of the mutual causality of mental consciousness and the physical world, but only at the local level" (Сафронов 2021).

A recent English-language discussion of Vasiliev's thesis of local interactionism, here concisely stated in terms of the refutation of the local supervenience of the mental on the physical, brings together the contributions of contemporary analytic philosophers including Eric Olson, Daniel Stoljar, Colin McGinn, Keith Frankish, as well as the venerable (and no less irascible!) Daniel Dennett himself (Vasiliev et al. 2021). Defining local interactionism in the introduction to this discussion as a kind of "qualia interactionism which is compatible with the causal closure principle", Evgeny Loginov interprets local interactionism as implying a kind of "ultracompatibilism": free will is compatible with the causal closure of the physical by treating desires as conditions of realising physical causation (ibid.). While some of the objections are certainly clarifying, in some cases delivering more concrete examples than those used by the original author, they seem generally based on a desire to avoid potential relativism rather than a faithful engagement with Vasiliev's clearly stated position. In particular, Dennett's objection that "the 'first-person perspective' is not as secure a starting point as many have thought" seems to miss Vasiliev's main points entirely. In claiming that the details in Vasiliev's discussion "help to show that functionalism, not dualism, is the path to follow", Dennett fails to identify in which direction such a path would lead or why it would be advantageous for anyone to set out on such a path. Indeed, in the view of the present reviewing author, the very essence of Vasiliev's position is not so much that it is "truer" (e.g., than functionalism), but rather that it is potentially more useful.

CONCLUSION AND POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As indicated in the word "sketch" in the subtitle (and explicitly stated in the introduction), *Consciousness and Things* purports to represent an auspicious starting point rather than a final destination. Nevertheless, in terms of its critical response alone, the relevance of its contribution to contemporary debates about consciousness and causality seems undeniable. However, while Vasiliev's reliance on phenomenological deductions for eliminating ambiguities in our ontological attitudes is crucial for his project for a phenomenological ontology, his affinity with analytic philosophy may sometimes result in a facile dismissal of approaches associated with the Continental tradition. For

example, while “phenomenological deduction” may sound more analytically valid, it is not immediately clear how it is methodologically distinguishable from Husserl’s eidetic reduction and the discovery of “essences” (Hopkins 2002; Lohmar 2020; Majolino 2016; Michels 2020; Palermo 1978; Łaciak 2004). However, Vasiliev’s main objection to Continental styles of reasoning seems to concern not so much the question of method as a desire to counter an excessive burgeoning of descriptive terminology. Therefore, while conceding that some of Husserl’s followers – e.g., Heidegger or Sartre – have shown that “ambiguities can be a rich source of new concepts and theories”, if we do not want to “endlessly terminologise or dialectically play out ambiguities, but instead eliminate them, we must use other techniques.” Thus, Vasiliev’s implicit appeal to the value of argumentative clarity as one of the hallmarks of the analytical style of philosophising lies at the heart of his philosophical venture.

Indeed, perhaps due to the influence of Anglophone authors, Vasiliev’s Russian prose reads very smoothly for the present native English-speaking reviewer. However, where he relies on the resources of the Russian language to communicate nuances for which corresponding English resources seem to be lacking, there are some potential translation pitfalls. For example, a key point in his argument relies on a distinction between *маловероятность* (low probability, unlikelihood) and *невероятность* (extreme unlikelihood, incredibility) (p. 61). While in English, such a distinction is generally a matter of degree, Vasiliev’s reliance on this distinction implies that, for a Russian thinker, there may be a qualitative distinction between *маловероятность* and *невероятность*, possibly indicating a cultural difference in terms of “belief in belief” (de Regt 2006).

Perhaps a more serious limitation of Vasiliev’s approach lies in his strenuous efforts to avoid the semblance of relativism. Such diffidence may also be attributed to the general squeamishness towards relativistic reasoning on the part of Analytic (and Anglophone) philosophers of mind. Consequently, while he justifies the local causal efficacy of private consciousness in rigorous terms, the only interaction to which his “local interactionism–global supervenience” formula specifically refers is that occurring between two unlike ontological categories: the physical and the mental. Unlike many Continental philosophers, however, Vasiliev does not appear to be interested in enquiring into the general nature of specific interactions *between* such private consciousnesses, even though the central relevance of such reciprocal interactions would seem to be implicit in his argument. A closer consideration of the reciprocity inherent in interactions defined as local is therefore the main topic of a current study by the reviewing author.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- de Regt, H. C. D. G. (2006). "To Believe in Belief." *Journal for General Philosophy of Science*, 37(1), 21-39. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10838-006-0479-z>.
- Hopkins, B. (2002). "Husserlian Transcendental and Eidetic Reductions and the Interpretation of Plato's Dialogues." *Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch Fuer Antike Und Mittelalter*, 7(1), 81-114. <https://doi.org/10.1075/bpjam.7.05hop>.
- Kincaid, H. (1988). "Supervenience and Explanation." *Synthese*, 77(2), 251-281.
- Łaciak, P. (2004). *The Place and Function of Eidetic Cognition in Edmund Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology*. *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej*, 49.
- Lohmar, D. (2020). "The Phenomenological Method of Eidetic Intuition and Its Clarification as Eidetic Variation". In: J. J. Drummond & O. Höffe (Eds.), *Husserl: German Perspectives* (pp. 110-138). Fordham University Press.
- Majolino, C. (2016). "Until the End of the World?: Eidetic Variation and Absolute Being of Consciousness—A Reconsideration." *Research in Phenomenology*, 46(2), 157-183. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15691640-12341334>.
- Michels, R. (2020). "Husserlian Eidetic Variation and Objectual Understanding as a Basis for an Epistemology of Essence." *Logos and Episteme*, 11(3), 333-353. <https://doi.org/10.5840/logos-episteme202011325>.
- Palermo, J. (1978). "Apodictic Truth: Husserl's Eidetic Reduction Versus Induction." *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic*, 19(1), 69-80. <https://doi.org/10.1305/ndjfl/1093888208>.
- Vasiliev, V., Olson, E., Stoljar, D., McGinn, C., Frankish, K., & Dennett, D. (2021). *Discussion. Local Natural Supervenience and Causation*. <https://doi.org/10.24412/2587-9308-2021-16-2-26>.
- Vasiliev, V. V. (2009). "«The Hard Problem of Consciousness» and Two Arguments for Interactionism." *Faith and Philosophy*, 26(5), 514-526. <https://doi.org/10.5840/faithphil200926552>.
- Vasiliev, V. V. (2013). "Philosophy of Mind, Past and Present." *Metaphilosophy*, 44(1-2), 15-18. <https://doi.org/10.1111/meta.12014>.
- Васильев, В. (2013). *Сознание и вещи: Очерк феноменалистической онтологии*. Книжный дом 'ЛИБРОКОМ'.
- Васильев, В. В. (1998). *Подвалы кантовской метафизики (дедукция категорий)*. Nasledie.
- Васильев, В. В. (2003). *История философской психологии. Западная Европа—XVIII век*. <http://books.apokrif93.com/istoria-1>.
- Васильев, В. В. (2009). *Трудная проблема сознания*. <https://www.livelib.ru/book/1001595527-trudnaya-problema-soznaniya-v-v-vasilev>.
- Васильев, В. В. (2010). *Философская психология в эпоху Просвещения*. <https://www.bookvoed.ru/book?id=3283945>.
- Васильев, В. В. (2014). Христлиб Фельдштраух: Альтернативное начало русской философии. *Russian Journal of Philosophical Sciences*, 0(5), Article 5.
- Васильев, В. В. (2017). *В защиту классического компатибилизма. Эссе о свободе воли*. <https://www.ozon.ru/product/v-zashchitu-klassicheskogo-kompatibilizma-esse-o-svobode-voli-vasilev-vadim-valerevich-260205807/>.

- Васильев, В. В. (2020). *Дэвид Юм и загадки его философии*. <https://urss.ru/cgi-bin/db.pl?lang=RU&blang=ru&page=Book&id=251664>.
- Волков, Д. Б. (2015). Опровергает ли аргумент каузальных траекторий локальную супервентность ментального над физическим? *Epistemology & Philosophy of Science*, 2(44), Article 2.
- Кант, И. (2000). *Кант: Из рукописного наследия* (материалы к 'Критике чистого разума'; Opus postumum) (перевод) (В. В. Васильев, С. А. Чернов, & В. А. Жучков, Trans.). Progress-Tadicija.
- Колыванов, А. (2005). *Наблюдения о человеческом духе и его отношении к миру* (В. В. Васильев, Trans.). <http://filosof.historic.ru/books/item/f00/s01/z0001010/st000.shtml> (Original work published 1790).
- Коплстон, Ф. Ч. (2004). *От Фихте до Ницше* (В. В. Васильев, Trans.). <https://www.labirint.ru/books/70244/> (Original work published 1963).
- Кузнецов, А. (2015). *Локальный интеракционизм. Новое решение проблемы ментальной каузальности. Вопросы Философии*.
- Сафронов, А. В. (2021). *Каузальный дуализм*. <https://www.livelib.ru/book/1006304659-kauzalnyj-dualizm-aleksej-safronov>.
- Стевенсон, Л., & Васильев, В. В. (2004). *Л. Стевенсон. Десять теорий о природе человека* (перевод). <https://istina.msu.ru/publications/book/4427649/>.



AUTHORITARIAN LIBERALISM AS A POLITICAL CONCEPT: THE EVOLUTION OF ORDOLIBERAL IDEAS IN THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS

Maxim Popov

North Caucasus Federal University
maximus.popov@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The concept of authoritarian liberalism is presented as one of the relevant explanatory models of European integration. Authoritarian liberalism can be conceptualized as an ideological synthesis of semi-authoritarian forms of government and neoliberal economic goals. The emergence of this concept is associated with periods of economic crises, such as the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s, and the Eurozone crisis. Ordoliberalism, representing a flexible, market-oriented form of authoritarian liberalism, refers to a rational strategy for maintaining and promoting economic neoliberalism, towards which the market economy and technocratic elite are converging as a means of contain crises and conflicts. While authoritarian liberalism explained in terms of the structural dominance of market capitalism over representative democracy may involve semi-authoritarianism in a technical role, this does manifest itself in overtly repressive or monocentric terms but is subject to democratic criticism in the process of regulating European integration.

KEYWORDS: Authoritarian liberalism, Neoliberalism, Ordoliberalism, Critical theory, Neoliberal theory, Communitarianism, European integration, European Union

INTRODUCTION

In the 20th century, the ideology and practice of liberalism spread widely throughout the world. “The end of history” led to most countries introducing universal suffrage, but some regimes remained or became less free, paving the way for majority-sanctioned tyranny and illiberal democracy. A notable conceptual event was the 2003 release of the book “The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad” by Fareed Zakaria, where he claimed that not just democracy, but also the development of liberal democ-

racy provides the key to answering all contemporary challenges: moreover, without such internal content, democracy can become a dangerous empty shell (Zakaria 2003, 46). Zakaria was not the first to issue such a warning. The focus of the study of liberalism must be shifted, insisted Nobel laureate Amartya Sen in the book “Development as Freedom”. The attention of many scientists, he emphasized, chained to the growth of the gross product, insufficient income, technological progress, but the central problem on which everything depends is political freedom and its restrictions, with the dominant role played by economic freedom. (Sen 1999, 112).

The crisis of liberalism was aggravated by the Eurocrisis in 2008 and an overlay in 2016 of two hardly expected events: the victory in the referendum of supporters of the UK’s exit from the European Union and Donald Trump’s coming to power in the USA. The severity of the crisis was reflected by the harsh statement in the title of an article by Jeff Colgan and Robert Keohane “The Liberal Order is Rigged. Fix It Now or Watch It Wither” (Colgan and Keohane 2017, 37-44). The United Kingdom and the United States, which have made the greatest contribution to the formation of the liberal order, they said, virtually turned their backs on it: Brexit became a symbol of the restoration of British sovereignty; Trump ran a nationalist and isolationist campaign in tone and content. The Trump and Brexit phenomena reflected the transformation of the social contract that underpins liberal democracy. Warning against many political experts underestimating the threat this structural and philosophical shift poses to the liberal order, the authors concluded, that the time has come to face reality and embark on policies that will help save the liberal order before it's too late; If change does not occur, they concluded, the global liberal order will die (Ibid).

In the very nature of the European integration project lies a dichotomy between the goals of market development and the achievement of social progress. The processes of globalization, the need to overcome the consequences of the financial and economic crisis, the growth of Europessimism and Eurosceptic sentiments and the strengthening of populist parties, Brexit – all this poses a difficult task for the European Union to harmonize the goals of macroeconomic development and social policy. Contemporary political analysts characterized the financial and constitutional crisis in Europe as a result of the economic policy of authoritarian liberalism (Bonefeld 2017, 747-761; Somek 2015, 67–87; Wilkinson 2015, 313-339), which was first analyzed by H. Heller as a fundamental characteristic of the late Weimar regime (Heller 2015, 295-301). Karl Polanyi and Herbert Marcuse conceptualized authoritarian liberalism as the most common characteristic of the entire period of the interwar collapse of liberal democracy (Marcuse 1988, 77; Polanyi 2001, 15). Jan-Werner Müller introduces the concept of “constrained democracy” as a representation of authoritarian liberalism (Müller 2011, 58). Michael

Wilkinson points out the connection between political authoritarianism and economic liberalism, which lies in the dynamics of constitutional changes in Europe (Wilkinson 2018, 3-19).

Critical theory analyzes political transformations during the current eurocrisis as long-term consequences of authoritarian liberalism, when politically authoritarian forms of government defend economic liberalism, while the principles of democracy and social rights become hostages of the logic of capital accumulation and market rationality. Authoritarian liberalism does not operate through the economic doctrine of *laissez-faire*, but with the help of a strong state apparatus that overregulates national parliaments, deregulates the free market and privatizes social goods, using forms of coercion both within states and within the framework of integration institutions. Neoliberal constitutionalism has always viewed social rights with caution and suspicion because of the clearly articulated material demands they entail (Bonefeld 2017, 747-761; Wilkinson 2015, 313-339). According to Wolfgang Streeck, the authoritarian-liberal regime of the consolidation state involves a deep transformation of democracy as we know it, away from traditional institutions of popular political participation designed to stand up for social equity against the laws of the market: where there are fewer public goods due to privatization, there is less to decide politically, and the economic democracy of capitalism begins to replace political democracy (Streeck 2014, 64). With markets, becoming the principal mechanisms of collective decision-making, there is even less “fiscal democracy” left than in the rigidified debt state of old: at the macro level, public finances are increasingly constrained by constitutionally enshrined debt limits and balanced-budget rules. In the European case, there are also international agreements on fiscal austerity from which countries can break away only at high political and economic cost (Ibid).

Political neoliberalism, conceptually developed in the 1970s, including using the ideas of classical liberalism, for a long time had a wide electoral base, the most numerous part of which was the middle class. Over time, it has undergone a rebirth, with the result that it has become an ideology serving the global financial oligarchy. The middle class, which emerged during the era of the welfare state, began to erode and stratify with the impoverishment of its lower strata. These processes were among the main reasons that led to the Great Recession in 2008 and the emergence of the phenomenon of new populism. Communitarianism pays attention to the fact that the individualism of authoritarian liberalism can be destructive; this is due to the exclusive emphasis on the role of law in civil society, as well as the recognition of interacting individuals as mutually indifferent, recognizing only formal rights. Charles Taylor draws attention to the ethics of authoritarian liberalism, which is the ethics of law, not good, that is, its basic principles relate to

how society should regulate and reconcile the competing demands of individuals. These principles, of course, should include attitudes towards individual rights and freedoms, but for any liberal society, the principle of maximum and equal assistance should be central. It does not say what benefits society will contribute to, but establishes what benefits are achievable given the aspirations and requirements of citizens – members of society. The central point here is decision-making procedures, which is why Taylor calls this branch of liberal theory “procedural” (Taylor 1989, 12).

European ordoliberalism as an enhanced and flexible market-oriented form of authoritarian liberalism transforms the norms of democratic constitutionalism and representative democracy in order to maintain economic commitments to currency and price stability, tight fiscal discipline and competitiveness. After the 2008 crisis, European liberalism paradoxically began to be accompanied by antisystem challenges to the future of the European integration project in the process of searching for integration alternatives, activating right-wing populism, nationalism and illiberal authoritarianism, which is most evident in Central and Eastern Europe, but is also reflected in the growth of Eurosceptic parties in Western Europe. The socioeconomic and political model of authoritarian liberalism has a contradictory character: in a crisis, neoliberal integration processes can increase social instability, creating conditions for the escalation of reactive neo-traditionalism and its development into cultural conflicts (Moravcsik 2004, 336-363; Wallerstein 1995, 81). According to Quinn Slobodian, “while neoliberal elites might be organized globally, they remain reliant on the set-up of a national vision, through which any national ruling class can appear as the sole representative of their national people. If we want to know why neoliberalism is now dissolving into this specific nightmare –one of nationalist authoritarianism – this is where we need to look” (Brandes 2019, 641-649).

The author evaluates the analytical significance of authoritarian liberalism and interprets it as one of the relevant conceptual models of European integration. The basic concepts of authoritarian liberalism by Hermann Heller, Herbert Marcuse and Karl Polanyi emphasize the political and ideological connection between authoritarianism of Carl Schmitt’s strong state and economic liberalism of market rationality (Schmitt 2008, 17). Authoritarian liberalism is conceptualized as a synthesis of semi-authoritarian forms of government and neoliberal economic goals; its actualization is associated with periods of economic crises, such as the interwar period of the 1920’s and 1930s and the Eurozone crisis. Based on a conceptual analysis, the article will substantiate that in critical and transitional periods, the actualization of authoritarian liberalism and ordoliberalism corresponds to the structural and normative tensions in contemporary Europe between market capitalism, constitutionalism and representative democracy.

In critical periods, when capitalism and democracy come into fundamental conflict of values and ideologies, the liberal state is perceived as conflict manifestation and in some cases as an actor in conflict resolution. The reason why one can speak of the state within the framework of this conflict is that the “ideological and repressive state apparatus” reinforces the contradictions between democracy and capitalism through the military, police, and judicial authorities (Althusser 2014, 237). Just as structural violence and inequality can threaten a democratic state, the democratic struggle for political and social equality can act as a potential threat to the capitalist state. Democratic movements are challenging the structural configuration of politics and economics with a new demand for political and democratic control of the economy. To maintain the economic status quo, the ideological state apparatus offers the historically first market-oriented form of authoritarian liberalism - European ordoliberalism.

THE INFLUENCE OF ORDOLIBERALISM IN THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS

Historically, Friedrich Hayek tried to reveal the essence of authoritarian liberalism in the controversial thesis that, from a political point of view, a dictatorship can be more liberal than unlimited democracy (Hayek 1960, 24). Hayek's idea of the potentially illiberal nature of a democratic government is the key to understanding German ordoliberalism as a form of authoritarian liberalism that arose in the context of the economic crisis of the Weimar Republic. Ordoliberalism, which traces its roots to a prolific group of economists and legal scholars at the University of Freiburg's Faculty of Law and Economics in the early 1930s, has proved singularly influential in shaping the social market economy of post-war Germany. While the Freiburg School undeniably has German roots, it has been from the start an integral part of the neoliberal network of scholars, which formed in Vienna, London and Chicago during the interwar period (Kolev 2019, 24). Ordoliberals relied on the political theology of Schmitt with his concept of the state as the dominant force in relations between the market and the state, calling these relations the union of a free economy and a strong authoritarian state. The premise of authoritarian liberalism was the idea that the establishment of a social order is the basis of a free economy, and a strong liberal state becomes a concentration of this order (Bonefeld 2017, 747-761; Röpke 1960, 72; Schmitt 2008, 114).

During periods of political transformations, tensions between democracy and the capitalist state increase, leading to a potential constitutional crisis. The most important moment in the history of European integration is the in-

terwar period. In late Weimar Germany, the democratic capitalist state reached its climax due to the growth of a politically emancipated proletariat, which began to threaten the differentiation of political and economic, created and protected by the Constitution (Wilkinson 2019, 1123-34). The reaction of the ruling elite to this threat was the convergence of authoritarianism and economic liberalism, which was first pointed out in 1933 by the social democrat and constitutional theorist Hermann Heller.

The main principle of authoritarian liberalism in Heller's phenomenology is the principle of rigid authoritarian power instead of the principle of democratic majority; authoritarian support for economic liberalism does not necessarily amount to totalitarian "quasi-religious salvation" (Heller 2015). The term "authoritarian liberalism" was used by Heller to radically criticize Germany's attempts to enter into an alliance with big business between 1930 and 1933 in order to maintain economic liberalism at the cost of intervention in politics in favor of capitalist interests. The subject of criticism of Heller was not only the centrist policy of Chancellor Heinrich Brüning, but also the constitutional theory of Schmitt with the formula "the strong state and the free economy". Schmitt recommended to Germany the strong state with the free market, resisting the threat of social democracy and emancipative experiments of economic democracy (Cristi 1998, 17). Heller's concept of authoritarian liberalism became part of the criticism of Schmitt's political theology and German ordoliberalism. A common feature of these doctrines is the recognition of the state as a source of security and social order in capitalist society. In relation to the economy, the state is absolutely the dominant force: Schmitt and the German Ordoliberals viewed the state as a "security regime" and characterized it as the main instrument for "preventing civil war" (Bonefeld 2017, 747-761). For them, the Weimar Republic was an ineffective political structure that allowed the ruled to influence the strategy of the rulers. According to Schmitt and the German Ordoliberals, for the sake of a free economy, the state should have been built as a fortress in order not to become a victim of massive democratic demands for social protection; Schmitt argued his position by referring to the concept of Leviathan by Thomas Hobbes as a symbol of dominant power, as well as to the traditions of conservative criticism of the egalitarianism of the French Revolution: Schmitt rejected the idea of social equality and defined lawmaking in democracy as the "rule of the crowd" (Schmitt 2008, 126-154).

Ordoliberals argued, based on the political intuitions of Adam Smith, that the power of the state is fundamental to the creation of civil society. The state, as legislator, must uphold the law of private property and prevent "bloodshed and disorder" (Smith 1976, 112). In ordoliberal theory, the state is the political practice of the "market police", where competition is not a category of cohesion and integration (Bonefeld 2017, 747-761; Rüstow

1942). The “market police” is obliged to maintain a competition of private interests, which can be reconciled based on common needs for security and freedom through contract and guarantee of property rights. Acting as a “market police”, the state civilizes the behavior of “greedy self-seekers” based on “politically imperative rules of the game” (Ibid). The law is a means of social security and a category of personal freedom: individuals are free if they obey the law, but the law does not apply to riots. The rule of law is underpinned by social order as a key political category. For theorists of authoritarian ordoliberalism, the rule of law entails the absolute power of the state as a concentrated force of order: if a situation of choice between law and order arises, the law must be sacrificed for the sake of order (Ibid). According to Marcuse, authoritarian nature of liberalism is associated with the existentialization and totalization of the political sphere, when depoliticization of social relations entails the politicization of the state as the dominant force (Marcuse 1988, 29).

Early German ordoliberalism expressed the political needs of a free economy in the form of the political theology of Schmitt: it is vital to eliminate all democratic intentions of state policy, especially in the monetary sphere, which should not be run like a switchboard by a weak government directly dependent on the parliamentary majority, or, even worse, from a non-parliamentary group posing as a representative of public opinion (Röpke 1960, 232). In this context, the Ordoliberals argued that the desire for a free economy presupposes a reduction in social democracy and total freedom to make executive decisions. The weakness of democracy in its effective response to economic crises and social unrest leads to the need that, according to Wilhelm Röpke, it must be supported by such restrictions and guarantees that will not allow democracy to be absorbed by democracy itself (Röpke 1969, 97). Malte Dold and Tim Krieger believe that in the period of the Eurocrisis, the battle of ordoliberal ideas was largely independent of the countries’ actual responses to the Eurozone crisis: pragmatic self-interest on behalf of governments rather than their ideological convictions played a crucial role in socio-political reactions. Ordoliberals themselves contributed to the ideological misuse of their own program: the ordoliberal Freiburg School ceased to be an active research program and instead grew to resemble a tradition, which all too often disregarded the international academic discourse, in particular in macroeconomics (Dold and Krieger 2021, 341-361). According to Bob Jessop, ordoliberalism is contrasted with neoliberalization: ordoliberals aim to achieve this goal “by creating a juridico-political institutional fix that provides a stable framework for accumulation. Promoters of neoliberal regime shifts pursue it through strategies of destabilization that exploit resulting crises. Ordoliberalism governs through order, neoliberalization through disorder. Further, ordoliberalism corresponds more to an accu-

mulation regime and mode of *régulation-cum-governance* based on a productivist concept of capital, reflecting the dominance of profit-producing capital in coordinated market economies” (Jessop 2019, 973).

The semi-authoritarian reduction of democracy to neoliberal economic regime became the main goal of authoritarian liberalism in the postwar period. These attempts have included empowering European constitutional courts to rule on the legitimacy of parliamentary law, subjecting parliamentary law to the primacy of judicial oversight, declaring the majority system invalid, and using debt ceiling regulation as a constitutional constraint on parliamentary power in the Eurozone crisis. According to Werner Bonefeld, since the early 1980s, there have been institutional attempts to remove / reduce democratic oversight of political decision-making for “extra-democratic technocratic institutions” such as central banks, which have been given wider independent powers (Bonefeld 2017, 754). In the current eurocrisis, Hayek’s concept of interstate federalism, underlying ordoliberalism, was embodied in the European economic constitution, according to which federal states operate within a supranational framework of economic rights and restrictions that dominate national democratic decision-making and legitimize the de-democratization of lawmaking. Today, in the Eurozone, the neoliberal idea of an “effectively governed community” that should limit the “democratic excesses of a mass society” (W. Bonefeld) manifests itself in a federal form, including a supranational economic constitution agreed by all member states. This megastructure reduces national democratic regulation of monetary policy, restricts fiscal policy, and ensures free competition and territorialization of the labor market, establishing a “regime of imposed liberty” (Ibid). According to Alexander Somek, the ambivalence and dichotomy of authoritarian liberalism as an instrument of eurocrisis management is an example of how actions taken in unfavorable conditions contribute to cognitive adaptation: confrontation with what needs to be done in an unprecedented crisis situation easily cancels what was previously considered as normative restrictions for delegation, and such cognitive adaptations occur not least because delegation is based on trust (Somek 2015, 67–87). Crisis management of the Economic and Monetary Union shows the administrative character of the cosmopolitan constitution of the member states (Somek 2014, 59). This type of constitution obliges states to present their results in a peer review process: the administrative dimension of authoritarian liberalism is associated with the growing importance of transnational decision-making processes, such as technocratic mechanisms and control and enforcement tools. In the current eurocrisis, the principle of proportional exercise of powers is replaced by the principle of proportionality of powers to unpredictable tasks (Somek 2015, 78). As Wilkinson notes, “as commitment to European integration became culturally entrenched across the political spectrum, to the ex-

tent that there remained little, if any, alternative to EU membership in the constitutional imagination, a functionalist ‘progressivism’ came to dominate, in continuation of much earlier trends. This was sometimes expressed by functionalist metaphor, that the project of integration can only move in one direction, and must continue forward if not to collapse, as a bicycle falls over once the cyclist stops pedaling” (Wilkinson 2022, 22).

AUTHORITARIAN LIBERALISM AS A STRUCTURAL ELEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL AND ECONOMIC REGULATION IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Liberalism in the philosophical paradigm of the Oxford Manifesto, endorsed by the 48th Congress of Liberal International, which was held on 27–30 November 1997 in the Oxford Town Hall, was succeeding when it was managing to fit into the political mainstream of the major winners in regional and national elections. In a number of votes, they managed to swing in one direction or another the minority of voters, which ensured an advantage. Hence the disputes among liberals about a winning political and electoral strategy, hence the attempts to combine goals and values, the organic combination of which is problematic in practice. For centuries, liberals have been struggling with the synthesis of freedom, justice and equality, popular sovereignty and effective political elite, strong state and democracy, ethnic identity and supranational solidarity, collective and individual rights. According Ronald Dworkin, liberalism relies on the legal regulation of civil life and presupposes a system of civil rights, because the liberal, having chosen the economic market and political democracy for purely egalitarian reasons, finds that these institutions generate non-egalitarian consequences if his scheme is not supplemented with various kinds of individual rights (Dworkin 1977, 63).

Assessing the current situation in the European Union from the angle of the Eurocrisis, Robin Niblett states, that Trump's victory, the decision of the majority of British voters in favor of leaving the EU and the rise of populist parties in the prosperous north and poorer south of Europe are only visible symptoms of dissatisfaction with globalization (Niblett 2017, 21-22). The growing dissatisfaction of Eurosceptics and Europessimists is caused by the activities of the European Commission, which is increasingly taking on the function of a kind of “political operator”, regulating everything via the marginalization of the sovereign rights and state capabilities of the EU member states. It is becoming more and more difficult to maintain a balance of interests of the EU member states: Brexit has strengthened centrifugal tendencies in the regional formats of Europe, primarily in Catalonia, in a less radical form – in Lombardy and Veneto, thoroughly fueled separatist sentiments in Flanders. The results of the referendum in the UK in June 2016 on the coun-

try's exit from the EU meant, among other defining motives and reasons, that they leveled pan-European values in their unified interpretation by the highest echelon of European bureaucrats. Thus, the ideological aspect of Brexit, along with the previous Eurocrisis, has become a new reality of European integration.

Authoritarian liberalism is actualized during periods of economic crisis and is a structural element of post-war constitutional regulation in Europe, based on the “fear of democracy” and popular sovereignty, in large part because of the threat they can pose to the neoliberal order. In the context of the current European crisis, it is necessary to talk about the politically authoritarian style of management of the Economic and Monetary Union, even if this managerial authoritarianism does not bear traces of direct repression (Somek 2015, 67–87). According to Wilkinson, authoritarian liberalism encompasses two key symptoms of the constitutional crisis of contemporary Europe – de-democratization and de-legalization. In the EU, there is a semi-authoritarian aspect of governance, represented by the binary process of de-democratization and delegation, associated with ignoring parliamentary powers and democratic debates, violation guarantees of the rule of law and protection of social rights (Wilkinson 2018, 3-19). To understand this binary process in contemporary political theory, the terms “executive managerialism” and “emergency Europe” are used (Joerges and Weimer 2012, 1-42; White 2015, 300-318).

Semi-authoritarianism means a form of government that is neither fully democratic nor fully authoritarian; this may be the result of an authoritarian regime adopting some features of a democracy, or a democracy restricting political or civil liberties. Semi-authoritarian regimes are an unwieldy category because they are defined by what they are not: they are neither democratic nor truly autocratic (Gobel 2011, 258-266). The root of this confusing problem lies in how democracy is conceptualized. Scholars do not agree on what procedural characteristics a regime must have to be called a democracy. The minimalist concept of electoral democracy, for example, requires free, fair and inclusive elections, which not only entail a real chance for opposition to come to power, but also includes a range of civil liberties such as freedom of organization, freedom of speech, and freedom of information. At the other end of the spectrum are middle-level concepts that, in addition to the characteristics just listed, entail a wide range of civil rights, no veto players not legitimized by democratic procedures, horizontal accountability, and the rule of law (Ibid).

Efforts to combat the systemic eurocrisis and its implications for public debt financing have profoundly changed the legal framework of the Economic and Monetary Union. The essence of these reforms is manifested in the active and deep involvement of the European Commission in the eco-

conomic and budgetary planning of the member states through the European Semester, which gives the Commission broad access to the entire field of domestic policy planning. The member states of the Eurozone should not only submit to the Commission and the Eurogroup a draft budget planning for the coming year, but under certain conditions, following the results of the work of fact-finding missions, they may be sanctioned in connection with the failure to implement the recommendations based on the reform of the Stability and Growth Pact (Somek 2015, 67-87). Constitutional reforms and the creation of European integration institutions are accompanied by two fundamental problems that accompany the entire post-war European project. The first issue is the legal authority and competence of the Union and the member states to take appropriate action. The second is related to the prospects for European crisis management within the existing “democracy deficit” (Craig 2012, 231-248; Menéndez 2014, 127-141). In this aspect, the contradictions between national and supranational legal competences inevitably lead to an increase in the deficit of democracy. The democratic deficit is that none of the areas in which the European Parliament specializes – trade liberalization, monetary policy, the removal of non-tariff barriers, technical regulation in the field of environmental protection and other areas – does not appear on the list of issues of interest to voters (Moravcsik 2004, 336-363).

In 1995, Jürgen Habermas noted that the democratic deficit is primarily due to the fact, that “economic dynamics within the existing institutional structure perpetuates the erosion of national forces through European law” (Habermas 1995, 303-307). The concern of Marxists and critical theorists about the economically liberal bias of European integration and its impact on social democracy can be traced back to before the adoption of the Single European Act. Although authoritarian-liberal governance is intensified through the eurocrisis, the logic and dynamics of authoritarian liberalism and the underlying de-democratization have been defined since the beginning of European post-war reconstruction, when the judiciary and technocratic authorities assumed the role of leaders of the European integration project (Cohen 2007, 109-127; Wilkinson 2018, 3-19).

Systematic interference in national law is observed within the framework of the European semester in order to develop a mechanism for reporting macroeconomic imbalances in member states. The transition to a single currency provided the euro area countries with the following consequences: the euro eliminated currency risk associated with exchange transactions and reduced transaction costs associated with intra-zone trade; the euro contributed to price stability; the euro helped accelerate the financial integration of the European Union (today, many segments of the financial market are characterized by sufficient depth and liquidity, which guarantees a better distribution of resources and risks); the euro plays the role of the second currency

in the world (after the US dollar), serving international trade and financial turnover. The direct impact of the euro on the capital market was manifested in the reduction of currency risks and the elimination of organizational, technical, legal and regulatory obstacles in the euro area, which in the past led to segmentation and disunity of national markets: the European financial market has become hyper-homogeneous. The transformation of the euro into an international currency created not only benefits for the region and its member countries, but also risks, and increased liability, as the issuer became more vulnerable to fluctuations in currency exchange rates, which undermine financial and macroeconomic stability and limit the choice of possible monetary policy measures. In addition, the rapid appreciation of the euro is disadvantageous for European manufacturers, since it leads to higher prices for exports, reducing their competitiveness compared to American and Asian goods, which, in turn, slows down economic growth (Surico 2007, 115-135; Ewald Nowotny, Peter Mooslechner, Doris Ritzberger-Grunwald 2010, 235).

One of the problem areas of the Economic and Monetary Union is the institutional heterogeneity of its two parts, or pillars. The single monetary policy has been transferred entirely to a supranational body, the European Central Bank (ECB). The national central banks of the Eurozone are subordinate to the ECB and exist only to strictly implement its decisions. The common economic policy of the European Union and the Eurozone countries is based on the principles of intergovernmental cooperation. The EU bodies - the Council and the Commission - develop some general guidelines for economic development, for the implementation of which national governments are responsible. They are also in charge of the main part of macroeconomic policy, including fiscal, structural, regulation of commodity markets and labor markets. This design arose during the preparation of the Maastricht Treaty: the EU countries sacrificed national sovereignty in the monetary sphere, but did not give Brussels powers in the field of economic policy: before the Eurozone crisis, this structure withstood the load, but then its inconsistency became obvious (Butorina 2012, 98-115). In January 2019 at Davos, Angela Merkel told an audience of global business leaders how she yearned for a resumption of conventional monetary policy: "When you look at the monetary policies of the large central banks, then we can see that we are still chewing over this crisis, that we're still not past it. Things should return to normal as soon as possible" (Donahue and Delfs 2019). As Patrick Donahue and Arne Delfs note, "It used to be bad form for government heads to be seen trying to tell central banks how to do their job; but that's changing with leaders now much more comfortable weighing in - some more aggressively than others" (Ibid). On the other hand, as Dóra Györffy notes, "while following the global financial crisis, many have argued that the homogeneity

of rules within the Economic and Monetary Union facilitate the rise of populist movements, authoritarian challengers have emerged only outside the Eurozone” (Györfy 2022, 1-21). She shows that while the limits on economic policy autonomy strongly hinder authoritarian tendencies within the Eurozone even under a populist government, being outside the EMU is a necessary though not sufficient condition for the entrenchment of authoritarian rule (Ibid).

The checks by the European Commission and the European Council cover all areas of public policy and areas over which the Union has no jurisdiction. According to Alexander Somek, due to the influence of the Union on budget planning, the member states are left with a “core of sovereignty”: national parliaments are not the main participants in decision-making against the background of the growing influence of the European Parliament and supranational executive bodies (Somek 2014, 48). The measures taken in response to the eurocrisis can be described as violating various constitutional norms that are stipulated in European treaties and constitutions: authoritarian liberalism leads to deconstitutionalization, which is “the flip side of excessive neoliberal constitutionalization” (Wilkinson 2018, 3-19). Post-war constitutional overregulation in Europe reflects this authoritarian attitude, which is the systemic fear of popular sovereignty and democratic constitutional power. Various measures associated with attempts by democratic politics to strike back at the principles of authoritarian liberalism at the national and subnational levels are rejected and condemned by neoliberal constitutionalists as populist. In an analytical report prepared in 2021 with the financial support of the European Parliament, Stefano Stefanini notes that “European sovereignty is both a reality and an ongoing process of further building its sphere, for instance with the Health Union, in response to structural changes and challenges in a globalized world. But it has boundaries that the EU institutions must recognize and respect and will continue to coexist with national sovereignties that the legal and political capacity to set the limits. Such limited European sovereignty is here to stay. Member States need to enhance it to confront issues that they cannot deal with in isolation. EU citizens should be thankful for it: only a shared, supranational, sovereignty can cater for their common interests. EU institutions should acknowledge that their hard-fought “sovereignty” is not a natural endowment. It originates from national sovereignties and must be used it wisely” (Stefanini 2021).

In terms of democratic criticism, authoritarian liberalism is accompanied by a significant weakening of parliamentary power and parliamentary debate both within the member states and within the EU itself, as well as the violation or refusal to protect social rights. The economic measures imposed by the Eurogroup and the Troika (IMF, ECB and European Commission) are neoliberal austerity measures requiring government intervention, breaking

social contracts and disrupting existing social relations in favor of structural reforms. According to Donald Tusk, the alternative to austerity is a dangerous illusion: Tusk links national resistance to austerity with “anti-German” forces and speaks approvingly of ordoliberalism as a “new rationality” and the main criterion of economic stability (Donald Tusk Interview 2015). European ordoliberalism is not formally a constitutional restriction and the internal electorate may agree with the idea of the absence of alternatives to neoliberal reforms, but today this idea is imposed as dominant. Authoritarian liberalism is becoming both a transforming and conservative idea and principle of constitutional order in Europe: the post-war ordoliberal regime has mutated from a nominally rule-based structure accompanied by market discipline to a discretionary regime reinforced by bureaucratic power; the goal of mutation is to preserve Europe's neoliberal constitution and its underlying market principle (Bonefeld 2017, 747-761). Contemporary authoritarian liberalism seems to be too epistemological in its orientation and too soft in practice (Somek 2015, 72). As Malte Dold and Tim Krieger note, “ordoliberalism is built on the core idea that the coordination of economic interactions in a complex system requires a deep understanding of the essential role of moral and political thinking... Facing the recent populist backlash against openness and international coordination, ordoliberal policy proposals might help to regain public support for market integration by increasing democratic control of national and European economic policies. After decades in which economists often neglected fundamental social questions in favor of technocratic details, ordoliberals can offer an attractive political economy framework” (Dold and Krieger 2021, 341-361).

Today, European liberalism as an ideology of sustainable peace and democratic freedom opposes all forms of direct, cultural and structural violence. Consequently, the attitude towards the future advocated by liberals is fundamentally cosmopolitan. Their ideas about the future world order go back to the classics of liberal ideology. In the fundamental work of L. Mises in 1927, the key points of the future world development were presented in the following sequence: peaceful cooperation of peoples – international law prevailing over national law – free world civil society – world government – cosmopolitan overcoming of nationalism and promoting “perpetual peace” (Mises 2005, 37). For post-war political philosophy, the convergence of authoritarianism and liberalism seems conceptually untenable, and this is due to the fact, that the considered conceptual dichotomy is about political, not economic liberalism. During the ideological battles of the Cold War, liberalism was closely associated with democracy (in Western capitalism) and opposed to authoritarianism (in Soviet communism). In the theories of John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas, liberal democracy is combined with egalitarian and progressive tendencies (Rawls 1971, 52; Habermas 1995, 303-307).

However, they offer neither an alternative to capitalism as a subject of political economy, nor an analysis of capitalism as a threat to the democratic order (Wolin 1996, 97-119).

The liberal project does not diminish the importance of moral ideals and obligations of solidarity, but, on the contrary, creates fair conditions for their implementation. The need to take into account moral views that vary depending on society does not yet indicate the inadmissibility of prioritizing certain basic values over them (today they are usually expressed through the concepts of human rights and equality). Communitarians represented by Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, Michael Walzer actually adhere to certain fundamental values that they put above any concept of the good, thus remaining within the framework of liberalism, and their attempts to justify the supremacy of ideas about the good life is unconvincing and often leads to the substitution of the problem itself (Sandel 1982; Taylor 1989; Walzer 1990). What has been said means that the communitarian critique does not undermine the foundations of Rawls's theory of justice, but, on the contrary, enriches it. The disagreements between communitarians and liberals are explained by the incorrect use of the concepts of "the good" and "moral merit", and partly by the untenable thesis that moral obligations can arise solely through membership in a particular community. Sandel argued, in a book titled "The Tyranny of Merit", that the rise of authoritarian populism in countries from the United States to Germany to China had been made possible by a confusion of success with merit: elites had come to believe that if they came out ahead it was because of talent and hard work; this left working-class people with the impression that if they had not come out ahead they lacked those things. All the hopeful talk about opportunity and talent rising in a system that did not really provide opportunities was a recipe for working-class alienation (Sandel 2020, 127).

Today, the European Union and the European integration project have almost completely recovered from the shock after the eurocrisis and Brexit. Despite the social transformations of the EU, the painful component of which is the economic and migration crisis, today it is possible to talk about the decline of an integrated Europe only in the format of purely theoretical assumptions. The power structures of the predominant part of the EU member states are aware that its disintegration is fraught with serious strategic consequences for Europe, weakening its political weight. Thus, it would be shortsighted to expect or argue that the EU will run aground in geopolitics for the near future. In general, the history of the development of European integration demonstrates a slow but progressive movement towards the communitarianization of social rights and the strengthening of the social dimension of the European single market. The European Commission, in its Reflection Paper on the Social Dimension of Europe states, that the Europe-

an Union has always had a social dimension closely linked to its economic ambitions. Improving working conditions, raising the standard of living and gender equality have been the main goals of the EU since 1957, when the Treaty of Rome enshrined the principle of equal pay for women and men in the form of law. Since then, the development of the social dimension has gone hand in hand with the deepening of the single market and the concept of EU citizenship, guaranteeing a level playing field and fundamental rights in all countries (European Commission, *Reflection Paper on the Social Dimension of Europe* 2017). Indeed, according to OECD data for 2018, the share of public spending on social needs as a percentage of GDP in the EU countries is significantly higher than in other regions of the world (EU – 22%, North America – 14.5%, and other OECD countries – 17%) (OECD 2019).

From the first steps of its economic and political existence, the European Union was accompanied by predictions of its inevitable collapse. The prophecies did not come true: the EU has shown a progressive and irreversible process of successful integration and development. In the post-war decades, unifying interethnic processes led to the emergence of a solidary political nation, representing a kind of superstructure on the civic nations, the formation of which took centuries. The growing feeling of supranational belonging to a united Europe began to appear in the minds of its citizens along with belonging to cultural nations. In March 2017, in the Rome Declaration, the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission reproduced the fundamental program setting “A stronger Europe on the global scene”, based on “further developing existing partnerships, building new ones and promoting stability and prosperity in its immediate neighbourhood to the east and south, but also in the Middle East and across Africa and globally; a Union ready to take more responsibilities and to assist in creating a more competitive and integrated defence industry; a Union committed to strengthening its common security and defence, also in cooperation and complementarity with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, taking into account national circumstances and legal commitments; a Union engaged in the United Nations and standing for a rules-based multilateral system, proud of its values and protective of its people, promoting free and fair trade and a positive global climate policy” (European Commission, *The Rome Declaration* 2017).

Many participants in political discussions insisted on saturating liberalism with democratic and socialist values. It is not easy to resolve this issue in a doctrinal frame but if we are talking about views that do not go beyond consensual approaches, then in the mainstream of practical activity it is necessary to seek and find balances between the goals of liberals, social democrats and democratic socialists. On the one hand, we should not forget that

the fundamental liberal idea is the defense of liberal democracy, on the other hand, not a single politician who comes to the polls today and in the foreseeable future can do anything with the slogans of dismantling the welfare state or even significantly reducing its scale, because he will lose the election. Thus, the debaters cannot get away from the structural and ideological gap between the normative state of the welfare state and neoliberal reality. The influence of ethno-nationalists, isolationists and xenophobes on people who are anxious about the independence and “specialness” of their country, about the preservation of their language, cultural identity and historical memory, must also be taken into account. Nationalist and anti-European parties have taken strong positions in a number of countries. Indicative in this aspect is the authoritarian case of Hungary, which in communist times was at the forefront of liberation processes, and after a short transitional democratic period showed phenomenal illiberal transformations. The successive waves of nationalist and social populism not only raised the autocratic government to the pinnacle of power, while throwing socialists to the periphery of political life, and liberals beyond it, but also buried the entire system of checks and balances under them. Today, among Eurosceptics within the European Union, and especially among external Europessimists and observers, there are many who try to substantiate the coming decline of European integration with theoretical calculations, but they still remain a kind of “conceptual minority shareholders” who do not take into account the growing transnational solidarity in the face of geopolitical threats, the structural adaptability of political liberalism and the flexible economic rationality of European ordoliberalism, as well as the current changeable mobility of sociocultural interactions both within the EU itself and outside it – with the most influential actors in world politics.

CONCLUSION

In the political studies of authoritarian liberalism, three competing conceptual approaches can be distinguished: a structural analysis of authoritarianism underlying European ordoliberalism in contemporary critical theory; an ethical analysis of the procedural consequences of neoliberalism in communitarianism; and an economic analysis of ordoliberalism as a rational strategy for managing a market economy in neoliberal theory. Authoritarian liberalism is conceptualized as an ideological synthesis of semi-authoritarian forms of government and neoliberal economic goals and is associated with periods of economic crises, such as the interwar period of the 1920's and 1930s and the current eurocrisis. Authoritarian liberalism means the strategy of maintaining and promoting economic neoliberalism, to which the market economy and

technocratic elite are shifting to contain social crises. Authoritarian liberalism embodies the political structure of market capitalism's dominance over representative democracy with the priority of economic liberalism and the technical and symbolic role of semi-authoritarianism. Due to the presence and dominance of the fundamental values of political liberalism, authoritarianism in this structure is not repressive or monocentric, it is subject to sharp democratic criticism in relation to the supranational structural and constitutional overregulation of the European integration.

The practice of the welfare state, having undergone a series of transformations, moved to one of the central places in political discussions and public life. The Oxford Manifesto of Liberal International proclaimed the creation of a system of social justice and equality of opportunity one of the main goals of liberalism. In the European Union, proposals have appeared to extend universal social benefits to all citizens. The idea of compatibility of the welfare state with the liberal ideology affects the foundations of the democratic structure – local self-government, NGOs, business. Without the free functioning of structures independent of the state, no effective social policy is possible. Opponents of this idea came out with strong objections. Presenting the idea in a rational way, they said, is impossible, because the welfare state, in the eyes of many, looks like post-modern Leviathan. In practice, this is a conglomerate made up of heterogeneous components, each of which has its own dynamics and effects that cancel each other out. They also suppress incentives to work and inflate the country's debt during periods of economic crisis.

European ordoliberalism as an enhanced form of authoritarian neoliberalism manifests itself in the constitutional consolidation of the primacy of economic freedoms in relation to legislatures and trade unions, as well as in institutions (European Commission, European Council, ECB, Eurogroup, and European Parliament) that transfer control over macroeconomic and monetary management from parliaments to supranational expert bodies and executive power. Authoritarian liberalism is pragmatic and ambivalent: on the one hand, if the emphasis is on economic liberalism, then authoritarian ways of managing and implementing policies are subject to the interests of property; on the other hand, economic liberalism can be an effective means of facilitating political authoritarianism, making it more acceptable to achieve interests. For authoritarian liberalism, the strong state is the dominant category of political economy. Authoritarian liberalism recognizes that the free economy, as a fundamental political category, is based on social order and constitutes an all-encompassing, totalizing practice of government. From the point of view of European ordoliberalism, all economic crises manifest themselves as crises of interventionism. Historically, authoritarian liberalism in the European integration process was reduced to the conceptu-

alization of a free economy as a political practice of the strong state: European ordoliberalism proceeded from the idea of the insufficiency of political liberalism and “softly controlled” the democratic organization of power.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Althusser, Louis. 2014. *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. London: Verso.
- Bonefeld, Werner. 2017. “Authoritarian Liberalism: From Schmitt via Ordoliberalism to the Euro.” *Critical Sociology* 43: 747-761.
- Brandes, Sören. 2019. “From Neoliberal Globalism to Neoliberal Nationalism: An Interview with Quinn Slobodian.” *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization* 19 (3): 641-649.
- Butorina, Olga. 2012. “Causes and Consequences of the Crisis in the Eurozone.” *Voprosy Ekonomiki* 12: 98-115.
- Cohen, Antonin. 2007. “Constitutionalism without Constitution: Transnational Elites between Mobilization and Legal Expertise in the Making of a Constitution For Europe (1940’s-1960’s).” *Law and Social Enquiry* 32: 109-127.
- Colgan, Jeff and Keohane, Robert (2017), “The Liberal Order is Rigged. Fix It Now or Watch It Wither.” *Foreign Affairs* 96 (3): 37-44.
- Craig, Paul. 2012. “The Stability, Coordination and Governance Treaty: principle, politics, pragmatism.” *European Law Review* 37: 231-248.
- Cristi, Renato. 1998. *Carl Schmitt and authoritarian liberalism: strong state, free economy*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Dold, Malte and Tim Krieger. 2021. “The Ideological Use and Abuse of Freiburg’s Ordoliberalism.” *Public Choice* 195 (3-4): 341-361.
- Donahue, Patrick and Arne Delfs. 2019. “Merkel Calls for Swift Return to ‘Normal’ Monetary Policy.” *Bloomberg*. URL: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-01-23/merkel-calls-for-swift-return-to-normal-monetary-policy> (accessed: 14.09.2023).
- Dworkin, Ronald. 1977. *Taking Rights Seriously*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- European Commission. 2017. *Reflection Paper on the Social Dimension of Europe*, COM, 206 of 26, April. URL: https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-07/reflection-paper-social-dimension-europe_en.pdf (accessed: 14.09.2023).
- European Commission. 2017. *The Rome Declaration of the Leaders of 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission*, Press Release, 25 March. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_17_767 (accessed: 14.09.2023).
- Gobel, Christian. 2011. “Semi-authoritarianism”, In: Ishiyama, John and Marijke Breuning (eds.), *21st Century Political Science: A Reference Handbook*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Györfi, Dóra. 2022. “Populism and authoritarianism in the EU: what is the role of the euro?” *European Politics and Society*. Online first: 1-21.

- Habermas, Jürgen. 1995. "Remarks on Dieter Grimm's "Does Europe Need a Constitution." *European Law Journal* 1: 303-307.
- Hayek, Friedrich. 1960. *The Constitution of Liberty*. London: Routledge.
- Heller, Hermann. (2015) Authoritarian Liberalism? *European Law Journal* 21 (3): 295-301.
- Jessop, Bob. 2019. "Ordoliberalism and Neoliberalization: Governing through Order or Disorder." *Critical Sociology*, 45 (7-8): 967-981.
- Joerges, Christian and Weimer, Maria. 2012. "A Crisis of Executive Managerialism in the EU: No Alternative?" *Maastricht Faculty of Law Working Paper* 7: 1-42.
- Koley, Stefan. 2019. "Ordoliberalism's embeddedness in the neoliberalism of the 1930s and 1940", In: Dold, Malte and Tim Krieger (eds.), *Ordoliberalism and European economic policy: Between realpolitik and economic utopia*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Marcuse, Herbert. 1988. *The Struggle against Liberalism in the Totalitarian View of the State. Negations*. London: Free Association Books.
- Menéndez Agustín José. 2014. "Editorial: A European Union in Constitutional Mutation?" *European Law Review* 20: 127-141.
- Mises, Ludwig. 2005. *Liberalism: The Classical Tradition*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund.
- Moravcsik, Andrew. 2004. "Is there a Democratic Deficit in World Politics? A Framework for Analysis." *Government and Opposition* 39 (2): 336-363.
- Müller Jan-Werner. 2011 *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT.
- Niblett, Robin. 2017. "Liberalism in Retreat." *Foreign Affairs* 96 (1): 21-22.
- Nowotny Ewald, Peter Mooslechner and Doris Ritzberger-Grunwald (eds.) 2010. *The Euro and Economic Stability: Focus on Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- OECD. 2019. *The European Union: A People-Centred Agenda: An International Perspective*. URL: <https://www.oecd.org/eu/The-European-Union-a-people-centred-agenda.pdf> (accessed: 14.09.2023).
- Polanyi, Karl. 2001. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Rawls, John. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Röpke, Wilhelm. 1960. *A Human Economy: The Social Framework of the Free Market*. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.
- Röpke, Wilhelm. 1969. *Against the Tide*. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.
- Rüstow, Alexander. 1942. *General Social Laws of the Economic Disintegration and Possibilities of Reconstruction. Afterword to Röpke. International Economic Disintegration*. London: William Hodge and Company.
- Sandel, Michael. 1982. *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sandel, Michael. 2020. *The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Schmitt, Carl. 2008. *Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of Any Political Theology*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Smith, Adam. 1976. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Somek, Alexander. 2014 *The Cosmopolitan Constitution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Somek, Alexander. 2015. "Authoritarian Liberalism." *Austrian Law Journal* 1: 67-87.
- Spiegel, P. 2015. "Donald Tusk Interview: the Annotated Transcript." *Financial Times*. URL: <https://www.ft.com/content/ff50e5a9-7b15-3998-a9f1-c11359dc01b8> (accessed: 14.09.2023).
- Stefanini Stefano. 2021. *The case for limited European sovereignty, IED Strategic Paper*, Brussels. URL: <https://www.iedonline.eu/download/2021/IED-Research-Paper-Stefanini.pdf> (accessed: 14.09.2023).
- Streeck, Wolfgang. 2011. "The Crises of Democratic Capitalism." *New Left Review* 7: 5-29.
- Streeck, Wolfgang. 2014. *Buying Time: The Delayed Crisis of Democratic Capitalism*. London: Verso.
- Surico Paolo. 2007. "The Monetary Policy of the European Central Bank." *The Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 109 (1): 115-135.
- Taylor, Charles. 1989. Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate. In: Rosenblum, Nancy (ed.), *Liberalism and Moral Life*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1995. *After Liberalism*. New York: The New Press.
- Walzer, Michael. 1990. "The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism." *Political Theory* 18 (1): 6-23.
- White, Jonathan. 2015. "Emergency Europe." *Political Studies* 63 (2): 300-318.
- Wilkinson, Michael. 2015, "Authoritarian Liberalism in the European Constitutional Imagination: Second Time as Farce?" *European Law Journal* 21 (3): 313-339.
- Wilkinson, Michael. 2018. "Authoritarian Liberalism as Authoritarian Constitutionalism". *LSE Law, Society and Economy. Working Papers* 18: 3-19.
- Wilkinson, Michael. 2019. "Authoritarian liberalism in Europe: A common critique of neoliberalism and ordoliberalism." *Critical Sociology* 45 (7-8): 1023-1034.
- Wilkinson, Michael. 2022. "Authoritarian Liberalism and the Transformation of Modern Europe: Rejoinder." *LSE Law, Society and Economy Working Papers* 5: 1-22.
- Wolin, Sheldon. 1996. "The Liberal / Democratic Divide: On Rawls' Political Liberalism." *Political Theory* 24: 97-119.
- Zakaria, Fareed. 2003. *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.



BEYOND TRUTH AND FICTION: AN EXPLORATION OF THE ARBITRARY AND INCONSISTENT CONSTRUCTION OF SELF IN J. D. SALINGER'S *THE CATCHER IN THE RYE*

Queen Sarkar

Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology
queen.sarkarfcem@kiit.ac.in

ABSTRACT

The history of the unreliable narrator in fiction, characterizing narratives shaped by personal biases, mental instability, or intentional deception, has a rich history dating back to ancient Greek drama. This investigation into the historical trajectory and influence of unreliable narration focuses on J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* as a case study. Published in 1951, the novel intricately explores the complexities of its protagonist, Holden Caulfield, seen here as embodying the essence of an unreliable narrator. The analysis delves into Salinger's artistry as part of a broader examination of truth, perception, and storytelling reliability throughout literary history. By drawing parallels with archetypal forms of unreliable narrators, the analysis aims to uncover Holden's classification and unique role in the exploration of unreliable narration. A consideration of the literary techniques employed in the novel emphasizes their contribution to the overall impact of the work, prompting a reflection on the foundations of selfhood and the narratives that shape it within the broader context of the history of ideas.

KEYWORDS: Self, Unreliability, Rhetoric narratology, Focalization, Constructivist narratology, Implied author

The use of non-reliable narrator in fiction has long history. The unreliable narrator, often a character of complexity and enigma, assumes the role of storyteller, molding the narrative through a lens tainted with ambiguity and uncertainty. This archetype, spanning from classical works to contemporary masterpieces, has indelibly shaped the literary landscape, prompting readers to reconsider the very essence of truth, perception, and storytelling reliabil-

ity. Characterized by a proclivity to distort or manipulate the truth, whether intentionally or unknowingly, an unreliable narrator is motivated by personal biases, mental instability, flawed memories, or a desire to deceive. In presenting events, characters, and their own thoughts, these narrators introduce a skewed, inconsistent, or contradictory narrative, plunging readers into a labyrinth of uncertainty and challenging them to decipher hidden truths amid the unreliability of the narrator's account.

The roots of this narrative style can be traced back to ancient Greek drama, with an early instance apparent in Euripides's *The Bacchae*. Within this play, the God Dionysus serves as the narrator, yet his intentions and perspective remain enigmatic, establishing the groundwork for the theme of unreliable narration. However, the full realization and skillful utilization of this storytelling device occurred only with the onset of modernity. It was in 1961 when Wayne C. Booth in his book *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, used this term and wielded a profound influence on literary storytelling. Booth writes, "the history of unreliable narrators from Gargantua to Lolita is in fact full of trap for the unsuspecting readers, some of them not particularly harmful but some of them crippling or even fatal" (Booth 1983, 239). William Riggan's 1981 work, *Picaros, Madmen, Naïfs, and Clowns: The Unreliable First-Person Narrator*, further refines the understanding of unreliable narrators, concentrating on the first-person narrator, the most prevalent form of unreliable narration. Riggan provides the following description to illustrate his classification. The first archetype, the Picaro, frequently encountered in picaresque novels, embodies the obstinacy of sin. A prominent exemplar of this picaro type of unreliable narrator is found in Don Quixote, the protagonist of Miguel de Cervantes' *The Ingenious Gentleman Sir Quixote of La Mancha* (1605). This novel chronicles the adventures of Don Quixote, a middle-aged man driven by a fervent yearning for adventure. The second classification, the Clown, characterized by a narrative tradition associated with fools, court jesters, and soties, utilizes unreliable narration replete with irony and ambiguities. A pertinent example of a Clown is Tristram Shandy, the central figure in Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–67). This biographical novel is marked by digression, double entendre, sarcasm, and insults, rendering it challenging for readers to discern which aspects of Tristram's life and recounted events are to be taken seriously. The third archetype, the Madman, possesses unreliability stemming from an unbalanced mind and serves as a case study in the pathology of insanity. Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) features the narrator, Alex, as an exemplification of the liar and madman type of unreliable narrator. Alex recounts the narrative under the influence of drugs and exhibits mental instability, characteristics intricately linked to the madman archetype of unreliable narrators. The fourth classification, the Naïf, is a narrator whose na-

ture unfolds through their own narration, lacking the experience to grapple with moral, ethical, emotional, and intellectual questions. An embodiment of The Naif is evident in Scout Finch, the protagonist of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1995). As a young child documenting her experiences growing up in the Deep South, Scout provides an example of the Naif archetype within the realm of unreliable narration (Riggan 1981).

The exploration of the unreliable self within the realm of psychology delves into the intricate facets of human consciousness and identity. Sigmund Freud's pioneering work in psychoanalysis notably in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) and *The Ego and the Id* (1923) laid the groundwork for understanding the complexities of the self. Freud's conceptualization of the unconscious mind, defense mechanisms, and the dynamic interplay of conscious and unconscious desires illuminated the inherent unreliability of self-perception. This psychological dimension provides a foundational understanding of how the self is often obscured by unconscious motives and hidden facets. Later, theorists like Carl Jung expanded upon Freud's ideas, introducing the collective unconscious, shadow, and archetypes. The concept of the shadow, introduced by Carl Jung, signifies the unconscious facets of an individual's personality that undergo rejection and repression. In analytical psychology, the shadow represents elements conflicting with the ego ideal, resulting in inner resistance and projection. It functions as an emotional blind spot, taking on archetypal manifestations within the collective unconscious, such as the trickster. While the concept of the shadow in Jung's psychology doesn't directly align with the notion of an unreliable narrator, there exist connections between the two concerning the comprehension of human perception and self-awareness. An unreliable narrator typically distorts or manipulates the truth in storytelling, often stemming from personal biases, mental instability, or a desire to deceive. This distortion can be perceived as a psychological defense mechanism, akin to the way the ego might resist acknowledging certain personality aspects, as elucidated by Jung's concept of the shadow (Jung 2014). In both scenarios, there's a nuanced exploration of unconscious elements influencing perception and narrative. Carl Jung's significant contributions to psychology through influential works like *Man and His Symbols*, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, *Psychological Types*, and *Psychology of the Unconscious*, indirectly shape discussions on the unreliable narrator in literature. These psychological constructs added further layers to the concept of the unreliable self, suggesting that the self is not only influenced by individual experiences but also by universal symbols and themes embedded in the collective unconscious. Additionally, Virginia Woolf's narrative innovations, particularly in works like *Mrs. Dalloway*, intricately navigate the inner thoughts and perceptions of characters, revealing the subjective and often fragmentary nature of self-awareness. Woolf's literary

explorations align with emerging psychological theories, creating a convergence of disciplines in the exploration of the unreliable self. The symbiotic relationship between psychology and literature becomes particularly evident in works like Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*, where characters like, Bernard, Susan, Rhoda, Neville, Jinny, and Louis grapple with their shifting identities and the unreliability of self-perception.

1. HOLDEN CAULFIELD: NAVIGATING THE HISTORICAL IDEATION OF KNOWING AND UNKNOWING

As the exploration of the unreliable self-intertwines with psychological dimensions in literature, our focus now shifts to a captivating case study that embodies this intricate theme. It is in this context that the paper intends to analyze *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, as it is an interesting case-study belonging to the history of this idea. This analysis accentuates the broader concept of the history of ideas, delving into the evolution and impact of unreliable narration as depicted in Salinger's seminal work. The exploration aims to unravel the intricate layers of Holden Caulfield's unreliability, offering insights into how this character contributes to the evolving narrative landscape and the historical trajectory of the idea within literature.

Published in 1951 *The Catcher in the Rye* serves as a rich reservoir of complexities within the narrative structure, with Holden Caulfield emerging as a character who encapsulates the embodiment of an unreliable narrator. It is a classic novel that follows the life of a teenage boy named Holden Caulfield, who is expelled from his boarding school and embarks on a journey to find meaning and purpose in his life. Holden's narrative unfolds through a lens tainted with ambiguity and uncertainty, a testament to the profound impact of Salinger's craftsmanship on the literary landscape. The novel compels readers to confront the intricate interplay of truth, perception, and storytelling reliability, mirroring the broader exploration of these themes throughout the history of literature. *The Catcher in the Rye*, like a chameleon in the literary realm, possesses an uncanny ability to mirror the universal struggles of human existence. Its protagonist, the brooding and disillusioned Holden Caulfield, embodies the angst and restless yearning that courses through the veins of countless souls navigating the treacherous path of adolescence. Holden's battle against the perceived phoniness of the adult world strikes a chord with individuals from all corners of the globe, transcending cultural barriers and resonating with the raw essence of youthful rebellion and existential contemplation. Furthermore, Salinger's novel acts as a cultural touchstone, a shared language that allows disparate individuals to connect and find solace in their shared experiences. It has become a testament to the

universal nature of human emotions, an emotional compass that points towards the turbulent seas of adolescence and the complex maze of identity formation. *The Catcher in the Rye* serves as a rite of passage, an initiation into the realm of global popular culture, where readers from diverse backgrounds are united in their collective nod of recognition, their shared understanding of the trials and tribulations of growing up. Moreover, the very themes and motifs that weave through the pages of *The Catcher in the Rye* are deeply embedded in the fabric of our modern world. The quest for authenticity, the struggle against conformity, the longing for connection in a fragmented society—these are not merely literary tropes confined to the realm of fiction. They reverberate in the corridors of our own lives, echoed in the voices of countless individuals who navigate the complexities of a globalized and rapidly changing world. This iconic work of literature, cherished by generations, acts as a perfect case study to illuminate the intricacies of self-construction and the role of the narrator in shaping an idealized version of themselves through their narration. Within this narrative tapestry, we shall explore how the text itself may subvert or challenge the implicit authority of the narrator, transcending the boundaries of conventional storytelling. Our inquiry delves beyond the surface of the story, peering into the depths of the characters' minds and the world they inhabit, uncovering the underlying nuances that shape their perceptions and actions. Through this exploration, the paper strives to provoke thought, to question the very foundations of our understanding of self-hood and the narratives that shape it.

This article aims to scrutinize the nuanced layers of Holden's unreliability, motivated by personal biases, mental instability, and a profound yearning for authenticity. By dissecting Salinger's masterful use of narrative distortion, intentional or unknowing, this analysis contributes to the ongoing dialogue on the evolution of unreliable narrators and the history of the idea of unreliability. The profound influence of *The Catcher in the Rye* on shaping perceptions of authenticity and truth within literature underscores its significance as a compelling case study in the historical trajectory of this captivating literary device. This article will also explore the literary techniques employed in *The Catcher in the Rye* and how these techniques contribute to the novel's overall impact.

2. NARRATOLOGY: COGNITIVE AND RHETORIC

To begin with the concept of Narratology, the art of unraveling the intricate tapestry of narratives, is more than a mere academic discipline; it is a key that unlocks the hidden chambers of human experience. In its exploration of storytelling, narratology delves into the depths of our collective conscious-

ness, exposing the intricate threads that weave together our thoughts, emotions, and perspectives. It invites us to question the very nature of truth and fiction, challenging the boundaries of our perceived reality. Through the lens of narratology, we become both architects and voyagers, constructing and traversing the landscapes of imagination, empathy, and meaning. It is a realm where words transcend ink on paper, becoming vessels of profound revelation, allowing us to glimpse the profound complexity and interconnectedness of our shared human existence. There exist two major schools of narratology that explore narrative unreliability: the rhetorical school, represented by scholars such as Wayne Booth, Seymour Chatman, William Riggan, Rimmon-Kenan, and James Phelan, and the cognitive or constructivist narratology, primarily represented by Tamar Yacobi and Ansgar Nünning and Mieke Bal. Wayne Booth, in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, delves into the role of the implied author and the strategies employed in narrative communication. Seymour Chatman, through *Story and Discourse* and *Reading Narrative Fiction*, examines the distinction between story and discourse, providing insights into narrative unreliability. The comprehensive understanding of various narrative unreliability types is elucidated by William Riggan's in *Picaros, Madmen, Naïfs, and Clowns: The Unreliable First-Person Narrator*. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, in her work *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, contributes to the understanding of narrative structure and the poetics of fiction. Her insights enrich the exploration of how narratives, including their unreliable aspects, are crafted and perceived. James Phelan, known for his work *Narrative as Rhetoric: Technique, Audiences, Ethics, Ideology*, focuses on the rhetorical dimensions of narrative, examining techniques, audiences, ethics, and ideology.

Conversely, the cognitive or constructivist narratology finds representation in theorists like Ansgar Nünning, Birgit Neumann and Mieke Bal. Bal in *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (2017) offers insights into the analysis of narrative structures and their impact on storytelling across various media. Ansgar Nünning, and Birgit Neumann notably in *An Introduction to the Study of Narrative Fiction* (2008), direct attention to the cognitive aspects of narrative, emphasizing how readers construct meaning and engage with unreliable narrators.

The rhetorical school of narratology refers to a theoretical approach to the study of narrative that focuses on the various ways in which narratives are constructed and communicated to readers. This approach is rooted in the classical tradition of rhetoric, which focuses on the use of language and other communicative strategies to persuade, influence, or engage an audience. According to the rhetorical school of narratology, narrative texts are not simply neutral conveyors of information, but rather they are shaped by the rhetorical strategies employed by their authors. In the context of narratology, the rhe-

torical school seeks to identify the specific rhetorical strategies that authors use to construct their narratives, such as the use of figurative language, the selection of specific details, and the deployment of narrative voice and point of view. These strategies are not limited to but may include the use of metaphor, irony, and other figures of speech, as well as the arrangement and organization of the narrative elements themselves. According to some critics, the rhetorical school of narratology draws on the ancient Greek rhetorical tradition, which emphasized the use of language to persuade and manipulate readers and audiences. In this approach, narrative is seen as a form of communication that aims to influence readers through its use of language, structure, and other rhetorical devices. These strategies are used to shape the reader's understanding of the story and the characters, and to create a particular emotional and aesthetic effect. One of the key principles of the rhetorical school of narratology is that narratives are not neutral or objective accounts of events, but rather are constructed and shaped by the author to achieve specific goals. These goals may be overtly political or ideological, or they may be more subtle, aimed at shaping the reader's attitudes, beliefs, or values. According to this school of thought, narratives are not simply reflections of reality, but are rather constructed through the use of rhetorical devices. The 'implied author', as conceptualised by Booth is a key concept in the rhetorical school of narratology, and it refers to the persona or voice that is created by the narrator of a story. This persona is not the same as the author of the work, but rather is a constructed character that is created through the use of language and rhetorical devices. The implied author is the voice that the reader hears as they read the story, and it shapes the way that the reader interprets and understands the narrative. The concept of the implied author is important because it allows us to understand the way that narratives are constructed and how they influence the reader. By analyzing the language and rhetorical devices used by the narrator, we can gain insight into the author's intended meaning and the effect that the narrative has on the reader. According to this school of theory, the implied author is not a static character, but rather is constantly evolving throughout the course of the narrative, as the narrator uses different devices and techniques to shape the reader's understanding of the story. Booth in his book *The Rhetoric of Fiction* writes, "The implied author chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choices" (Booth 1983, 74-75). In simpler terms, the meaning of a narrative is not fixed or predetermined by the author, but rather is shaped by the reader's interpretation. Readers bring their own experiences, beliefs, and values to the reading process, and these factors play a crucial role in shaping the meaning that is derived from a narrative. Booth argues that the implied author is a powerful force in shaping the reader's un-

derstanding of the story, and that it is the responsibility of the reader to critically analyze and interpret the narrative. By understanding the role of the implied author and the techniques used to construct it, readers can become more aware of the ways that narratives shape our understanding of the world and our place in it.

On the other hand, Cognitive narratology, also known as constructivist narratology, is an approach to the study of narrative that focuses on how readers construct meaning from the stories they read. This approach is based on the idea that the meaning of a story is not inherent in the text itself, but is instead created by the reader's interpretation of the text. According to cognitive narratology, readers bring their own knowledge, experiences, and cultural background to the act of reading. They use this knowledge to make sense of the story and to create their own mental representations of the characters, events, and themes of the narrative. These mental representations are constructed through a process of inference, where readers draw inferences about the story based on the information provided in the text and their own prior knowledge. This approach recognizes that different readers may interpret the same text in different ways, depending on their individual perspectives and backgrounds. The cognitive approach to narratology is grounded in the theory of cognitive psychology, which emphasizes the importance of mental processes such as attention, perception, memory, and reasoning in shaping human behavior (Huhn et al. 2014). In the context of reading, cognitive psychology suggests that readers actively engage with the text, using their cognitive processes to construct a mental model of the story. According to cognitive narratology, the process of constructing a mental model involves four stages: comprehension, inference, elaboration, and evaluation. In the comprehension stage, the reader processes the narrative at a surface level, extracting basic information about the story's characters, setting, and events. In the inference stage, the reader uses this basic information to make inferences about the story's meaning and themes. In the elaboration stage, the reader integrates their own prior knowledge and experiences with the story to create a more detailed mental model. Finally, in the evaluation stage, the reader evaluates their mental model and the story itself to determine its overall significance and meaning.

One of the key concepts in cognitive narratology is the idea of a "narrative world." This refers to the mental model that readers construct of the story as they read it. In cognitive narratology, a mental model is a cognitive representation of a narrative that a reader constructs in their mind while reading or listening to a story. The mental model is based on the information that is presented in the narrative and is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, and cultural background. It is not a static entity, but rather a dynamic construct that evolves as the reader encounters new infor-

mation in the narrative. The reader continually updates their mental model as they process new information and revise their understanding of the story. Mental models play a crucial role in cognitive narratology because they help to explain how readers make sense of stories. When a reader constructs a mental model, they are actively engaging with the narrative and creating a personalized understanding of the story based on their own cognitive processes and experiences. The concept of mental models is closely related to other key concepts in cognitive narratology, including schema, frame, and script. Mental models are built using these basic building blocks, and they provide a foundation for the reader's interpretation and understanding of the narrative.

2.1. *The Unreliable Narrator*

The Catcher in the Rye is a prime example of rhetoric narrative, as Salinger uses language to create a specific mood and tone throughout the novel. While cognitive narratology primarily focuses on the cognitive processes involved in the creation and reception of narratives, rhetoric narratology centers its attention on the persuasive and communicative strategies employed by authors to shape and convey their narratives. In the case of *The Catcher in the Rye*, Salinger's deliberate use of language, narrative voice, and point of view serves as a testament to the rhetorical nature of the novel. The novel's narrative structure is also very essential to its impact and meaning. The narrative is divided into three parts, with each section reflecting different stages in Holden's emotional journey. The first part introduces Holden and his current state of mind, while the second part explores his interactions with other characters and his attempts to connect with them. The final part focuses on Holden's inner thoughts and emotions, as he begins to come to terms with his own identity and the world around him. We can say that Holden Caulfield's voice dominates the narrative, and his use of slang and colloquial language creates a distinctive and authentic voice that resonates with readers. Salinger's use of repetition, such as Holden's use of the phrase "phony" to describe things he dislikes, adds to the novel's thematic coherence and reinforces Holden's characterization as an outsider who sees through the hypocrisy of the adult world. However, the narrative structure of the novel is also characterized by a nonlinear plot-line that reflects Holden's fragmented and unstable emotional state. The story is punctuated by flashbacks and dream sequences that further blur the line between reality and fantasy. The nonlinear plot structure also reflects Holden's feelings of disorientation and confusion, as he struggles to make sense of his own emotions and experiences.

One of the key aspects of rhetoric narratology is the way that the narrative elements and rhetorical devices interact to create meaning. In *The*

Catcher in the Rye, Salinger uses a variety of rhetorical devices to convey the novel's themes and messages. For example, the novel is replete with metaphors, such as Holden's description of himself as a "catcher in the rye," which symbolizes his desire to protect innocent children from the corruption of the adult world. The use of this metaphor creates a powerful image that resonates with readers and reinforces the novel's themes of innocence and corruption. One of the most prominent rhetorical devices in the novel is the use of symbolism. The title of the novel itself is a symbol that represents Holden's desire to protect the innocence of childhood from the corrupting influence of adulthood. The red hunting hat is one of the most prominent symbols in the novel. Holden wears the hat as a way to separate himself from the rest of the world. The hat is also a symbol of Holden's innocence and vulnerability, as he is only comfortable wearing it in private. To quote a few lines, "I pulled the peak of my hunting hat around to the front all of a sudden, for a change. I was getting sort of nervous, all of a sudden" (Salinger 2018, 20). When Holden gives the hat to his sister Phoebe, it is a symbol of his acceptance of growing up and moving away from childhood.

The Museum of Natural History is another symbol that is significant in the novel. For Holden, the museum represents a frozen moment in time, a place where things remain the same and do not change. The museum also represents Holden's desire for stability and permanence in a world that he perceives as constantly changing and phony. Holden says,

The best thing, though, in that museum was that everything always stayed right where it was. Nobody'd move. You could go there a hundred thousand times, and that Eskimo would still be just finished catching those two fish, the birds would still be on their way south, the deers would still be drinking out of that water hole, with their pretty antlers and their pretty, skinny legs, and that squaw with the naked bosom would still be weaving that same blanket. Nobody'd be different. (Salinger 2018, 66)

The ducks in Central Park are a recurring symbol in the novel. Holden asks several people throughout the novel where the ducks go in winter when the pond freezes over. The ducks are a metaphor for Holden's own situation, as he is also displaced and searching for a place to belong. The carousel is a symbol of innocence and childhood. Holden watches his sister Phoebe ride the carousel and experiences a moment of clarity and understanding. The carousel represents the fleeting nature of childhood and the inevitability of growing up. The symbols used in *The Catcher in the Rye* contribute to the overall theme of Holden's search for meaning and identity. Holden's struggle with authenticity is reflected in his search for symbols that represent stability and permanence in a world that he perceives as constantly changing

and phony. The symbols also serve as a way for Holden to separate himself from the rest of the world, highlighting his feelings of isolation and alienation.

Salinger also uses imagery to create a vivid and memorable picture of Holden's experiences. For example, he describes Holden's encounters with various characters in vivid detail, such as his conversation with the taxi driver who tells him about the ducks in Central Park. The use of vivid imagery helps to make the story more engaging and memorable for the reader. Holden abruptly asks the taxi driver a series of questions: "You know those ducks in that lagoon right near Central Park South? That little lake? By any chance, do you happen to know where they go, the ducks, when it gets all frozen over? Do you happen to know, by any chance?" (Salinger 2018, 33)

The idea of the "implied author" is particularly relevant to *The Catcher in the Rye*. Holden Caulfield is a character who is often described as being a stand-in for J.D. Salinger himself. However, it is important to remember that Holden is a fictional character and that the implied author of the novel is not necessarily the same as the real-life author. The implied author of *The Catcher in the Rye* is the persona that the reader constructs based on the textual clues provided by Salinger.

Holden's narration is also characterized by its unreliability and the use of irony to create meaning. Booth defines irony as a "hidden evaluation," which means that the author is making a judgment about a character or situation without explicitly stating it. Holden's unreliability as a narrator is apparent from the very beginning of the novel. He introduces himself as a liar, stating that he sometimes lies just for the sake of lying. He also frequently contradicts himself, such as when he claims to dislike his former school but then admits to missing it. Holden's narration is further complicated by his tendency to exaggerate and misremember events. For example, he describes an encounter with a former classmate as a violent fight, but it later becomes clear that the encounter was not as extreme as he initially described it. Like the characteristic traits of an unreliable narrator, as proposed by Rigman, Holden frequently lies, exaggerates, and distorts the truth. He is prone to making sweeping generalizations and indulging in black-and-white thinking, which can make his perspective seem skewed or exaggerated. For example, he describes his brother as a prostitute-chaser, implying that his brother is promiscuous and unfaithful, but it later becomes clear that this is not the case. Another example for the same is, he tells his little sister, Phoebe, that he wants to be a "catcher in the rye" who saves children from falling off of a cliff, but later admits that he doesn't actually know what he wants to do with his life. Holden's unreliability as a narrator forces the reader to question their assumptions and to engage with the text more critically. Holden also withholds information from the reader. He often alludes to events that have oc-

curred in his past but does not provide a full explanation. For example, Holden talks about his brother's death but does not provide any details about how his brother died. Holden says:

I slept in the garage the night he died, and I broke all the goddam windows with my fist, just for the hell of it. I even tried to break all the windows on the station wagon we had that summer, but my hand was already broken and everything by that time, and I couldn't do it. It was a very stupid thing to do, I'll admit, but I hardly didn't even know I was doing it. (Salinger 2018, 22)

Holden also mentions a girl he used to know, Jane Gallagher, but does not provide any information about their relationship. Holden's withholding of information creates a gap between what the reader knows and what Holden wants the reader to believe. Holden's misrepresentation of events is evident in his interactions with other characters. Holden often misinterprets the intentions of others, which leads to misunderstandings. For example, Holden misinterprets the intentions of his former English teacher, Mr. Antolini, and accuses him of making a homosexual advance. Holden's misrepresentation of events creates a gap between what the reader knows and what Holden wants the reader to believe.

Holden's unreliability as a narrator has several important effects on the novel *The Catcher in the Rye*. First, it creates a sense of ambiguity and uncertainty about the events of the novel. The reader is forced to question Holden's version of events and consider the possibility that what he is saying may not be entirely accurate. This uncertainty contributes to the novel's overall mood of disillusionment and confusion. Second, Holden's unreliability serves to highlight the theme of alienation and isolation. His inability to connect with others and his tendency to push people away are a direct result of his unreliable narration. The reader sees him as a complex and flawed character, but the other characters in the novel see only a difficult and unpleasant person. Finally, the use of the unreliable narrator serves to create a sense of intimacy between the reader and the narrator. The reader becomes intimately acquainted with Holden's thoughts and feelings, and is able to sympathize with his struggles. This intimacy is key to the novel's success, as it allows the reader to become emotionally invested in Holden's journey.

The Catcher in the Rye also employs internal focalization, with the story being told from the perspective of the protagonist, Holden Caulfield. One of the unique features of *The Catcher in the Rye* is the way in which Salinger uses the theory of focalization to create a specific atmosphere and tone. By employing internal focalization, Salinger restricts the reader's access to information, forcing them to rely on Holden's perception of events. This cre-

ates a sense of tension and uncertainty, as readers are never quite sure what is happening outside of Holden's perspective. For example, when Holden meets up with his former classmate, Ackley, the reader can only see Ackley through Holden's eyes. We never get a sense of what Ackley is thinking or feeling, which creates a sense of ambiguity and unease. Another way in which focalization affects the reader's understanding of *The Catcher in the Rye* is through the characterization of Holden himself. Because the story is told entirely from his perspective, readers are given an intimate view of his psyche, which helps to create a sense of sympathy and understanding for the character. Holden is a deeply troubled and emotionally stunted individual, and his unique perspective on the world around him helps to explain some of his more erratic behavior. For example, when Holden visits the museum, he fixates on the fact that nothing ever changes. This reveals his fear of change and his desire for a world that is stable and unchanging.

Booth's theory of point of view argues that the author's choice of perspective can influence the reader's understanding of the story. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, Salinger uses a limited third-person point of view to convey Holden's story. This means that the reader is only able to see events from Holden's perspective, and other characters are presented only as he perceives them. Holden's limited perspective is an essential part of the novel's narrative structure. It allows Salinger to create a sense of ambiguity and irony, as the reader is forced to question Holden's interpretation of events. For example, Holden's perception of his brother D.B. as a sell-out writer may not be entirely accurate, as D.B. may have valid reasons for choosing to write for Hollywood. The limited point of view creates tension and suspense, as the reader is left wondering whether Holden's perspective is accurate or not.

CONCLUSION

The Catcher in the Rye, intricately intertwines the theme of the unreliable self into the narrative, primarily through the perspective of Holden Caulfield. Holden's inclination towards falsehoods, exaggerations, and selective omissions represents a conscious narrative choice, crafting a nuanced landscape laden with ambiguity and uncertainty. Salinger's incorporation of metaphors, symbolism, and vivid imagery, as explored in the paper, further enriches the portrayal of Holden's unreliable narrative. The novel's rhetorical essence, reflected in Salinger's deliberate language, narrative voice, and chosen point of view, contributes significantly to the development of Holden's intricate character. As detailed in the analysis, the non-linear plot structure adeptly mirrors Holden's fractured emotional state, injecting nuanced layers into the exploration of truth and authenticity. Through these literary techniques, Sal-

inger not only constructs a captivating narrative but also draws readers into an intimate connection with Holden's emotional struggles and contemplative journey. *The Catcher in the Rye* remains a cultural touchstone, transcending generations due to its exploration of universal themes. Salinger's role in shaping the evolution of unreliable narrators, as scrutinized in the paper, positions the novel as a noteworthy case study in the historical trajectory of this literary device and in understanding the history of the idea of the "unreliable self."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bal, Mieke. 2017. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Booth, Wayne C. 1983. *Rhetoric of Fiction*. 2nd ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Burgess, Anthony. 1962. *A Clockwork Orange*. London, England: William Heinemann.
- Cervantes, Miguel de. 1605. *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de La Mancha*. <https://archive.org/details/elingeniosohidal00cerguat/page/n3/mode/2up>.
- Chatman, Seymour Benjamin. 1980. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Chatman, Seymour Benjamin, and Brian Attebery, eds. 1992. *Reading Narrative Fiction*. London, England: Macmillan.
- Euripides. 2016. *Bacchae*. London, England: Vintage Classics.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1999. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Translated by Joyce Crick. Oxford, England: Oxford Paperbacks.
- . 2018. *The Ego and the Id*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.
- Huhn, Peter, Jan Christoph Meister, John Pier, and Wolf Schmid, eds. 2014. *Handbook of Narratology*. Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter.
- Jung, C. G., ed. 1978. *Man and His Symbols*. London, England: Picador.
- . 2014. *Collected Works of C.g. Jung, Volume 9 (Part 2): Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*. Edited by Gerhard Adler and R. F. C. Hull. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- . 2020. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul: Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. 2nd ed. London, England: Routledge.
- . 2023a. *Psychological Types*. Translated by H. G. Baynes. London, England: Routledge.
- . 2023b. *Psychology of the Unconscious A Study of the Transformations and Symbolisms of the Libido*. Lushena Books.
- Lee, Harper. 1995. *To Kill a Mocking Bird*. 35th ed. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Neumann, Birgit, and Ansgar Nünning. 2008. *An Introduction to the Study of Narrative Fiction*. 1st ed. Stuttgart, Germany: Klett.
- Phelan, James. 1996. *Narrative as Rhetoric: Techniques, Audiences, Ethics, Ideology*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press.

- Riggan, William. 1981. *Picaros, Madmen, Naiifs and Clowns: The Unreliable First Person Narrator*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith. 1983. *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*. London, England: Methuen young books.
- Salinger, J. D. 2018. *The Catcher in the Rye*. Harlow, England: Penguin Books.
- Sterne, Laurence. 2009. *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*. Edited by Ian Campbell Ross. London, England: Oxford University Press.
- Woolf, Virginia. 1976. *Mrs. Dalloway*. London, England: Grafton.
- . 2008. *The Waves*. Edited by Gillian Beer. London, England: Oxford University Press.

histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
ideeengeschiedenis
история идей
ideeengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
storia delle idee
HISTORY OF IDEAS
historia idei
idehistorie
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
storia delle idee
Ideeengeschichte
historia idei
ideeengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
история идей
historia de las ideas
история идей
STORIA DELLE IDEE
ideeengeschiedenis
storia delle idee
History of Ideas
история идей
historia dei
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
History of Ideas
Ideeengeschichte
idehistorie
Ideeengeschichte
histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
storia delle idee
история идей
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideeengeschiedenis
historia de las ideas
STORIA DELLE IDEE
histoire des idées
History of Ideas
Ideeengeschichte
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
Ideeengeschichte
история идей
idehistorie

Second Section

CONTRIBUTIONS
IN ITALIAN



«UN DIO PER UN MONDO CHE STA INIZIANDO». LA «SINGOLARITÀ» TEOLOGICA DI PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

Gianfilippo Giustozzi
Istituto Teologico Marchigiano
Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose – Pescara
giangustozzi@gmail.com

ENGLISH TITLE: "A GOD FOR A WORLD ABOUT TO BEGIN." THE THEOLOGICAL "SINGULARITY" OF PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

ABSTRACT

The article reconstructs the evolution of Teilhard de Chardin's thought about the structure of religious experience. From the first diary notes written in the trenches in 1915 to his last writings in 1955, the Jesuit thinker emphasizes the need for "another theology" to satisfy the religious needs and aspirations of a human race that is undergoing a phase of profound changes. As well as indicating ways of thinking that reframe the Christian experience within the space of the evolutionary vision of a universe articulated by the natural sciences, such a theological discourse must respond to the needs of human beings faced by the growing expansion of technology. Teilhard's opus stands out as a message from a Christian thinker who defines himself "isolated" and "irregular" in relation to an insular Catholic culture that fails to adequately comprehend the transformations induced by the scientific revolution, as well as political and technological change.

KEYWORDS: Teilhard de Chardin, Catholic Theology, Science and Theology, Ultra-humanism, Panentheism

Nelle ultime righe di *Le Christique*, scritto datato marzo 1955, composto, quindi, un mese prima della morte, Teilhard parla di se stesso come di un credente «isolato», portatore di una «singolarità» ritenuta fuorviante dalla gerarchia ecclesiastica. In alcune lettere si definisce un «indipendente», un «irregolare», che, come scrive a Jeanne Mortier il 13 aprile 1940, si descrive

come una sorta di Giovanni Battista che «annuncia ed evoca ciò che deve venire»¹.

Queste autodesignazioni non autorizzano l'identificazione di Teilhard come un visionario, un mistico stravagante, o un profeta eccentrico che parla uno strano gergo cristiano. La sua «singolarità» è infatti il prodotto della sua condizione di religioso e di scienziato nella cui persona, «per puro caso (temperamento, educazione, ambiente)»², una profonda religiosità si è unita con l'amore della conoscenza del mondo prodotta da scienze come la geologia, la paleontologia, la paleoantropologia, e con una riflessione sui futuri scenari dell'evoluzione in cui le competenze dello scienziato si saldano con i pensieri del filosofo e le speranze del cristiano. Questa «fusione» prodottasi in lui viene ritenuta dal gesuita ancora troppo «debole» per potersi propagare «esplosivamente». A suo avviso, però, è sufficiente per affermare che essa «è possibile, e che un giorno o l'altro la connessione si stabilirà»³ su scala più ampia. Egli è infatti convinto che alla verità sia sufficiente «apparire una sola volta, in un solo spirito, perché nulla possa impedire di invadere e di infiammare tutto»⁴.

Teilhard ritiene quindi che la sua condizione di credente «isolato», «irregolare», è portatrice di una «singolarità» soltanto «apparente», perché la sua «fede purificata», che è il prodotto di una lunga riflessione sull'impatto esercitato dallo sviluppo delle scienze e dall'espansione della tecnica sulla pratica cristiana, e, più in generale, sull'esperienza religiosa, sarà anche la fede capace di soddisfare «i carbonai e le brave donne di domani»⁵.

Il gesuita è dunque convinto della «superiorità» della sua interpretazione della dottrina e della prassi cristiana rispetto a quella depositata nel «cristianesimo classico», perché consente di non dissolvere l'identità cristiana, e, al tempo stesso, di metabolizzare la mutazione dell'immagine del mondo e dell'uomo prodottasi a partire dall'avvento della modernità. Si sente confortato, in tal senso, dalla constatazione del numero crescente di persone che, come lui, «presentono» una figura di cristianesimo capace, come scrive nel marzo del 1916 nell'esergo del primo dei venti saggi composti al fronte nel corso della Prima Guerra Mondiale, di dar vita a una pratica cristiana vissuta come «comunione con Dio attraverso la Terra»⁶.

¹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres à Jeanne Mortier*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1984, p. 24.

² P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Christique*, in Id., *Le Cœur de la Matière*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1976, p. 117.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 116.

⁶ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *La vie cosmique*, in Id., *Écrits du temps de la guerre*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1975, p. 19.

A questa ermeneutica del cristianesimo assegna il compito di liberare i credenti da versioni ascetiche, intimistiche e demondanzianti della fede, di fronteggiare il materialismo legato a letture riduzionistiche del sapere scientifico, di mostrare che la fede è in possesso di una «coscienza cosmica»⁷ capace di impedire che il nuovo «Dio (finito o no)»⁸ che l'universo è divenuto per la modernità possa eclissare il Dio della tradizione cristiana.

1. LA «SINGOLARITÀ» DI TEILHARD: UN INNOVATIVO PROGRAMMA DI RICERCA TEOLOGICA

Nel suo tentativo di riforma del discorso cristiano, Teilhard non si limita alla ricerca di un possibile rapporto di concordia tra discorso scientifico sulla natura, tecnoscienza, e una fede cristiana fissata nella configurazione stabilita da una ortodossia ritenuta immutabile, e da una teologia che esclude ogni possibilità di riformulazione del discorso cristiano in presenza dei mutamenti dell'immagine del mondo e della vita umana prodotti dalla nascita e dall'avanzamento del sapere tecnico-scientifico. Dalla sua esperienza di religioso e di scienziato trae infatti la convinzione secondo la quale gli risulta impossibile «fare tranquillamente scienza», come gli ingiungono i Superiori della Compagnia di Gesù, senza che egli non debba anche «ripensare contemporaneamente la sua visione religiosa»⁹.

Spinto da questa convinzione, costatagli sospetti, diffidenze, e due esili, uno in Cina, l'altro negli Stati Uniti, elabora un pensiero che si differenzia profondamente dalla mentalità tipica di molti intellettuali cattolici, per i quali «il cristianesimo resta immutato, *quali che siano* le apparenze assunte, per la nostra esperienza, dall'Universo (nelle sue dimensioni, nella sua struttura, nella sua organicità)»¹⁰. È sua convinzione, infatti, che la nascita, l'espansione, il potenziamento del sapere tecnico-scientifico, esercitano sulla religione un urto decostruttivo che la teologia deve prendere seriamente in considerazione, se non desidera affidare la pratica cristiana a un dogmatismo autoritario, o a una «pietà» senza pensiero.

Teilhard si colloca in tal modo agli antipodi della mentalità religiosa autoritaria e devozionistica che vede all'opera anche in confratelli molto acculturati. Ne riconosce, ad esempio, la presenza nel p. Auguste Valensin, suo

⁷ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *L'Élément Universel*, in Id., *Écrits du temps de la guerre*, P. 403.

⁸ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Note pour servir à l'Évangélisation des Temps nouveaux*, in Id., *Écrits du temps de la guerre*, p. 400.

⁹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Lavoro, ricerca e adorazione*, in Id., *La Scienza di fronte a Cristo. Credere nel mondo e credere in Dio*, tr. it. di A. Tassone Bernardi, Il Segno dei Gabrielli, San Pietro in Cariano (VR), 2022, p. 248.

¹⁰ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres familières de Pierre Teilhard de Chardin mon ami. Les dernières années (1948-1955)*, Éditions du Centurion, Paris 1976, p. 195.

amico e consigliere, il quale dice di guardare con «scetticismo» alla teologia, e ritiene che la cosa più importante sia «credere nel Dogma»¹¹. Per Teilhard, invece, il Dogma può «vivere e crescere»¹² soltanto a patto di venire «pensato in teologia»¹³, di essere cioè messo in condizione di offrire una forma di comprensione del mondo e della vita umana «omogenea» con la mutazione dell'immagine e dell'esperienza del mondo prodottasi con la nascita, l'espansione, il potenziamento, del sapere tecnico-scientifico. Ritiene inoltre altamente fuorviante il divorzio tra intelligenza e «pietà», una forma di pratica cristiana che, con sorpresa, riscontra anche in confratelli nei quali una acuta intelligenza critica della realtà convive con una «pietà da novizio»¹⁴.

Teilhard, pur riconoscendo che anche mentalità che legano la pratica cristiana alla diade autorità-obbedienza, o a devote mozioni dell'anima, possano sostenere un'autentica vita di fede, ritiene tuttavia che la visione della verità cristiana come Dogma legittimato dalla *Auctoritas Dei revelantis*, e dal Magistero che ne garantisce la corretta trasmissione, o forme di «pietà» senza pensiero, presentano un grave inconveniente. Non consentono infatti di far fronte all'urto decostruttivo che le scienze della natura e l'espansione della tecnoscienza esercitano sul cristianesimo, e, più in generale, su ogni forma di esperienza religiosa.

La sorgente di tutte le difficoltà in questo momento – si legge nella lettera al p. Valensin del 08 agosto 1950 – è che i teologi non vedono il Mondo e l'Uomo nel modo in cui essi si manifestano attualmente a noi. Ci presentano un Dio per un Mondo finito (o che sta finendo) proprio quando noi potremmo adorare soltanto *un Dio per mondo che sta iniziando*. Ne sono sempre più sicuro: tutta la difficoltà e tutta la grandezza del problema religioso moderno sono lì¹⁵.

Nella «Terra moderna»¹⁶, Teilhard vede attuarsi profonde mutazioni che sono il prodotto della nascita del sapere scientifico e dell'espansione della tecnica. Questi fenomeni dovrebbero a suo avviso indurre la cultura cattolica a dismettere il paradigma neoscolastico, un modello di pensiero che continua ad incastonare la riflessione teologica e la pratica cristiana nello spazio dell'essenzialismo e del fissismo tipici della metafisica dell'essere, e dell'etica da essa dedotta, finendo, così, per dar corso ad una visione del

¹¹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres intimes de Teilhard de Chardin à Auguste Valensin*, Bruno de Solages, Henri de Lubac (1919-1955), Aubier-Montaigne, Paris 1974, p. 419.

¹² *Ibidem*,

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres à Jeanne Mortier*, p. 172.

¹⁵ Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres intimes*, p. 382.

¹⁶ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Il Fenomeno umano*, tr. it. di F. Mantovani, Queriniana, Brescia 1995², p. 198.

mondo nella quale si pretende di poter inscrivere, una volta per tutte, le possibilità della vita del cosmo e della specie umana.

Il gesuita ritiene invece che il compito della teologia è creare un raccordo tra esperienza di Dio e esperienza del mondo, dando luogo a un pensiero cristiano capace di recepire la visione evolutiva del cosmo e della vita umana delineata dalla biologia e dalle scienze della Terra, e di prendere atto dello spostamento dell'asse di comprensione della realtà prodottosi in epoca moderna con il passaggio dal primato attribuito all'ordine invariante dell'essere al paradigma di una visione della natura e della vita umana come formazioni non stabilizzate, portatrici di «qualità creatrici».

Collocandosi in questo orizzonte di comprensione del mondo e della vita umana, intende porre il pensiero cristiano nella condizione di non chiudersi all'interazione con la visione evolutiva del cosmo, e con le mutazioni prodotte dall'allargamento delle capacità di intervento sulla natura e sulla stessa vita umana legato alla rapida espansione del sapere tecnico-scientifico. Il discorso teologico cristiano viene in tal modo disconnesso da modelli di pensiero che rappresentano il cosmo e la vita umana come realtà stabilizzate, e, sulla scia del detto di Tertulliano, «*id verius quod prius*», identificano la struttura originaria del mondo posto in essere dall'atto creatore di Dio come il luogo privilegiato di manifestazione della verità.

Questa operazione di disconnessione, che trasforma la teologia cristiana in un sapere inquieto che si assume il rischio di ripensare radicalmente l'esperienza religiosa, è resa necessaria, secondo il gesuita, dal fatto che l'umanità sta attraversando un «*cambiamento di età*»¹⁷.

Questo fenomeno costringe non solo la teologia, ma anche la metafisica, l'antropologia, l'etica, la politica, a misurarsi con l'urto teorico e pratico prodotto dall'avvento di un sapere che considera la natura e la vita umana come formazioni in divenire, dotate di una energia creatrice, che, da ricettacoli passivi di un ordine che le precede, come vengono rappresentate nella metafisica neoscolastica dell'essere, le trasforma in potenze attive in continua trasformazione. Questa visione del cosmo e dell'uomo come entità dotate di «qualità creatrici» viene contestualizzata dal gesuita nello spazio di una ontologia che trova una formulazione sintetica nelle parole di un teologo luterano americano che hanno forti assonanze teilhardiane: «l'esplorazione di possibilità non ancora attuali è la natura della realtà»¹⁸.

¹⁷ Teilhard de Chardin, *Il Fenomeno umano*, p. 200.

¹⁸ Ph. Hefner, *Technology and Human Becoming*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 2003, p. 90.

1.1. Dalla teologia come sapere «codificato» alla teologia come laboratorio del cristianesimo del futuro

La «singolarità» di Teilhard come pensatore cristiano si manifesta già con chiarezza nel diario tenuto al fronte, e nei venti saggi composti tra il 1916 e il 1919, nei quali delinea un pensiero teologico inquieto, interrogativo, estraneo ad ogni deferenza verso la Neoscolastica, come pure verso forme di pensiero ancorate alla mitizzazione romantica del Medioevo.

Nel «sussulto di pensiero» vissuto nel corso di questi anni, il gesuita sviluppa una riflessione teologica e una spiritualità cristiana dal tratto antidualista e antiascetico, attente alla valorizzazione della struttura evolutiva del mondo e della vita umana. In tal modo si propone di integrare nel bagaglio teorico e pratico del cristianesimo quelli che egli considera i due contrassegni più tipici della sensibilità culturale moderna, vale a dire, la coscienza del radicamento della vita umana nel divenire della natura, e l'identificazione dell'uomo come *Homo Creator*, come potenza di agire capace di dare forma alla natura, agli assetti della propria vita associata, alla struttura stessa della propria costituzione biofisica.

Nella figura di cristianesimo proposta dal gesuita a partire da quanto egli va maturando sulle prime linee del fronte nella propria esperienza di religioso, di scienziato, di «barelliere di seconda classe» che vive la «vita istantanea» tipica di chi è esposto costantemente alla morte, prende forma una visione unitaria del mondo e della vita umana in cui, in maniera non conflittuale, coabitano mistica e Illuminismo, scienza e fede, materia e spirito, amore di Dio e azione di trasformazione della realtà.

Egli intende infatti indicare la via di uscita dal conflitto tra cultura moderna e mentalità cattolica convenzionale attraverso la costruzione di un pensiero religioso capace di valorizzare positivamente la visione evolutiva del mondo e della vita umana, la potenza cognitiva e inventiva delle scienze, il potere di trasformazione della natura reso possibile dai dispositivi della tecnica, il riformismo sociale e le questioni connesse all'emancipazione femminile.

La ricerca tecnico-scientifica, le invenzioni, i progetti di trasformazione della società, la capacità della tecnoscienza di dar corso a nuove configurazioni della realtà, divengono così il nuovo ambiente in cui, a partire dall'avvento della modernità, gli uomini costruiscono la propria forma di vita una volta crollati gli scenari che regolavano la comprensione del mondo tipica dell'Antichità e del Medioevo. Erano scenari più stabili e rassicuranti, non più fruibili, però, dai modi di pensare e di vivere tramite cui gli uomini, dopo la nascita delle scienze della natura, l'espansione della tecnoscienza, le trasformazioni sociali e politiche, conoscono il mondo, se stessi, e organizzano la propria vita.

Per affrontare le problematiche teologiche connesse a questa trasformazione culturale, a differenza di quanto gli suggerisce il p. de Grandmaison, una voce importante della spiritualità cattolica nel primo quarto del Novecento, che lo invita a «integrare le acquisizioni delle moderne della scienza della natura in una “filosofia compatibile con il Cristianesimo”»¹⁹, e ad esso propedeutica, Teilhard ritiene che la compatibilità non vada cercata nella costruzione di una filosofia aperta ai contributi delle scienze che dovrebbe delineare i nuovi *Prolegomena Fidei*. Reputa, piuttosto, che la compatibilità con le acquisizioni della cultura moderna vada cercata «nella Teologia», nello spazio delle categorie di cui essa si serve per produrre il proprio discorso su Dio, sulla creazione, sul peccato originale, sulla figura di Cristo, sulla redenzione, sulla spiritualità, sull'escatologia. Ritene opportuno, in tal senso, scrive in una nota di diario del 28 dicembre 1916, «esprimere il Dogma in termini di divenire umano; mostrare che la Rivelazione si salda alla Scienza, nel rispetto delle stesse leggi dell'essere e del Divenire cosmico»²⁰.

Per realizzare questo innovativo programma di ricerca, che si propone di saldare pratica cristiana e visione evolutiva del cosmo e della vita umana, Teilhard si vede costretto a inventare un linguaggio teologico diffforme rispetto a quello egemone nella cultura cattolica coeva, in cui domina il paradigma della Neoscolastica. In circoli minoritari si guarda con simpatia al Romanticismo religioso veicolato da alcuni letterati convertiti al cattolicesimo, i quali, al pari di filosofi e teologi neoscolastici, considerano la Chiesa cattolica come una istituzione funzionale al contenimento della spinta innovativa proveniente dalla cultura moderna. Il gesuita reputa del tutto inadeguate queste forme del pensiero cattolico, che hanno a suo avviso il torto di fissare l'esperienza cristiana sui canoni del passato, e fanno della teologia un sapere «codificato», stabilizzato, portatore di certezze immutabili, in cui, si legge nella nota di diario del 13 marzo 1918, «il lavoro intellettuale religioso consiste soltanto nel *comprendere un pensiero passato!!!*»²¹.

Per delineare un discorso teologico capace di elaborare le problematiche connesse alla visione evolutiva del mondo affermatasi con l'avvento di discipline a lui familiari come la geologia, la zoologia, la paleontologia, la paleoantropologia, e alle trasformazioni prodotte nella vita umana dall'accelerazione dell'espansione del sapere tecnico-scientifico, Teilhard ritiene che la Chiesa debba «rompere» con la convinzione di essere in possesso di una formulazione immutabile della verità che le garantisce il monopolio della spiegazione della realtà, e debba, di conseguenza, ripensare il

¹⁹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Journal*, Tome I (cahiers 1-5): 26 août 1915 – 4 janvier 1919, Fayard, Paris 1975, p. 175.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 174.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 255.

«Dogma» nell'orizzonte di una mutata visione della natura e della vita umana. Questo passaggio culturale viene da lui assimilato all'attraversamento di una «soglia» nel campo del pensiero teologico, un transito che ha effetti decostruttivi sui modi usuali di pensare e di parlare di Dio. Richiede, infatti, di rompere il «guscio» del discorso teologico convenzionale e dislocare la costruzione della teologia nello spazio culturale aperto da una comprensione del cosmo e dell'uomo che «deborda» l'immagine del mondo e dell'uomo depositata nei linguaggi e nei modi di pensare e di vivere l'esperienza cristiana codificati dalla Chiesa.

Attualmente – scrive il gesuita in due note di diario vergate tra la fine del 1917 e l'inizio del 1918 – c'è veramente una crisi del Cristianesimo nel mondo, dovuta al fatto che il Mondo sembra largamente debordare *la spiegazione cristiana*, il Cristianesimo, *attraverso i suoi misteri, la sua potenza, la sua vitalità evolutiva*. Occorre mostrare che il Cristianesimo, ben compreso, è alla misura di queste oscurità e di queste promesse [...]. Passiamo dunque attraverso una soglia nella storia del Dogma. Occorre *rompere un guscio*, quello della credenza beata nel possesso di una spiegazione universale del Mondo [...]. La Realtà deborda ancora il Dogma esplicitato (Mondo più grande della Religione formulata)²².

Spinto dal riconoscimento dell'incapacità della «teologia classica» di ispirazione neoscolastica, e del romanticismo religioso, di affrontare i problemi imposti dalla visione della natura prodotta dalla biologia, dalle scienze della Terra, dalla paleoantropologia, e dalle mutazioni antropologiche connesse all'espansione della potenza cognitiva e operativa della tecnoscienza, Teilhard assume una posizione fortemente critica nei confronti della cultura cattolica coeva. Questo suo modo di pensare non è attribuibile, si legge nella lettera del 5 gennaio 1921 ad un amico, scienziato e non credente, a un atteggiamento di «doppiezza», come gli rimprovera l'amico, che gli consiglia di rompere con l'istituzione ecclesiastica. Per il gesuita, infatti, la critica del pensiero cattolico dominante non è frutto di narcisismo frondista, né, tantomeno, di «doppiezza». È, invece, l'espressione della volontà di portare avanti «*in vivo*», a partire cioè dalle inquietudini della sua esperienza di credente e di scienziato, un progetto innovativo di ricerca teologica che, senza operare rotture traumatiche con l'istituzione, si propone di dar vita a un pensiero cattolico capace di mettere la Chiesa in condizione di prospettare una forma di pratica cristiana recepibile nello spazio della cultura espressa da un gruppo umano in fase di transizione verso nuovi sviluppi della propria evoluzione.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 243; 274.

So e sento – scrive il 5 gennaio 1921 all'amico scienziato – che il mestiere che faccio è difficile: ma il mio dovere, penso, e la mia missione, è di non cambiarlo con un altro. Innanzitutto, non potrei farlo; e poi non è forse vero che è necessario che ci siano uomini per maneggiare i raggi X e i microbi?²³.

Attraverso la metafora dello sperimentalismo carico di rischi, tipico dello scienziato che si espone all'interazione con agenti le cui reazioni avverse non sono del tutto calcolabili, Teilhard si smarca da una mentalità teologica che reputa di poter fare fronte alle problematiche imposte al cristianesimo dalla modernità rifacendosi a modelli patristici o scolastici. Ritiene infatti che questa via, percorsa dalla cultura cattolica da tre secoli, si è rivelata una impresa fallimentare, perché fissata su paradigmi disfunzionali nella cultura affermatasi a partire dall'avvento della modernità. Per questo, nell'interpretazione della dottrina e della prassi cristiana, si avventura nella ricerca di un paradigma omogeneo con l'orizzonte di pensiero aperto dall'evoluzione biologica e dall'espansione della tecnica.

In tal modo, da gesuita «isolato», la cui riflessione teologica non è garantita dal sigillo dell'approvazione ecclesiastica, delinea un programma di ricerca nel quale l'ermeneutica del Cristianesimo, e, più in generale, di ogni esperienza religiosa, viene collocata in un orizzonte che si qualifica per due caratteristiche. In primo luogo, per la rilevanza assegnata al radicamento della vita umana nelle scansioni evolutive della vita cosmica. In secondo luogo, per l'importanza che la «vita pensante», e il complesso delle produzioni oggettivate nel nuovo spazio di realtà da essa posto in essere, la «Noosfera», hanno nella costruzione dei futuri assetti dell'evoluzione. In tal modo, l'evoluzione, nell'insieme variegato del suo divenire, viene accreditata come riferimento imprescindibile per comprendere il senso e la funzione dell'esperienza religiosa.

Il gesuita delinea in tal modo un innovativo programma di ricerca che, senza nostalgie passatiste, o arroccamenti dottrinali, intende parlare di Dio e della pratica cristiana collocandosi nell'orizzonte dei linguaggi e delle forme di vita prodotti da una cultura che considera l'evoluzione del cosmo, la crescita esponenziale della potenza del sapere tecnico-scientifico, la crescente unificazione della specie umana nel nuovo spazio di realtà da essa prodotto, la «Noosfera», come gli apriori entro cui collocare ogni conoscenza e ogni esperienza del mondo, quindi, anche la dottrina, la spiritualità, la prassi della Chiesa.

²³ G. Martelet, *Teilhard de Chardin, prophète d'un Christ toujours plus grand. Primauté du Christ et transcendance de l'homme*, Éditions Lessius, Bruxelles 2005, p. 112.

1.2. Passi e passaggi dell'ermeneutica teilhardiana del cristianesimo

La «singolarità» di Teilhard non si manifesta soltanto nel «sussulto di pensiero» sperimentato al fronte nel corso della Prima Guerra Mondiale. Infatti, malgrado la proibizione di pubblicare scritti di carattere teologico e filosofico comminatagli dai Superiori della Compagnia di Gesù nell'ottobre del 1924, la sua ricerca teologico-filosofica prosegue intensamente fino al 1955, anno della sua morte.

Volendo schematizzare, si potrebbe dire che essa si articola in tre fasi. Nella prima, che val 1920 al 1928, persegue l'obiettivo di dar corso alla «rifondazione» della teologia e della spiritualità cattolica. Nella seconda, che va dal 1929 al 1948, focalizza il proprio interesse sulla evidenziazione del cambiamento in atto nella struttura dell'esperienza religiosa dovuto all'espansione della tecnoscienza, e alla conseguente affermazione di un nuovo modello di comprensione della vita umana. Nella terza, che copre gli anni che vanno dal 1949 al 1955, elabora la categoria di «Ultra-umano», e riflette sulle mutazioni ad essa connesse nel campo dell'antropologia e della riflessione teologica.

1.2.1. La «necessaria rifondazione» della teologia cattolica

Gli anni che vanno dal 1920 al 1928 sono il periodo nel quale Teilhard precisa l'impatto decostruttivo che il suo programma di riforma del pensiero cattolico delineato al fronte ha sulla dottrina convenzionale della Chiesa. Nel corso di questi anni, inoltre, in seguito all'abiura impostagli circa le opinioni da lui esternate sul peccato originale, e all'ingiunzione di limitarsi a pubblicare unicamente scritti attinenti alla sua attività di paleontologo, assume forma anche giuridica il suo profilo di pensatore religioso «isolato», e «irregolare». Per il gesuita sono infatti gli anni dell'esilio in Cina e del vano tentativo di uscire allo scoperto con la pubblicazione del «libro di pietà», *L'Ambiente Divino*. Sono anche gli anni, però, di una intensa ricerca scientifica e della maturazione di un pensiero in cui entrano categorie come «Noosfera», «Fenomeno umano», e prende forma il tentativo di dar corso ad una scienza della natura capace di inglobare il fenomeno della «vita pensante», identificato come il nuovo spazio di realtà in cui prosegue l'evoluzione.

Tra il 1920 e il 1928, il discorso teologico del gesuita si concentra soprattutto sull'obiettivo di dar corso alla «necessaria rifondazione»²⁴ della teologia e della spiritualità cattolica attraverso la reinterpretazione di categorie come creazione, peccato originale, redenzione, rapporto tra potenza creatrice dell'azione umana e Regno di Dio. Attraverso questi esercizi di re-

²⁴ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Nota sul Cristo Universale*, in Id., *La Scienza di fronte a Cristo*, p. 43.

visionismo teologico, servendosi di categorie come «pan-cristismo», «panteismo cristiano», «Ambiente Divino», e di una visione della creazione come processo di un mondo in evoluzione che include anche le scansioni del divenire della «vita pensante», delinea una interpretazione unitaria della realtà che inquadra l'evoluzione del cosmo nello spazio di una comprensione cristiana di Dio, del mondo, dell'uomo, che traduce in discorso ontologico esplicito la comprensione del mondo e della vita umana implicita nell'evento del «contatto umano-divino rivelatosi nell'Epifania di Gesù»²⁵.

In questo orizzonte, il cosmo appare come «luogo sacro», in quanto luogo del «contatto» tra Dio, mondo, uomo, avvenuto nell'Incarnazione, evento al quale Teilhard connette una concezione di Dio che travalica sia quella delineata da Spinoza, sia quella espressa dal teismo metafisico. A suo avviso, infatti, Dio non è identico al mondo, ma non è neppure così differente da poter essere concepito come un pezzo di realtà esterna al mondo. In tal modo, la visione di Dio prodotta dalla metafisica dell'essere, che lo concepisce come ente eterno, immutabile, trascendente, «altro» rispetto al mondo, viene sostituita dalla visione di Dio come «sfera», come realtà inglobante, che costituisce lo sfondo «mobile» in cui sono «immersi» gli sviluppi evolutivi del mondo e della «vita pensante».

Prende forma, così, un pensiero religioso che proietta su scala cosmica la compenetrazione tra Dio, mondo, uomo, prodottasi nell'evento cristologico e nei prolungamenti che di esso si danno nell'eucaristia e nell'espansione della forza unificante dell'amore. Il linguaggio su Dio viene in tal modo dislocato dall'orizzonte teoretico definito da una metafisica che lo rappresenta attraverso il riferimento alla stabilità di una presenza eterna totalmente definita, altra rispetto alla struttura mutevole del mondo. Secondo il gesuita, infatti, anche Dio e il suo rapporto con il mondo hanno una storia. La sua costituzione ontologica, di conseguenza, è sottoposta alle variazioni di un divenire che si dispiega nel movimento della materia verso la vita, della vita verso l'avvento del pensiero e la formazione della «Noosfera», e, a partire da quest'ultima formazione, nel processo che si sviluppa come movimento che procede verso il compimento escatologico nel Regno di Dio.

Il percorso evolutivo del cosmo si configura in tal modo come la progressiva compenetrazione tra storia della natura, storia della «vita pensante», storia del divenire di Dio. A questa forma di pensiero teologico inclusivo, Teilhard collega la possibilità di superare la scissione tra materia e spirito, tra Dio e mondo, tra avanzamento del sapere e fede cristiana, che, a suo avviso, è il prodotto della metafisica neoscolastica dell'essere egemone nel pensiero cattolico coevo.

²⁵ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *L'Ambiente Divino*, tr. it. di A. Dozon Daverio e F. Mantovani, Queriniana, Brescia 2005⁴, p. 89.

1.2.2. Il «cambiamento di curvatura» dell'esperienza religiosa

Una variante nell'approccio al cristianesimo, e più in generale all'esperienza religiosa, è riscontrabile nel pensiero elaborato da Teilhard tra il 1929 e il 1948, anni in cui sviluppa una riflessione che travalica le problematiche interne alla «rifondazione» della teologia e della spiritualità cattolica, e prospetta una nuova comprensione della struttura dell'esperienza religiosa. La religione viene infatti dislocata dal «teatro dell'anima», cioè dalla ricerca da parte del singolo di una perfezione individuale derivante dalla pratica religiosa, o dall'aspirazione ad una salvezza personale. Attraverso questo processo di desingularizzazione, la religione si trasforma in una pratica che, insieme all'etica, alla politica, all'espansione della ricerca tecnico-scientifica, ha il compito di «dare forma» alla «energia libera, pensante, sprigionata dalla Terra»²⁶.

Servendosi della categoria geologica di «cambiamento di curvatura» di una formazione geologica, Teilhard mette in luce l'impatto esercitato sull'esperienza religiosa da fenomeni come «il risveglio del Senso Umano», «la massificazione dell'Umanità», il «rilancio umano dell'evoluzione», «l'Ascesa della Ricerca» tecnico-scientifica, con gli effetti che essa ha nella trasformazione del mondo e della vita umana. Si tratta, a suo avviso, di un insieme di fenomeni che mutano la specie umana in un raggruppamento sempre più unificato, che, in forza dell'espansione e del potenziamento delle pratiche della tecnoscienza, è in grado di dar corso all'«ottavo atto della Creazione»²⁷, di aprire cioè una fase di accelerazione e di rilancio dell'evoluzione.

Questa comprensione del mondo e della vita umana che va prendendo forma nelle parti più avanzate del mondo occidentale, oltre a decretare il tramonto degli stilemi tipici di un pensiero politico ancorato al nazionalismo, o quelli di un'etica statica, connessa al mantenimento della continuità identitaria di un gruppo etnico, o ad antropologie esistenzialiste e fissiste, determina anche la crisi irreversibile delle forme di vita cristiana delineate da classici della spiritualità come Bossuet, Sant'Ignazio di Loyola, oppure dal Catechismo della Chiesa Cattolica. In essi Teilhard vede infatti all'opera la mentalità espressa da una letteratura religiosa inadatta a integrare nel pensiero e nella prassi della Chiesa i modi in cui gli uomini strutturano attualmente la loro conoscenza e la loro azione.

²⁶ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Il Cristianesimo nel mondo*, in Id., *La scienza di fronte a Cristo*, p. 131.

²⁷ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Trois choses que je vois*, in Id., *Les Directions de l'Avenir*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1973, p. 166.

Il Mondo visibile – scrive il gesuita – forma un quadro *ne varietur*, in cui, fino alla fine dei tempi, l’Uomo deve ripetersi identico a sé stesso, senza altra funzione che di rapportare a Dio, attraverso un omaggio intellettuale e uso temperante, i molteplici oggetti, disposti armoniosamente una volta per sempre dalla Creazione [...]. Tutta la letteratura religiosa attuale, poiché è stata scritta o prima di questo evento, oppure senza tenerne conto, da questo momento, è in gran parte sorpassata: non nel senso che essa sia divenuta falsa o inutile, ma nel senso che essa deve piegarsi al Cambiamento Di Curvatura subito recentemente dall’«*anima naturaliter christiana*» in seguito al fatto dell’apparizione di questa dimensione nuova: il Senso Umano. Riconosciamo dunque francamente la situazione: non soltanto l’*Imitazione di Cristo*, ma la nostra stessa interpretazione del Vangelo ha bisogno di subire questa correzione; e tutto contribuisce a fargliela subire. Perché non dirlo?²⁸.

Per il gesuita, quindi, in una condizione storica definita tramite formule come «risveglio del Senso Umano», «Super-Umanità», «Supervita», che fanno riferimento alla condizione di una specie umana che attraverso l’espansione e il potenziamento del sapere tecnico-scientifico va strutturandosi come soggetto unificato su scala planetaria in grado di avviare una nuova fase dell’evoluzione, l’etica, la politica, la religione, possono risultare significative soltanto a patto di venire decontaminate da codici linguistici e comportamentali non più fungibili in questo nuovo assetto della vita umana.

In questa fase, il Cristianesimo vive secondo Teilhard una «crisi» che può trovare soluzione soltanto a patto di «rinascere». La rinascita è legata alla mutazione dell’orizzonte che fa da sfondo al pensiero e alla prassi della Chiesa. Egli sostiene, in tal senso, che in seguito alle trasformazioni in atto nell’umanità, la salvezza annunciata dalla predicazione fuoriesce dall’orizzonte di un’esperienza religiosa caratterizzata da una relazione duale in cui c’è «l’individuo umano e Dio. *E nulla tra i due*»²⁹, come accade nella letteratura religiosa più diffusa nella Chiesa, nella quale Dio viene rappresentato come l’ente la cui assolutezza assicura sostegno e riparo a soggetti che si percepiscono come creature fragili e smarrite.

Con l’avvento dell’epoca moderna gli uomini iniziano invece ad auto-comprendersi, secondo il gesuita, come forza di trascendenza. Giungono infatti a disporre di sistemi cognitivi e operativi che consentono loro di superare condizioni date e equilibri raggiunti, e di dislocare nella progettazione della «Terra di domani» le proprie energie psichiche, affettive, cognitive. In questo contesto, l’esperienza religiosa non è più riconducibile alla struttura del rapporto duale tra il singolo individuo e Dio, ma assume il

²⁸ Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Sens Humain*, in Id., *Les Directions de l’Avenir*, pp. 23; 40.

²⁹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *La Parole attendue*, in Id., *Les Directions de l’Avenir*, p. 103.

carattere di una struttura triadica, formata dal rapporto tra «la nostra anima, Dio e l'avvenire terrestre del Mondo avanti a noi»³⁰.

All'avvento di questa nuova configurazione dell'esperienza religiosa, Teilhard lega la necessità di disconnettere la pratica cristiana da mentalità caratterizzate dall'ascetismo, oppure centrate sull'interiorità, o sull'ingentilimento dei rapporti interpersonali, per proiettarla sullo scenario dell'esperienza collettiva di un'umanità che si percepisce come il raggruppamento che, attraverso il potenziamento delle proprie capacità cognitive e operative, giunge ad autocomprendersi come il «grande Corpo» che assume di su di sé il compito di costruire i futuri assetti dell'evoluzione.

La specie umana viene in tal modo pensata come una formazione non stabilizzata, la cui evoluzione procede in due direzioni. La prima muove verso la costruzione di tipologie di organizzazione sociale dotate di livelli sempre più elevati di inclusione. Ciò consente al gruppo umano di giungere gradualmente a strutturarsi come soggetto unificato su scala planetaria, capace di dar corso a una progettualità condivisa. La seconda direzione avanza invece verso l'instaurazione di uno *status* nel quale, attraverso le scoperte scientifiche e il miglioramento dei dispositivi della tecnica, gli uomini arrivano ad acquisizioni cognitive e operative che consentono loro di «maneggiare» i meccanismi della riproduzione, dell'ereditarietà, della morfogenesi, e di trasformare il proprio organismo, cervello compreso. Si apre così un'età del mondo designata come «evoluzione nella sua fase Ominizzata»³¹, un passaggio che lascia intravedere che «qualcosa di più grande dell'uomo è in gestazione sulla Terra»³².

Si tratta infatti di una forma di vita nella quale la specie umana si pone nella condizione di «supervivere», accede, cioè, alla condizione di soggetto in grado di «prendere in carico l'Evoluzione della vita sulla Terra»³³, e di rilanciarla verso esiti in larga parte non prevedibili nel breve come nel lungo periodo.

In questa fase dell'evoluzione umana, la Chiesa deve uscire secondo Teilhard dal perimetro ristretto di una cultura ispirata all'umanesimo costruito sul rapporto «tra Belle Lettere (o matematica) e Religione»³⁴, per immettersi nello spazio del «Neo-umanesimo moderno», una cultura non orientata verso il culto degli antichi, consapevole di disporre delle risorse teoriche e pratiche che consentono di dar corso a un nuovo assetto dell'evoluzione.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 104.

³¹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Sul valore religioso della ricerca*, in Id., *La Scienza di fronte a Cristo*, p. 231.

³² P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Super-Umanità, Super-Cristo, Super-Carità. Nuove dimensioni dell'avvenire*, in Id., *La Scienza di fronte a Cristo*, p. 194.

³³ Teilhard de Chardin, *Sul valore religioso della ricerca*, p. 231.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 234.

Il gesuita, dunque, pur riconoscendo un qualche merito al paradigma dell'umanesimo cristiano, che ha ispirato in passato anche la tradizione gesuitica, ritiene che tale paradigma vada profondamente rimaneggiato, ridefinendolo nello spazio aperto dal «Neo-umanesimo moderno», una forma di vita e di pensiero che travalica i canoni tipici della visione del mondo e dell'uomo espressi dall'umanesimo ispirato alla rivisitazione cristiana della *Paideia* greca o della *Humanitas* romana.

Per questo motivo, ritiene urgente che la Compagnia di Gesù inizi a porsi il problema di offrire ai suoi membri più giovani un percorso formativo che, lasciatisi alle spalle gli stilemi tipici dell'umanesimo classicheggiante, sia in grado di confrontarsi con le inedite modalità di essere uomini rese possibili dall'espansione e dal potenziamento del sapere tecnico-scientifico.

Teilhard è convinto che il futuro della specie umana sia già in costruzione in ambienti di ricerca altamente specializzati e innovativi, «dove – scrive – ci si batte in questo momento per elevare le grandi cittadelle della Materia e della vita»³⁵. Sono infatti gli ambienti in cui vede realizzarsi il passaggio dalla fase darwiniana dell'evoluzione in cui la sopravvivenza è legata alla selezione naturale, alla fase della «Super-umanità», cioè all'avvento di una neoformazione nella quale lo sforzo inventivo della «vita pensante» diviene un fattore determinante del processo evolutivo.

Come figli divenuti adulti, come operai divenuti coscienti, stiamo scoprendo – scrive il gesuita – che Qualche Cosa si sviluppa nel Mondo, per tramite nostro, forse a nostre spese. E, fatto ancor più grave, ci rendiamo conto che, nella grande partita in corso, noi siamo i giocatori e, nello stesso tempo, le carte e la posta. Nulla continuerà più, se lasciamo il tavolo da gioco, e nulla può d'altronde costringerci a rimanervi seduti [...]. Se il progresso è un mito, se cioè davanti al lavoro noi possiamo dire «a che serve?», il nostro sforzo si esaurisce di colpo e trascina nella sua caduta l'intera Evoluzione, *poiché siamo noi l'Evoluzione*³⁶.

1.2.3. *L'antropologia ultraumanista e i suoi nemici*

A partire dal 1949, nel pensiero di Teilhard si profila una terza variazione nell'interpretazione del Cristianesimo, e, più in generale, dell'esperienza religiosa, che viene tematizzata in *Le Cœur du problème*, il breve saggio composto nei primi giorni del settembre 1949, e inviato al p. Gorostarzu, assistente del p. Generale per la Francia. Questo scritto intende essere il «grido» che, nell'intenzione del gesuita, dovrebbe indurre la gerarchia cattolica a

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ Teilhard de Chardin, *Il Fenomeno umano*, pp. 214; 216.

prendere coscienza del fatto che «qualcosa non va più, nel nostro tempo, tra l'Uomo e Dio, tale *quale lo si presenta al giorno d'oggi*»³⁷.

A suo avviso, le «forze appena nate di trans-ominizzazione»³⁸ sono all'origine dei «primi vagiti di un *Neo-umanesimo*»³⁹ al quale la gerarchia cattolica non dovrebbe relazionarsi in modo esorcistico, se desidera evitare di proporre una figura «sub-umanizzata» di cristianesimo. Per raggiungere questo obiettivo, prospetta una forma di pensiero e di pratica cristiana raccordati con la visione della conoscenza e dell'azione che ha reso possibile la cultura che è all'origine dell'avvento dell'«Ultra-umano». Ritene, infatti, che il tratto distintivo della Chiesa stia nella capacità di «cristianizzare tutto l'Umano nell'Uomo»⁴⁰, quindi anche la transizione verso l'«Ultra-umano».

Le problematiche riguardanti l'esistenza, la natura, i futuri sviluppi dell'«Ultra-umano», insieme alla riflessione sulla «scossa» che l'avvento di questa neoformazione produce nel campo dell'antropologia e in quello del pensiero religioso, in particolare nella teologia cattolica, divengono, dal 1949 al 1955, i riferimenti attorno ai quali Teilhard organizza il proprio lavoro teorico. In tal modo, la ricerca di una «Nuova Antropologia», unitamente alla ricerca di una figura di cristianesimo raccordabile con l'ordinamento «Ultra-umano» dell'evoluzione, «la cui apparizione ha sconvolto la scala del nostro potere di adorazione»⁴¹, divengono i vettori del suo pensiero negli ultimi due anni della permanenza a Parigi, e negli anni dell'esilio americano.

Il primo vettore lo pone in rotta di collisione con le antropologie ancorate alla tradizione platonica, a quella aristotelico-scolastica, con lo spiritualismo cristiano, con l'esistenzialismo, sia teologico che ateo, con il pensiero fenomenologico, come pure con antropologie centrate sulla ricostruzione dell'evoluzione biofisica dell'uomo che non prendono in considerazione le «singolarità evolutive» da Teilhard attribuite alla specie umana, determinate dal fatto che «nell'evoluzione culturale umana» si realizza «una continuazione intensificata dell'evoluzione animale»⁴². Egli sostiene infatti che l'uomo non è soltanto una nuova specie animale, ma una nuova forma di vita, che, tramite il sistema delle pratiche cognitive e operative da essa poste in essere nell'attuale configurazione della «Noosfera», opera un passaggio epo-

³⁷ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Cœur du problème*, in Id., *L'Avenir de l'Homme*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1959, p. 339.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 343.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 345.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 348.

⁴² P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Un grandissimo problema per l'antropologia. È vero o no che nell'uomo continua, trasformandosi, il processo biologico dell'evoluzione*, in Id., *Verso la Convergenza. L'attivazione dell'energia nell'umanità*, tr. it. di A. Tassone Bernardi, Il Segno dei Gabrielli editori, San Pietro in Cariano (VR) 2004, p. 264.

cale nel quale prende forma una «*rivoluzione* nel processo dell'evoluzione naturale»⁴³.

Il secondo vettore del suo pensiero lo mette in rotta di collisione con la «Teologia classica» di ispirazione neoscolastica, come pure con discorsi teologici innovativi, come quelli elaborati da Karl Barth, da Romano Guardini, da Jean Mouroux, esponente dell'esistenzialismo teologico, dalla *Nouvelle Théologie* di de Henri Lubac, dal neotomismo di Jacques Maritain. Questi modelli di pensiero non sono infatti capaci, secondo Teilhard, di arginare la crisi in atto nel cristianesimo contemporaneo. La loro inadeguatezza viene attribuita al fatto che Barth, de Lubac, Maritain, intendono rinnovare il pensiero cristiano attraverso un'operazione di carattere archeologico che rimanda, rispettivamente, al primato del dato biblico, al «*réssourcement*» patristico, al tomismo di San Tommaso. Agli esponenti dell'esistenzialismo teologico, dello spiritualismo cristiano, del personalismo, viene invece rimproverato il fatto di praticare una comprensione dell'esistenza disconnessa dal suo radicamento nell'evoluzione del cosmo e in quella della specie umana.

Nel primo, come nel secondo caso, il discorso teologico non prende in considerazione il problema che la visione della specie umana come formazione non stabilizzata, che avanza verso l'avvento dell'«Ultra-umano», pone alla dottrina e alla pratica della Chiesa e, più in generale, ad ogni esperienza religiosa. La vita umana viene infatti considerata da Teilhard come «un'opera da completare»⁴⁴, non inquadrabile, quindi, attraverso gli strumenti euristici tipici di un biologismo che si limita a dissotterrare le radici animali della sua struttura d'essere. Per il fatto di disconnettere la comprensione della vita umana dall'evoluzione del cosmo risultano quindi a suo avviso deficitarie anche le antropologie che si servono di modelli di pensiero ispirati alla Patristica o alla Scolastica, oppure fanno del dato biblico l'unico elemento di riferimento nella definizione del discorso antropologico, come pure i discorsi sulla vita umana costruiti attraverso l'analitica esistenziale, o il rimando al valore euristico dell'antepredicativo, identificato come lo spazio in cui affiorerebbe una visione dell'uomo non distorta dal discorso scientifico, né dalle categorie che hanno strutturato il pensiero filosofico occidentale. Il gesuita ritiene in tal senso che molti filosofi e teologi, come pure molti scienziati, siano nel torto. I primi non prendono atto del fatto che la vita umana risulta incomprensibile se disconnessa dalla «grande storia del cosmo», i secondi non prendono invece in considerazione «le singolarità

⁴³ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Antiquity and World Expansion of Human Culture*, in Id., *L'Œuvre scientifique, X: 1945-1955*, Walter-Verlag, Olten und Freiburg 1971, p. 4583.

⁴⁴ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *La riflessione dell'Energia*, in Id., *Verso la Convergenza*, p. 655.

evolutive della specie umana», che è a suo avviso una formazione non stabilizzata, nella quale sono in gestazione nuove maniere di essere umani.

Per questo, l'umanità attuale, al contrario di quanto sostengono Oswald Spengler o Charles Galton Darwin, non vive secondo Teilhard una condizione di decadenza, né è precipitata, per insipienza nell'uso delle risorse, in condizioni che mettono a rischio la sua sopravvivenza, ma attraversa la fase «embrionale» di uno sviluppo che è carico di futuro.

Zoologicamente e psicologicamente parlando – scrive – l'Uomo osservato nell'integrità cosmica della sua traiettoria, non è ancora che a uno stadio embrionale, al di là del quale si profila una larga frangia di ULTRA-UMANO⁴⁵.

L'antropologia ultraumanista sviluppata dal gesuita tra il 1949 e il 1955 viene impiegata come pensiero terapeutico, funzionale al contrasto dell'uso antiumanistico della scienza portato avanti da esponenti di varie discipline scientifiche. che, in nome della scienza, «sottostimano l'Umano»⁴⁶, facendone una variante della vita animale, oppure il soggetto di un'avventura evolutiva destinata al disastro o all'inabissamento nel nulla. Dell'antropologia ultraumanista si serve inoltre per evidenziare il fatto che le forme più diffuse di pensiero teologico, in quanto affette da cronica resistenza a prendere in considerazione l'urto decostruttivo che le trasformazioni in atto nell'evoluzione umana esercitano sull'esperienza religiosa, finiscono per incappare in una nuova variante della «questione Galilei».

Il gesuita ritiene, infatti, che come gli uomini del XVII secolo si sono visti costretti a elaborare una nuova interpretazione del quadro cosmologico, allo stesso modo nella fase attuale dell'evoluzione della «Noosfera», occorrerebbe dar vita a forme di discorso antropologico capaci di lasciarsi alle spalle i modelli teorici e pratici con i quali gli uomini hanno tradizionalmente dato forma alla loro esperienza del mondo, alla comprensione di sé, alla concettualità teologica.

In questo quadro, Teilhard colloca la sua riflessione sulla fine di una fase storica del Cristianesimo. Concorde con Arnold Toynbee nel rilevare la condizione di crisi del Cristianesimo. Dissente però dallo storico inglese sulla tesi secondo la quale tale crisi annuncia l'inizio di un'epoca «ex cristiana» o «post-cristiana». Il gesuita ritiene infatti possibile scongiurare tale evenienza dando vita ad una figura di cristianesimo capace di «sorpassarsi», di lasciarsi cioè alle spalle modelli di comprensione della pratica cristiana normati da paradigmi non più fungibili nel quadro della conoscenza e dell'esperienza del mondo tipici dell'umanità contemporanea, il cui contrassegno, oltre che

⁴⁵ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Cœur de la Matière*, in Id., *Le Cœur de la Matière*, p. 48.

⁴⁶ Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres familières*, p. 209.

dalla visione evolutiva del cosmo, è dato dalla comprensione della specie umana come formazione non stabilizzata, che, con l'avvento dell'«Uomo auto-evolutore», procede verso una condizione nella quale prende forma «qualcosa al di là dell'Uomo»⁴⁷.

Si comprende così il gergo atipico dell'ultimo Teilhard, fatto di formule come «ultra trans-cristiano», «Dio trans-cristiano», «Ultra-cristico», «Ultra-cristianesimo», «Neo-cristianesimo», «Cristianesimo re-incarnato», «Cristianesimo rinato». Sono formule che inquietano diversi suoi confratelli e amici, ma hanno il potere di mostrare la radicalità della consapevolezza da lui maturata circa la fine di una fase storica del Cristianesimo, e l'urgenza di dar corso, senza nostalgie passatiste, o mitici ritorni alle origini, a un «nuovo inizio» che consenta alla dottrina e alla prassi della Chiesa di interagire, attraverso la configurazione di un discorso teologico profondamente rinnovato, con l'esperienza di sé e del mondo che gli uomini vanno maturando con l'ingresso nel regime evolutivo dell' «Ultra-umano». Egli è convinto, in tal senso, che i credenti del futuro potranno apprezzare l'esperimento teologico da lui portato avanti nell'isolamento e nel disconoscimento, poiché saprà offrire un impulso significativo alla nascita di una nuova figura di pratica cristiana.

2. «PRAESENTIRE CUM ECCLESIA»

Thomas Berry sostiene che Teilhard «ha dato espressione alla più grande trasformazione del Cristianesimo dal tempo di San Paolo»⁴⁸. Infatti, nelle diverse fasi del suo pensiero fortemente innovativo, in cui connette le competenze dello scienziato con una riflessione di carattere teologico e filosofico, pone in luce il fatto che se le religioni, quindi anche il Cristianesimo, intendono giocare un ruolo nel futuro, «debbono cambiare – scrive il pensatore americano – in una misura nella quale non sono mai cambiate»⁴⁹.

Teilhard ha portato avanti con radicalità e continuità un progetto di ripensamento del cristianesimo e, più in generale, dell'esperienza religiosa, il cui nucleo generatore nasce dalla convinzione secondo la quale l'umanità sta vivendo un «cambiamento di età» che la disloca dal Neolitico, con i suoi stilemi identitari, localisti, razziali, per traghettarla nell'universalismo e nel costruttivismo tipici della neoformazione dell'«Ultra-umano». La precisazione e lo sviluppo di tale tematica fanno di lui un «isolato» non solo nel

⁴⁷ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Accomplir l'Homme. Lettres inédites (1926-1952)*, Grasset, Paris 1968, p. 124.

⁴⁸ Th. Berry, Th. Clarke, *Befriending the Earth. A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth*, Twenty- Third Publications, Mystic, Connecticut 1991, p. 6.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

campo del pensiero teologico e filosofico, ma anche in quello del pensiero scientifico.

La condizione di «isolato» non fa, però, del gesuita un eremita risentito, né un profeta solitario che inveisce contro l'arretratezza culturale della Chiesa cattolica. Egli, infatti, malgrado i provvedimenti disciplinari di cui è stato oggetto, l'aura di diffidenza che circonda la sua persona, la forzata rinuncia a cariche importanti al *Collège de France* o al *Musée de l'Homme*, non ha mai disgiunto il proprio destino personale da quello della Chiesa cattolica, che egli, servendosi del linguaggio della zoologia, descrive come il «*Phylum* d'amore» al quale è connessa inscindibilmente la sua esistenza.

Dopo il tentativo stoppato dal canonico-teologo della Diocesi di Malines di dare un minimo di visibilità al proprio pensiero attraverso la pubblicazione di *L'Ambiente Divino*, il «libro di pietà» che, nelle sue intenzioni, doveva essere l'«outlet» tramite cui accedere ad una cerchia più vasta del gruppo ristretto degli amici, Teilhard, a partire dalla metà degli anni trenta del Novecento, affida la diffusione del suo innovativo discorso teologico alla circolazione clandestina di duecento/trecento copie ciclostilate dei suoi scritti, portata avanti, in un primo tempo, da Simone Begouen, poi da Jeanne Mortier⁵⁰.

Tramite questo espediente si propone di far circolare in una cerchia ultraminoritaria, composta da cattolici inquieti, accomunati da un «teismo insoddisfatto»⁵¹, che è l'espressione delle riserve avvertite nei confronti delle chiusure presenti nella mentalità cattolica convenzionale, una ermeneutica del cristianesimo che intende immettere la Chiesa in una situazione liminale.

Questa situazione di passaggio viene intesa dal gesuita come il transito verso una figura di cristianesimo omogenea con la figura del bisogno religioso presente in una umanità che sta vivendo una transizione verso forme di comprensione di sé e del mondo profondamente difforni da quelle ereditate dalla tradizione. In tal senso, formule come «iper-ortodossia», «Neo-cristianesimo», «*praesentire cum Ecclesia*», veicolano la convinzione profondamente radicata in Teilhard secondo la quale il messaggio cristiano, se opportunamente ripensato e riformulato, contiene in sé le risorse simboliche e concettuali capaci di offrire a uomini e donne che vivono un «cambiamento d'età» il Dio da essi atteso.

Il lavoro di «Riforma» della Chiesa prospettato dal gesuita non riguarda però soltanto la trasformazione dello sfondo culturale che definisce l'identità cattolica. Ha infatti a che fare, sia pur marginalmente, anche con le dinamiche istituzionali che regolano il governo della Chiesa, definiscono il

⁵⁰ Sulla diffusione degli scritti di Teilhard in forma di ciclostilati, cfr. M. Prats, *La parole attendue. La circulation des polycopiés de Teilhard*, Salvator, Paris 2022.

⁵¹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Il piacere di vivere*, in Id., *Verso la Convergenza*, p. 203.

ruolo in essa svolto dalla donna, determinano la funzione del Magistero ecclesiastico. A suo avviso, come scrive nella lettera del 07 ottobre 1929, indirizzata al prof. Gaudefroy, sacerdote e docente di Mineralogia alla Sorbona, occorre aprire la «questione femminile» nella spiritualità cattolica. Si deve, cioè, elaborare una riflessione sulla sottovalutazione del ruolo della donna nella Chiesa, e sulla sua esclusione dal sacerdozio. Questi fenomeni vengono identificati come una delle «tre pietre friabili», le altre due sono l'assenza di democrazia nella Chiesa, e la presenza in essa di una gerarchia che esercita un Magistero dottrinalistico e autoreferenziale, privo di «Profezia», sulle quali poggia l'ordinamento di un cattolicesimo che va profondamente riformato.

Talvolta mi sembra – scrive il gesuita – che nella Chiesa attuale ci siano tre pietre friabili pericolosamente utilizzate nelle fondamenta: la prima è un governo che esclude la democrazia; la seconda è un sacerdozio che esclude e minimizza la donna; la terza è una Rivelazione che esclude, per il futuro, la Profezia⁵².

Teilhard, nell'elaborazione della sua versione del pensiero cristiano come una *expeditio in novum* che deve mobilitare le energie psichiche e le risorse culturali dei credenti, ha trovato amici e nemici. Tra questi ultimi, come si legge nella lettera indirizzata al p. Valensin il 25 maggio 1938, colloca gli esponenti della «Chiesa ufficiale» vicini alle posizioni dell'intransigentismo cattolico, i quali nutrono la «segreta speranza» che il mondo moderno possa essere «cancellato», e si potrà «tornare al buon tempo che aveva preceduto la Scienza e la Rivoluzione»⁵³.

Oltre ai nemici, Teilhard ha avuto tra confratelli e ecclesiastici degli amici che, con livelli differenziati di perplessità, hanno seguito il suo cammino di pensiero. Tra i confratelli che hanno guardato al suo pensiero con interesse, misto a gradazioni più o meno elevate di apprensione, ci sono il p. Valensin, il p. de Lubac, il p. Fessard, il p. Leroy, il p. d'Ouince, il p. Ravier. Quest'ultimo, negli ultimi anni della vita di Teilhard, è stato una sorta di suo Superiore *ad personam*, che ha fatto da tramite tra lui e i vertici della Compagnia. A Ravier indirizza cinque scritti, definiti «scritti Ravier», da far conoscere «*in alto loco*» per far presenti problemi che, se non avvertiti e affrontati, rischiano di far «esplodere» le immagini di Dio ereditate dalla tradizione⁵⁴.

⁵² P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres inédites à l'Abbé Gaudefroy et à l'Abbé Breuil*, Éditions du Rocher, Monaco 1988, p. 80.

⁵³ Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres intimes*, p. 327.

⁵⁴ Una suggestiva formulazione delle questioni con le quali la Chiesa si dovrebbe confrontare per offrire ad una umanità in profondo cambiamento forme di pratica cristiana da essa rece-

Tra gli ecclesiastici, Teilhard ha avuto relazioni significative con Mons. Bruno de Solages, rettore dell'Università cattolica di Tolosa, suo apologeta in occasione di attacchi a lui sferrati da teologi integristi. Tra gli intellettuali, ha intrattenuto un rapporto particolarmente intenso con il filosofo e matematico Edouard Le Roy e con il biochimico Vladimir Ivanovic Vernadsky. A Parigi, prima dell'esilio in Cina, per un paio di anni si incontravano settimanalmente per discutere di problemi scientifici, filosofici, teologici.

Nella prima metà degli anni Trenta del Novecento, Teilhard ha un contatto con due alti esponenti della gerarchia ecclesiastica, Mons. Celso Costantini e Mons. Mario Zanin. Il primo, Legato Apostolico in Cina fino al 1933 poi Segretario di Propaganda Fide. Il secondo, Legato Apostolico in Cina, dal 1933 al 1946. A Mons. Costantini, su richiesta di Mons. Zanin, Teilhard invia una memoria in cui espone alcune sue idee sulla necessità di un rinnovamento della Chiesa⁵⁵. Su sollecitazione di Mons. Costantini, Mons. Zanin incarica p. Gabriele Allegra di fornire un parere sullo scritto di Teilhard, *L'Ambiente Divino*. Il cappuccino, che tra il 1942 e il 1945 aveva avuto con il gesuita lunghe conversazioni sul pensiero di Duns Scoto, in particolare sulla sua visione della Redenzione, pur riconoscendo la sostanziale ortodossia del libro, ne sconsiglia la pubblicazione, poiché potrebbe urtare «le pie orecchie» di molti fedeli.

Occorre dire, però, che nella costruzione del pensiero di Teilhard ha giocato un ruolo essenziale il confronto con figure femminili, come evidenzia egli stesso in *Le Cœur de la Matière*, che è una sorta di autobiografia intellettuale.

Alla storia della mia visione interiore, come la raccontano – scrive – queste pagine, mancherebbe un elemento (una atmosfera ...) essenziale se, concludendo, non ricordassi che dal momento critico in cui, rifiutando molti dei vecchi modelli familiari e religiosi, ho iniziato a svegliarmi e a formularmi

pibili e vivibili è contenuta nell'importante saggio, *Le Cœur de la Matière*, composto nel 1950. «Per un certo numero di vostri servitori, o Signore, il Mondo, il nostro Nuovo Mondo, quello dei nuclei, degli atomi e dei geni, è divenuto fonte di continua ansia, perché ora ci appare così in movimento, così irresistibile, così grande! Questa crescente possibilità (sulla quale facciamo del tutto per chiudere gli occhi) di altri pianeti pensanti nel firmamento..., questo rilancio, evidente, di una evoluzione divenuta capace, per sforzo planetario, di autodirigersi e di accelerarsi. Questa ascesa, all'orizzonte, per effetto di ultra-riflessione, di un Ultra-umano. Tutto ciò appare spaventoso a chi, esitando ancora a gettarsi nelle grandi acque della Materia, teme di vedere il proprio Dio esplodere acquisendo una dimensione in più»: Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Cœur de la Matière*, pp. 68-69.

⁵⁵ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Alcune riflessioni sulla conversione del Mondo. Ad uso di un Principe della Chiesa*, in Id., *La Scienza di fronte a Cristo*, pp. 143-158.

veramente da me, nulla si è sviluppato in me se non sotto uno sguardo o sotto una influenza di donna⁵⁶.

Le donne con le quali intrattiene un rapporto amicale sono intellettuali nelle quali trova non soltanto persone interessate al suo pensiero, ma interlocutrici che lo mettono a confronto con modi di pensare e di stare al mondo che lo spingono a dar corso ad una riflessione non convenzionale sul presente e sul futuro del cristianesimo⁵⁷.

Tra esse vanno ricordate, Marguerite Teilhard Chambon, cugina, e raffinata intellettuale sensibile alle ragioni del femminismo, l'americana Ida Treat, fervente militante del partito comunista francese, Leontine Zanta, filosofa con interessi nel campo del femminismo, la scultrice Lucile Swan, che ha accompagnato la riflessione di Teilhard su tematiche riguardanti il rapporto tra esperienza religiosa e conoscenza scientifica, le scrittrici Claude Rivière e Rhoda de Terra, Jeanne Mortier, sua segretaria a partire dal 1939, e studiosa di teologia e di spiritualità cristiana, la giornalista e psicoanalista junghiana Maryse Choisy.

Il gesuita, nella condizione di isolamento in cui elabora il proprio pensiero filosofico-teologico, trova in queste donne una cerchia di interlocutrici i cui pensieri nessun teologo cattolico accreditato avrebbe mai preso in seria considerazione.

Interlocutori più numerosi dei suoi amici, e dei lettori dei suoi scritti che circolano in forma di ciclostilati, Teilhard li ha trovati nella JOC e nel Movimento dei preti operai. Con queste forme di presenza innovativa della Chiesa nella società ha avvertito una empatia immediata, che lo ha indotto a coinvolgersi in alcuni momenti della loro vita organizzativa. Da tale coinvolgimento nascono i fastidi e le insofferenze che sono all'origine della deci-

⁵⁶ Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Cœur de la Matière*, pp. 71-72.

⁵⁷ Sulla rilevanza del contributo che il confronto con alcune donne ha nella definizione del pensiero di Teilhard cfr. H. de Lubac, *L'Éternel Féminin. Étude sur un texte du Père Teilhard de Chardin*, suivi de *Teilhard et notre temps*, Aubier- Montaigne, Paris 1968; G. Schiwy, *Eine heimliche Liebe. Lucile Swan und Teilhard de Chardin*, Herder, Freiburg 2005; Th. M. King, *Epilogue: "Teilhard and the Feminine"*, in Th. M. King, and M. Wood Gilbert (eds.), *The Letters of Teilhard de Chardin and Lucile Swan*, Georgetown University Press, Washington 1993, pp. 295-297; U. King, *Spirit of Fire. The Life and Vision of Teilhard de Chardin*, Orbis Books, New York 1996, pp. 104-105; 144-154; 161-162; 222-223; ID., *The Letters of Teilhard de Chardin and Lucile Swan: A Personal Interpretation*, in A. Fabel, D. St. John (eds.), *Teilhard in the 21st Century. The Emerging Spirit of Earth*, Orbis Books, New York 2003, pp. 44-56; J. Maaluf, *Teilhard and the Feminine*, in «Teilhard Studies», Fall 2003; M.J. Conchon, M.J. Coutagne, M. Prats, *Le Féminin avenir du monde. Deux vies en conversation. Marguerite Teilhard – Chambon et son cousin Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*, Saint-Léger Éditions, Paris 2020; G. Giustozzi, *Prefazione*, in A. Tassone Bernardi, *L'elemento femminile nel pensiero di Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*, Gabrielli Editori, San Pietro in Cariano (VR) 2023, pp. 7-15.

sione della gerarchia ecclesiastica di chiedere il suo allontanamento da Parigi.

Nello scritto *Ricerca, lavoro e adorazione*, composto nel marzo 1955 pochi giorni prima del suo ultimo saggio, *Le Christique*, Teilhard parla dei «preti ricercatori» e dei «preti operai»⁵⁸ come figure di avanguardia che potranno aiutare «i giovani ricercatori e i lavoratori di domani [...] a esplicitare i legami che saldano geneticamente tra loro Regno di Dio e impegno Umano»⁵⁹.

Il «ricercatore» e «l'Operaio», identificati in questo scritto come le figure più rilevanti dei due ambienti che a suo avviso danno forma all'assetto attuale della vita umana, cioè il laboratorio e la fabbrica, vengono indicati da Teilhard come gli interlocutori privilegiati di un pensiero e di una prassi cristiana dislocati

in un Universo nuovo (quello precisamente dei laboratori e della fabbrica) dove la "creatura" non è più soltanto uno "strumento da utilizzare", bensì un "co-elemento da integrare" in una Umanità in genesi, dove la vecchia opposizione Terra-Cielo scompare (o si corregge) nella nuova formula: "Al Cielo attraverso il compimento della Terra"⁶⁰.

Negli ultimi giorni della vita di Teilhard ritorna così, in forma leggermente variata, la formula con la quale nel 1916 aveva sintetizzato il nucleo generatore del suo pensiero: «c'è una comunione con Dio, e una comunione con la Terra, e una comunione con Dio attraverso la Terra»⁶¹.

3. UN APPROCCIO POST-TEISTA AL DIVINO: IL «PANTEISMO CRISTIANO»

Teilhard ritiene che per soddisfare i bisogni e le aspirazioni religiose di una umanità che attraversa una fase di profondi cambiamenti sia necessario dar vita a «un'altra teologia»⁶², a un discorso in grado di indicare vie di pensiero che consentano di veicolare l'esperienza cristiana nello spazio della visione evolutiva del cosmo prodotta dalle scienze della natura, e nel mondo delle nuove forme di esistenza prodotte dalla crescente espansione della tecnoscienza.

La sua opera appare in tal senso come il messaggio inviato da un pensatore cristiano che si definisce «isolato», «irregolare», a una Chiesa coeva

⁵⁸ Teilhard de Chardin, *Ricerca, lavoro e adorazione*, p. 249.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 250.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 251.

⁶¹ Teilhard de Chardin, *La Vie cosmique*, p. 19.

⁶² Teilhard de Chardin, *Lavoro, ricerca e adorazione*, p. 251.

chiusa nei «bastioni» della «teologia romana»⁶³. L'arroccamento nel discorso filosofico-teologico di ispirazione neoscolastica le impedisce di interloquire in termini non meramente deprecatori con le trasformazioni indotte dalla rivoluzione scientifica, dai mutamenti politici, dalle rivoluzioni tecnologiche, sui modi in cui gli uomini fanno esperienza di sé e del mondo⁶⁴.

Teilhard invita i credenti a liberarsi da atteggiamenti di pigrizia e di timidezza, che, per timore di vedere «esplodere» le immagini convenzionali di Dio, dell'uomo, dell'esperienza cristiana, li inducono a rifiutare, oppure a guardare con sospetto quanto gli uomini, con le loro ricerche e le loro sperimentazioni, realizzano al di fuori del recinto confessionale cattolico. Egli intende infatti valorizzare le «qualità creatrici» che appartengono alla natura e al mondo umano, poiché ritiene che la verità non sia il testo già scritto nel mondo e nella vita umana dall'atto originario della creazione, ma, al contrario, sia il prodotto della sinergia tra divenire della natura, divenire della «vita pensante», azione di «amorizzazione» del cosmo, che assume forma nella manifestazione di Dio in Gesù Cristo. In tal modo, quello che la metafisica neoscolastica chiama l'«essere partecipato» perde la connotazione di ente irrilevante rispetto all'assolutezza dell'essere divino, per divenire un fattore determinante nella costruzione della figura escatologica di uno stato di unificazione del reale che è il risultato della sinergia tra il divenire del processo cosmogonico e l'azione divina, un processo che nel linguaggio cristiano viene definito attraverso le categorie di creazione, incarnazione, redenzione, *pleroma*.

Pensato in tale prospettiva, l'essere di Dio risulta per un verso autosufficiente, per altro verso, però, nel momento in cui, dopo la «trinizzazione», si apre la fase creativa della «teogenesi», l'unità divina immanente è insufficiente a definire il suo essere. Della costituzione d'essere di Dio entra infatti a far parte anche il processo di unificazione in atto nel mondo, che è una realtà distinta dall'unità originaria dell'essere divino, ma, al tempo stesso, una componente rilevante nella definizione della sua struttura ontologica.

Teilhard arriva in tal modo a pensare l'essere di Dio come un processo nel cui divenire si allarga l'unità che appartiene originariamente al Dio unitrino fino all'espansione che di essa si dà nel *pleroma*. Questa categoria viene impiegata per indicare la sintesi tra l'unità immanente appartenente al Dio trinitario e un cosmo la cui progressiva unificazione è il prodotto della

⁶³ Sul dispositivo teorico della «teologia romana», cfr. P. Petrucci, *Romolo Murri un cristiano nella storia*, Andrea Livi Editore, Fermo 2022, pp. 7-22.

⁶⁴ Su tale problematica, cfr. R. Bodei, *Scomposizioni. Forme dell'individuo moderno*, il Mulino, Bologna 2020; Id., *Domino e sottomissione. Schiavi, animali, macchine, Intelligenza Artificiale*, il Mulino, Bologna 2019; A. Schiavone, *Il progresso*, il Mulino, Bologna 2020; Id., *L'occidente e la nascita di una civiltà planetaria*, il Mulino, Bologna 2022; R. Campa, *Tecnoetica*, Orbis Idearum Press, Krakow 2023.

sinergia tra i processi di complessificazione della materia e della «vita pensante» con l'istanza di «amorizzazione» che in essi imprime l'azione divina.

In tal modo, la creatività espressa dal divenire della natura, che va dalla formazione delle particelle sub-atomiche all'apparire della vita biologica, e, a partire dall'evoluzione di quest'ultima, alla formazione della «vita pensante», i cui sviluppi si estendono dagli Ominini⁶⁵ all'avvento dell'«Ultra-umano», si saldano con il movimento convergente che l'azione di Dio imprime al divenire del cosmo.

Teilhard si congeda in tal modo dal teismo tipico della teologia filosofica neoscolastica, come pure dalla «metafisica biblica»⁶⁶ evocata da Claude Tresmontant, un interprete del suo pensiero da lui duramente avversato⁶⁷. In ambedue i casi, infatti, Dio viene concepito come ente distinto dal mondo, che non influisce in alcun modo nella configurazione della sua costituzione d'essere.

La posizione del gesuita va in altra direzione, ed è espressa nell'enunciato lapidario contenuto in uno scritto del 1936 in cui si legge che Dio è «reale» ma «non realizzato»⁶⁸. Egli afferma, cioè, che Dio è un essere dotato di una propria originaria realtà, al quale, però, l'universo, nel suo divenire, apporta qualcosa nella sua costituzione ontologica. Secondo Teilhard, infatti, guardando il mondo dal punto di vista del suo compimento escatologico, Dio si completa nel *pleroma*, poiché l'unità con il cosmo che in esso si realizza amplifica l'unità immanente appartenente alla struttura trinitaria dell'essere divino. «Dio si compie – scrive – si completa in qualche modo nel *pleroma*»⁶⁹, cioè in quella figura ultima del reale nel quale «non resta più nulla da unificare né in Dio né “al di fuori” di Dio»⁷⁰.

C'è dunque divenire in Dio, e il mondo, a sua volta, non è semplicemente il regno di una consistenza ontologica inferiore rispetto all'assolutezza dell'essere divino, poiché l'avanzamento verso la costituzione di uno stato finale di unificazione del reale è il prodotto della sinergia tra l'agire divino e il divenire del processo cosmogonico.

⁶⁵ Sull'evoluzione umana, cfr. T. Pievani, *Homo sapiens. Il cammino dell'umanità*, Istituto Geografico D'Agostini, Novara 2012; G. Manzi, *Il grande racconto dell'evoluzione umana*, il Mulino, Bologna 2018.

⁶⁶ C. Tresmontant, *Études de métaphysique biblique*, Gabalda, Paris 1955.

⁶⁷ Sulla questione mi permetto di rimandare a G. Giustozzi, *Teilhard contro Tresmontant. Testi e contesti dello scontro tra il gesuita e un suo interprete*, in M. Florio (ed.), *Scrutando il Mistero nella storia*, Cittadella Editrice, Assisi 2018, pp. 230-254.

⁶⁸ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Esquisse d'un Univers personnel*, in Id., *L'Énergie humaine*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1962, p. 91.

⁶⁹ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Christianisme et Évolution. Suggestions pour servir à une Théologie nouvelle*, in Id., *Comment je Crois*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1969, p. 209.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*.

Teilhard fa propria in tal modo la tesi secondo la quale l'essere di Dio è il divenire, e abbandona la tesi secondo cui il cosmo è identificabile come *l'ens ab alio* che si qualifica soprattutto per l'indigenza ontologica mostrata rispetto alla pienezza d'essere appartenente a Dio, pensato come «*esse ipsum subsistens*».

Prende forma, così, una «metafisica dell'unione» che configura una visione del rapporto tra Dio, mondo, uomo, in grado di integrare più adeguatamente la visione evolutiva del cosmo e la potenza creatrice della «vita pensante» rispetto alla metafisica dell'*esse* e alla «metafisica biblica» evocata da Tresmontant. Il gesuita delinea infatti i tratti di una visione teologica del mondo in cui l'uomo non è soltanto interlocutore di un Dio distinto dal mondo, ma «vita pensante» che attraverso la propria azione prosegue l'opera creatrice di Dio, e il mondo, a sua volta, appare come realtà che apporta qualcosa di necessario all'attivazione e al sostegno della vita umana e alla determinazione dell'essere di Dio.

Ilia Delio, teologa americana e valente studiosa di Teilhard de Chardin, con alle spalle, inoltre, una solida formazione scientifica nel campo della biochimica e della genetica, definisce il pensiero del gesuita attraverso la formula «olismo relazionale».

A suo avviso, infatti,

secondo Teilhard, Dio è nel cuore della natura. Egli ha sposato un «panteismo cristiano», termine che usava con attenzione, sebbene sia stato gravemente frainteso. Come ha scritto, trovava in se stesso «una forte tensione monista», in seguito alle sue idee su materia, vita, energia [...]. Teilhard ha scoperto un Dio nuovo e vitale, non un Dio che domina il mondo con il potere, un Dio inerente al divenire del mondo. Il mondo ha preso un nuovo significato, non più lo stato frammentato di un cosmo statico, ma lo stato organico e la vitalità di una cosmogenesi, con l'umano all'avanguardia [...]. C'è una profonda correlazione tra coscienza, spazio, unità e amore che può essere sintetizzata nella parola creatività. Come egli ha scritto, «il valore comparativo delle credenze religiose può essere misurato dal loro rispettivo potere di attivazione evolutiva». La religione esiste per dare energia all'umano verso una maggiore totalità e unità. La fede nel Dio-Omega è l'energia al cui interno si accresce la vita di fronte alle resistenze; l'energia di creare, cambiare, divenire qualcosa di nuovo. Teilhard e Jung contribuiscono al nuovo mito religioso dell'olismo relazionale, che farà fermare o battere più velocemente il cuore. In ambedue i casi siamo nel mezzo di una rivoluzione riguardante Dio⁷¹.

⁷¹ I. Delio, *The Not-Yet God. Carl Jung, Teilhard de Chardin and the Relational Whole*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York 2023, pp. 36; 37; 41.

Teilhard si lascia così alle spalle la versione metafisica dell'esperienza religiosa, che pensa il rapporto con Dio come distacco dallo spazio ontologico inferiore, che ha a che fare con il mondo, il divenire, il tempo, il sensibile, e accesso allo spazio ontologico superiore, che ha a che fare con l'immutabile, l'eterno, il sovrannaturale, come pure ogni interpretazione dell'esperienza religiosa ispirata alla teologia dialettica o al pensiero della differenza⁷².

Occorre dire, però, che la riflessione teologica di Teilhard si differenzia non soltanto dalla comprensione di Dio espressa dalla metafisica teista di ispirazione neoscolastica, o dal teismo veicolato dalla «metafisica biblica» teorizzata da Tresmontant, ma anche da forme di panteismo filosofico che fanno riferimento alla visione del divino come principio indeterminato⁷³, oppure a una visione panteista del mondo nella quale alla «identità di mente e materia»⁷⁴ viene dato il nome di Dio.

Il gesuita delinea infatti la figura di un «panteismo cristiano» che articola il proprio discorso su Dio a partire dalla comprensione di Dio, del mondo, della vita umana, implicita in categorie del discorso cristiano come Trinità, incarnazione, eucarestia, prassi ispirata alla carità, attesa del Regno di Dio, *pleroma*. Su questa base accede alla comprensione di Dio come «at-

⁷² Per una analisi del pensiero di Teilhard in rapporto al «panteismo cristiano», al «pancrismo», formule che, al pari di altre, come «Cristo cosmico», «Dio evolutore», sono spesso ricorrenti nella sua opera, e mostrano somiglianze con il panenteismo evocato da Karl Krause, cfr. G. Giustozzi, *Teilhard de Chardin: praesentire cum Ecclesia. Indicazioni per un neo-cristianesimo in due scritti del 1945*, in V. Cresti, L. Galleni, F. Scalfari (edd.), *Teilhard de Chardin oggi in Italia. Il punto sulla ricerca*, Aracne, Roma 2016, pp. 89-118; G. Giustozzi, *Teilhard de Chardin. Geobiologia/Geotecnica/Neo-cristianesimo*, Studium, Roma 2016, pp. 70-113; 145-164; 278-284; 600-619; Id., *Teilhard contro Tresmontant*, in Florio, *Scrutando il Mistero nella storia*, pp. 230-254; V. Mendonca, *Du conflit entre «l'un absolu» et «la multitude» à la communion de «l'un et la multitude» interconnectés: Révision panenthéiste des intuitions initiales de Teilhard dans ses essais de la Grande Guerre*, in G. Agudelo, J.F. Boulanger, K. Duffy (éds.), *Regarder la guerre en face, voir au-delà. De la Grande Guerre aux turbulences de la mondialisation*, Les acteurs du savoir, Paris 2018, pp. 201 – 247; Id., *Die Komplementarität von Polarität und Pleroma im Prozess-Panentheismus: Die Metaphysik der Gott-Welt-Beziehung bei Whitehead und Teilhard*, in G. Bruntrup, J. Jaskolla, T. Müller (hrsg.), *Prozess, Religion, Gott. Whiteheads Religionsphilosophie im Kontext seiner Prozess-metaphysik* Alber Verlag, Freiburg-München 2020, pp. 251-284; Id., *Panentheistic Inter-connectedness. On The Revival of Metaphysics in A.N. Whitehead and P. Teilhard De Chardin*, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, July 2019: disponibile in <https://lirias.kuleuven.be/retrieve/545999>; P. Gamberini, *Deus duepuntozero. Ripensare la fede nel post-teismo*, Gabrielli editori, San Piero in Cariano (VR) 2022; C. Fanti (ed.), *Quale Dio, quale cristianesimo. La metamorfosi della fede nel XXI secolo*, Gabrielli editore, San Pietro in Cariano (VR) 2022; Delio, *The Not-Yet God*, pp. 22-41; 66-88; 108-125; 213-258.

⁷³ Sull'argomento, cfr. F. Mignini, *Commento*, in B. Spinoza, *Korte Verhandelng-Breve Trattato*, Japadre, L'Aquila 1986, pp. 371-800; Id., *Un «segno di contraddizione»*, in B. Spinoza, *Opere*, Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, Milano 2007, pp. XI-LXIX.

⁷⁴ E. Dattilo, *Il dio sensibile. Saggio sul panteismo*, Neri Pozza, Venezia 2021, p. 10.

mosfera»⁷⁵, come «sfera»⁷⁶, come «ambiente universale»⁷⁷, cioè realtà che non è né «fuori», né «accanto» al mondo, ma costituisce lo sfondo «mobile» in cui sono immersi il mondo e la vita umana.

Il divenire della natura e della vita umana non sono in tal senso elementi esterni all'essere di Dio che fungono da scenario di manifestazione del suo potere di «Padrone del mondo» che regola l'essere e il non essere di uomini e cose. In forza dell'evento cristologico, e del «contatto» in esso stabilito tra Dio, mondo, uomo, e delle «estensioni» che di esso si danno nella predicazione, nell'eucarestia, nella prassi ispirata alla carità, nell'attesa operosa del Regno di Dio e del compimento che di esso si dà nel *pleroma*, il mondo appare come «luogo sacro». Non è infatti lo scenario dell'«epifania» di un Dio ad esso esterno, ma l'ambiente in cui si dispiega la sua «*Diafania*». Il «contatto» tra Dio, mondo, uomo, prodottosi nell'evento cristologico costituisce in tal senso il «*focolaio storico*»⁷⁸ nel quale trova espressione quella unità tra Dio, cosmo, «vita pensante», che costituisce la grammatica profonda che regola la costituzione della realtà, che avrà piena realizzazione nel *pleroma*.

La divina presenza non si è manifestata semplicemente di fronte a noi, accanto a noi. È scaturita in modo così universale, ce ne troviamo talmente avvolti e pervasi che non ci rimane neppure un posto per cadere in ginocchio, fosse pure nel profondo di noi stessi. Mediante tutte le creature, senza eccezione, il Divino ci assedia, ci pervade, ci plasma. Pensavamo che fosse lontano, inaccessibile, invece viviamo immersi nelle sue sfere ardenti. «*In eo vivimus*». In verità, come diceva Giacobbe uscito dal suo sogno, il mondo, questo mondo tangibile per il quale sentivamo la noia e l'irriverenza riservate ai luoghi profani, è un luogo sacro, e non lo sapevamo? «*Venite, adoremus*» [...]. Se è lecito modificare leggermente una parola sacra, diremo che il grande mistero del cristianesimo non è esattamente l'Apparizione, ma la Trasparenza di Dio nell'Universo. Sì, o Signore, non solo il raggio che sfiora, ma il raggio che penetra. Non la tua Epifania, o Gesù, ma *la tua Diafania*⁷⁹.

Nel contesto di questa visione evolutiva di Dio, del mondo, della vita umana, la pratica cristiana non viene compresa come forma di esistenza che estranea gli uomini dal mondo, o che, in nome del primato attribuito all'ordine in esso impresso da Dio, demonizza il lavoro di trasformazione del mondo e della propria vita da essi realizzato. L'esperienza religiosa si strut-

⁷⁵ Teilhard de Chardin, *L'Ambiente Divino*, p. 102.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 87.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 86.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 89.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 85;101.

tura infatti come pratica di attivazione e di sostegno dell'azione creatrice di un'umanità che, attraverso l'espansione della propria potenza cognitiva e operativa, arriva ad accreditarsi come formazione capace di dar corso al «rilancio» dell'evoluzione.

Secondo Bergson l'universo «è una macchina per produrre dei»⁸⁰, per Teilhard, invece, è una «macchina» per produrre il *pleroma*, per muovere cioè verso quella figura ultima dell'evoluzione in cui si realizza il massimo di unità fra Dio, mondo, «vita pensante». In tale orizzonte prende forma una relazione tra Dio, cosmo, uomo, in cui si passa dalla sudditanza ontologica dell'*ens ab alio* nei confronti dell'*ens a se* alla sinergia tra fonti differenti di creatività, che trovano il proprio compimento nell'estensione alla totalità dell'universo della compenetrazione tra mondo, uomo, Dio, realizzatasi nell'esistenza di Gesù Cristo, che si prolunga nell'eucarestia e nell'attivazione di una prassi radicata nella speranza cristiana di un mondo riconciliato.

In questa storia generale della Materia, chi non riconoscerebbe – scrive Teilhard – il grande gesto simbolico del Battesimo? Nelle acque del Giordano, immagine delle potenze della Terra, il Cristo si immerge. Egli le santifica. E, come dice San Gregorio Nisseno, ne esce gocciolante, sollevando il Mondo con Sé [...]. Nulla di meno di questa *Parusia* ci vuole per equilibrare e dominare, nei nostri cuori, la gloria del Mondo che si eleva. Affinché con Te possiamo vincere il Mondo, manifestaTi a noi ammantato della Gloria del Mondo [...]. Ci siamo compenetrati a lungo in queste prospettive: il progresso dell'Universo, e specialmente dell'Universo umano, non fa concorrenza a Dio, né rappresenta un vano sperpero delle energie che gli dobbiamo. Più l'uomo sarà grande, più l'Umanità sarà unita, cosciente e padrona della propria forza, più, di conseguenza, la creazione sarà bella, l'adorazione perfetta, tanto più il Cristo troverà, per le Sue espansioni mistiche, un Corpo degno di risurrezione⁸¹.

4. CONCLUSIONE. LA RIVOLUZIONE TEOLOGICA DI TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

Teilhard non è stato un teologo in senso professionale. Ciò non gli ha però impedito di essere un importante pensatore religioso che ha posto non soltanto la Chiesa cattolica, confessione cui apparteneva, ma ogni forma di esperienza religiosa, davanti all'urgenza di cambiamenti imposti da tre fenomeni, da lui evidenziati, che hanno un impatto decostruttivo sull'immaginario religioso. Si tratta, in primo luogo, dell'avvento della visione evolutiva del

⁸⁰ H. Bergson, *Le due fonti della morale e della religione*, tr. it. di M. Vinciguerra, SE, Milano 2006, p. 243.

⁸¹ Teilhard de Chardin, *L'ambiente divino*, pp. 81; 98; 124.

mondo e della vita umana; in secondo luogo, della globalizzazione della condizione umana prodotta dall'espansione della tecnica; infine, dell'affermarsi della «vita pensante» come fattore trainante di una evoluzione che immette gli uomini nella condizione inedita dell'«Ultra-umano».

In tal modo, il gesuita a partire dalle problematiche che gli si impongono nella sua condizione di religioso attivamente impegnato nel campo della ricerca scientifica, elabora un pensiero che costituisce una enorme provocazione per la teologia.

Pur essendo persona dal tratto gentile e dal carattere mite, anche se interiormente tormentato e combattuto, appare infatti, nel campo della riflessione teologica, come una sorta di agente provocatore che decostruisce molte certezze consolidate del *depositum fidei* della Chiesa cattolica, come pure comprensioni convenzionali dell'esperienza religiosa ispirate alla demonizzazione della vita umana, oppure a un imperialismo veritativo che fa dell'inimicizia e dell'intolleranza verso il diversamente credente o il non credente lo stigma delle dottrine e delle pratiche religiose.

Dalla ricerca di una nuova figura di cristianesimo nasce la revisione cui il gesuita sottopone alcune dottrine classiche del cattolicesimo, come la dottrina della *creatio ex-nihilo*, che è venuta precisandosi nella Patristica a partire dalla metà del secondo secolo⁸², l'inquadramento della figura di Gesù Cristo nel paradigma niceno e calcedonense delle due nature, il soprannaturalismo vigente in molte espressioni della dottrina e della pratica cristiana, che è il frutto della visione di Dio come *ens a se* che crea e domina un mondo che è identificato nella figura deficitaria dell'*ens ab alio*, il dualismo tra materia e spirito, come pure, infine, una dottrina dell'escatologia che pensa in termini di discontinuità o di reciproca esclusione il rapporto tra storia del cosmo e della vita umana e Regno di Dio.

Teilhard si mostra molto critico, inoltre, nei confronti di ogni visione dell'esperienza religiosa che estranea gli uomini dal coinvolgimento attivo nella costruzione dei futuri scenari dell'evoluzione. A suo avviso, infatti, la funzione delle religioni è «dare forma» alla «energia libera» della Terra, canalizzandola nella costruzione di figure inclusive e non distruttive dei futuri scenari dell'evoluzione umana⁸³.

Secondo il gesuita, dunque, ogni religione che non intenda ridursi a residuo di un «passato che non vuole passare» deve ripensare il proprio patrimonio simbolico, dottrinale, e la prassi ad esso connessa, nel quadro delle trasformazioni prodottesi con l'avvento della modernità e con l'entrata

⁸² Sull'argomento cfr. C. Keller, *Face of the Deep. A theology of Becoming*, Routledge, New York 2002, pp. 43-64.

⁸³ Per un approfondimento delle tematiche sovraindicate mi permetto il rimando a G. Giustozzi, *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. La «reinvenzione» dell'esperienza religiosa*, Studium, Roma 2021, pp. 115-216.

nell'epoca del «Ultra-umano», dell'avvento, cioè, di una condizione in cui gli uomini, attraverso l'espansione e il potenziamento della loro creatività, fenomeno legato in particolare agli avanzamenti prodottisi nel campo della ricerca tecnico-scientifica, si impongono come il soggetto di un «rilancio» dell'evoluzione.

Teilhard appare, in tal senso, non lontano da quanto sostiene Alfred North Whitehead, il quale, in un'opera apparsa nel 1926, *Science and Modern World*, scrive:

La religione non recupererà la sua antica forza finché non riuscirà ad affrontare i cambiamenti con lo stesso spirito della scienza. I suoi principi possono essere eterni, ma la loro espressione necessita di un costante sviluppo. Questo sviluppo della religione è principalmente liberazione delle idee autenticamente sue dalle nozioni estranee inserite per presentare tali idee nei termini di un quadro immaginario del mondo concepito in altri tempi. Una siffatta liberazione della religione dai vincoli di una scienza imperfetta va tutta a suo vantaggio. Essa pone in risalto il suo messaggio genuino. La cosa più importante da tener presente è che di norma un progresso della scienza dimostrerà che enunciazioni di diverse credenze religiose richiedono qualche tipo di modifica [...]. Le dispute religiose del sedicesimo e diciassettesimo secolo misero i teologi in uno stato d'animo dei più malaugurati [...]. Essi non ebbero l'ardire di modificare alcunché, perché si sottrassero all'impegno di liberare il loro messaggio spirituale dalla connessione con un particolare complesso di immagini fantasiose⁸⁴.

Teilhard, come Whitehead, considera inadeguato pensare il rapporto tra scienza, filosofia, teologia, attraverso affermazioni del tipo: «la scienza si occupa di problemi, la filosofia si occupa di misteri»; oppure, «la scienza si chiede che ora è, la filosofia ricerca cosa è il tempo»; o anche, infine, la tesi secondo la quale la scienza, stando all'adagio di Galilei recepito anche da Bellarmino, e ripetuto come un mantra da molti teologi, «ricerca come vanno i cieli, la religione, invece, come andare in cielo»⁸⁵.

Il gesuita ritiene infatti carente ogni forma di pensiero filosofico o teologico che intenda salvaguardare l'agibilità dell'etica e la legittimità delle rappresentazioni religiose mettendo al sicuro i loro discorsi in uno spazio immune dagli effetti decostruttivi legati alle mutazioni indotte dalla ricerca scientifica e dall'espansione della tecnica in campi riguardanti la genesi e la struttura del cosmo, l'evoluzione della terra e gli effetti che in essa ha l'espansione del potere di intervento dell'uomo sulla natura, oppure ambiti

⁸⁴ A.N. Whitehead, *La scienza e il mondo moderno*, tr. it. di A. Banfi, Bollati Boringhieri, Milano 2001, p. 205.

⁸⁵ J. Caputo, *The Insistence of God. A Theology of Perhaps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2013, p. 257.

della vita umana come il nascere, la gestione dei corpi, il curarsi, il morire, e più in generale l'organizzazione politica della vita umana.

Secondo Teilhard, la scienza mette in discussione le immagini del cosmo e della vita umana tracciate da filosofie affette da fissismo o da essenzialismo, o da forme di pensiero che, in maniera diretta o indiretta, si ispirano alla tesi secondo la quale «la scienza non pensa», come pure da religioni che considerano l'impresa tecnico-scientifica, e l'allargamento degli spazi della creatività umana da essa consentito, come realizzazione di un progetto anti-divino e antiumano.

Il gesuita non intende infatti immunizzare l'esperienza religiosa dagli effetti decostruttivi indotti dalle variazioni prodotte dalla ricerca scientifica e dalla tecnica nei modi di concepire il mondo, e nei modi in cui gli uomini stanno al mondo e organizzano la propria vita. Invece di definire campi specifici di competenza della scienza e della religione, Teilhard delinea una prospettiva transdisciplinare⁸⁶, cioè una tipologia di rapporto tra sapere tecnico-scientifico e mentalità religiosa nella quale le religioni non si sottraggono al lavoro teorico e pratico richiesto dalla nuova comprensione di sé imposta dall'impatto decostruttivo che il discorso tecnico-scientifico ha sui linguaggi e sulle pratiche ereditati dalla tradizione. A suo avviso, inoltre, la scienza non può blindarsi in un atteggiamento che squalifica in linea di principio i linguaggi e le pratiche tipici delle religioni, ignorando il fatto che nei miti, nei simboli, nei rituali da essi veicolati, sono presenti risorse spirituali, etiche, politiche, che possono dare un apporto positivo all'evoluzione di una umanità che, in seguito all'espansione e al potenziamento delle pratiche cognitive e operative del sapere tecnico-scientifico, sta entrando nell'epoca in cui pone in essere un «rilancio» dell'evoluzione.

Teilhard ritiene che la presa d'atto dell'imporsi della visione evolutiva del mondo e della vita umana cambia in modo significativo la teologia. Costringe infatti i teologi a riconsiderare ciò che viene indicato con la parola Dio, a ripensare il rapporto tra Dio e il mondo nel contesto di una comprensione scientifica della realtà, che, a suo avviso, non sfocia necessariamente nel materialismo, ma può essere assunta come componente di un paradigma olistico e relazionale nel quale la storia del cosmo e della «vita pensante» appare come lo spazio in cui e attraverso cui si dispiega la presenza di Dio nel mondo.

Dio non viene concepito, in tal senso, come ente esterno al mondo, ma come realtà in divenire «intrecciata» con il divenire del mondo, nella quale

⁸⁶ Sul tema della transdisciplinarietà come forma di rapporto tra ricerca tecnico-scientifica e mentalità religiosa, cfr. C. Keller, M.J. Rubenstein, *Introduction: Tangled Matters*, in C. Keller, M.J. Rubenstein (eds), *Entangled Worlds. Religion, Science and New Materialisms*, Fordham University Press, New York 2017, pp. 1-18.

trovano unità e compimento i processi evolutivi del cosmo e della «vita pensante» in esso prodottasi.

Teilhard – scrive Ilia Delio – contribuisce a un olismo teologico riconoscendo la vita dinamica del Dio-Omega come energia dell'evoluzione. Omega è il Dio intrecciato, aperto al compimento in avanti. Poiché Dio e materia sono intrecciati, Dio è una totalità in divenire in noi, come noi siamo una totalità in divenire in Dio. Mentre gli antichi pensavano che Dio è quanto c'è di più semplice e immutabile, Teilhard ha sostenuto che Dio è in via di complessificazione nell'evoluzione, e quindi è in via di mutazione come risultato dell'attrazione e dell'unione. Egli ha anticipato una piena fioritura della vita materiale cosciente in avanti, non soltanto vita terrestre, ma ogni vita intelligente attraverso le galassie e forse altri universi. Il *pleroma* supera di gran lunga i limiti della vita terrestre. Ogni materia cosciente ha del potenziale per la vita cristica⁸⁷.

L'esperienza religiosa viene accreditata da Teilhard come forma di vita, modo di stare al mondo che non chiude le persone nel cerchio dell'interiorità, non si esprime, inoltre, soltanto nello spazio del rito o dell'evocazione del soprannaturale, non si limita, infine, a suggerire una prassi funzionale all'ingentilimento dei rapporti interpersonali. A suo avviso, infatti, l'esperienza religiosa è portatrice di una «coscienza cosmica» che connette la vita umana al divenire del processo cosmogonico. Egli reputa, inoltre, che nei linguaggi del simbolo, del mito, del rito, della prassi religiosamente orientata, è contenuto un potenziale culturale capace di saldare l'esperienza religiosa con i processi cognitivi e operativi tramite i quali la «vita pensante» dà forma al presente e al futuro dell'evoluzione. In tal modo, la conoscenza del cosmo sviluppata dalle scienze, e la trasformazione tecnico-scientifica della natura, vengono assunte come elementi essenziali della nuova storia delle religioni.

Nel campo del pensiero religioso, Teilhard appare dunque come il portatore di una «singolarità» che è data dal fatto che si propone di integrare nel bagaglio teorico e pratico del cristianesimo, e, più in generale, di ogni esperienza religiosa, quelli che identifica come i contrassegni più tipici della sensibilità moderna e contemporanea, vale a dire, la coscienza del radicamento della vita umana nel divenire della natura, e l'identificazione della specie umana come soggetto che si è reso capace, attraverso gli sviluppi della scienza e della tecnica, di indirizzare, di dar forma alla natura, e ai propri stessi assetti biofisici.

In tal modo, viene delineata una originale tipologia di discorso teologico nel quale la natura, il corpo, la ricerca scientifica, le invenzioni della tecnica,

⁸⁷ Delio, *The Not-Yet God*, p. 251.

le trasformazioni politiche, le mutazioni del costume personale e collettivo, divengono il nuovo ambiente in cui le persone possono trovare lo spazio del rapporto con il divino una volta crollati gli scenari di immagini del mondo non più fruibili, dati i cambiamenti prodottisi nei modi in cui l'umanità attuale fa esperienza di sé e del mondo.

A partire dalla rilevazione del passaggio in atto nel gruppo umano verso modelli inediti di esistenza, Teilhard delinea dunque una riflessione teologica dotata di una portata innovativa che lo pone in linea con i più importanti tentativi di radicale rinnovamento del pensiero cristiano tracciati da teologi del Novecento come Rudolf Bultmann, Dietrich Bonhoeffer⁸⁸, Paul Tillich⁸⁹, Karl Rahner⁹⁰.

BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Bergson H., *Le due fonti della morale e della religione*, tr. it. di M. Vinciguerra, SE, Milano 2006.
- Berry Th., Clarke Th., *Befriending the Earth. A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth*, Twenty-Third Publications, Mystic (Connecticut) 1991.
- Bodei R., *Scomposizioni. Forme dell'individuo moderno*, il Mulino, Bologna 2020.
- Campa R., *Tecnoetica*, Orbis Idearum Press, Krakow 2023.
- Caputo J., *The Insistence of God. A Theology of Perhaps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2013.
- Conchon M.J., Coutagne M.J., Prats M., *Le Feminin avenir du monde. Deux vies en conversation. Marguerite Teilhard – Chambon et son cousin Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*, Saint-Léger Éditions, Paris 2020.
- Dattilo E., *Il dio sensibile. Saggio sul panteismo*, Neri Pozza, Venezia 2021.
- Delio I., *The Not-Yet God. Carl Jung, Teilhard de Chardin and the Relational Whole*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York 2023.
- Fabel A., John D. St. (eds.), *Teilhard in the 21st Century. The Emerging Spirit of Earth*, Orbis Books, New York 2003.
- Fanti, C. (ed.), *Quale Dio, quale cristianesimo. La metamorfosi della fede nel XXI secolo*, Gabrielli editore, San Piero in Cariano (VR) 2022.
- Gamberini P., *Deus duepuntozero. Ripensare la fede nel post-teismo*, Gabrielli editori, San Pietro in Cariano (VR) 2022.

⁸⁸ Sul confronto del pensiero di Teilhard con quello di Bultmann e Bonhoeffer mi permetto il rimando a G. Giustozzi, *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Mistica cristiana e potenza creatrice della tecnica*, «Orbis Idearum», 2 (2019) pp. 70-72.

⁸⁹ Su convergenze e divergenze tra Tillich e Teilhard de Chardin, cfr. J.F. Haught, *In Search of a God for Evolution: Paul Tillich and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*, «Teilhard Studies», Fall 2002.

⁹⁰ Sulla rilevanza, in Rahner, delle problematiche legate al rapporto tra esperienza cristiana e visione tecnico-scientifica della realtà, mi permetto il rimando a G. Giustozzi, *Karl Rahner (1966): Experiment Mensch. L'alba incompiuta di una 'Antropotecnica' cristiana. Teologi a confronto con Peter Sloterdijk*, «Orbis Idearum» 1 (2023), pp. 75-113.

- Giustozzi G., *Karl Rahner (1966): Experiment Mensch. L'alba incompiuta di una 'Antropotecnica' cristiana. Teologi a confronto con Peter Sloterdijk*, «Orbis Idearum» 1 (2023), pp. 75-113.
- Giustozzi G., *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. La «reinvenzione» dell'esperienza religiosa*, Studium, Roma 2021.
- Giustozzi G., *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Mistica cristiana e potenza creatrice della tecnica*, «Orbis Idearum», 2 (2019) pp. 57-80.
- Giustozzi G., *Teilhard contro Tresmontant. Testi e contesti dello scontro tra il gesuita e un suo interprete*, in Florio M. (ed.), *Scrutando il Mistero nella storia*, Cittadella Editrice, Assisi 2018, pp. 230-254.
- Giustozzi G., *Teilhard de Chardin. Geobiologia/Geotecnica/Neo-cristianesimo*, Studium, Roma 2016.
- Giustozzi G., *Teilhard de Chardin: praesentire cum Ecclesia. Indicazioni per un neo-cristianesimo in due scritti del 1945*, in Cresti V., Galleni L., Scalfari F. (edd.), *Teilhard de Chardin oggi in Italia. Il punto sulla ricerca*, Aracne, Roma 2016, pp. 89-118.
- Haught J.F., *In Search of a God for Evolution: Paul Tillich and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*, «Teilhard Studies», Fall 2002.
- Hefner Ph., *Technology and Human Becoming*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 2003.
- Keller C., *Face of the Deep. A theology of Becoming*, Routledge, New York 2002.
- Keller C., Rubenstein M.J. (eds), *Entangled Worlds. Religion, Science and New Materialisms*, Fordham University Press, New York 2017.
- King U., *Spirit of Fire. The Life and Vision of Teilhard de Chardin*, Orbis Books, New York 1996.
- Mendonca V., *Die Komplementarität von Polarität und Pleroma im Prozess-Panentheismus: Die Metaphysik der Gott-Welt-Beziehung bei Whitehead und Teilhard*, in Bruntrup G., Jaskolla J., Müller T. (hrsg.), *Prozess, Religion, Gott. Whiteheads Religionsphilosophie im Kontext seiner Prozessmetaphysik* Alber Verlag, Freiburg-München 2020, pp. 251-284.
- Mendonca V., *Du conflit entre «l'un absolu» et «la multitude» à la communion de «l'un et la multitude» interconnectés: Révision panenthéiste des intuitions initiales de Teilhard dans ses essais de la Grande Guerre*, in Agudelo G., Boulanger J.F., Duffy K. (éds.), *Regarder la guerre en face, voir au-delà. De la Grande Guerre aux turbulences de la mondialisation*, Les acteurs du savoir, Paris 2018, pp. 201-247.
- Mendonca V., *Panentheistic Interconnectedness. On The Revival of Metaphysics in A.N. Whitehead and P. Teilhard De Chardin*, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, July 2019: disponibile in <https://lirias.kuleuven.be/retrieve/545999>.
- Mignini F., *Un «segno di contraddizione»*, in B. Spinoza, *Opere*, Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, Milano 2007, pp. XI-LXIX.
- Petruzzi P., *Romolo Murri un cristiano nella storia*, Andrea Livi Editore, Fermo 2022.
- Prats M., *La parole attendue. La circulation des photocopies de Teilhard*, Salvator, Paris 2022.
- Schiavone A., *L'occidente e la nascita di una civiltà planetaria*, il Mulino, Bologna 2022.

- Schiwy G., *Eine heimliche Liebe. Lucile Swan und Teilhard de Chardin*, Herder, Freiburg 2005.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Comment je Crois*, Editions du Seuil, Paris 1969.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Écrits du temps de la guerre*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1975.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Il Fenomeno umano*, tr. it. di F. Mantovani, Queriniana, Brescia 1995.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Journal*, Tome I (cahiers 1-5): 26 août 1915 – 4 janvier 1919, Fayard, Paris 1975.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *L'Ambiente Divino*, tr. it. di A. Dozon Daverio e F. Mantovani, Queriniana, Brescia 2005.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *L'Œuvre scientifique, X: 1945-1955*, Walter-Verlag, Olten und Freiburg 1971.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *La Scienza di fronte a Cristo. Credere nel mondo e credere in Dio*, tr. it. di A. Tassone Bernardi, Il Segno dei Gabrielli, San Pietro in Cariano (VR) 2022.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Le Cœur de la Matière*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1976.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Les Directions de l'Avenir*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1973.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Lettres à Jeanne Mortier*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1984.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Lettres familières de Pierre Teilhard de Chardin mon ami. Les dernières années (1948-1955)*, Éditions du Centurion, Paris 1976.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Lettres inédites à l'Abbé Gaudefroy et à l'Abbé Breuil*, Éditions du Rocher, Monaco 1988.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Lettres intimes de Teilhard de Chardin à Auguste Valensin, Bruno de Solages, Henri de Lubac (1919-1955)*, Aubier-Montaigne, Paris 1974.
- Teilhard de Chardin P., *Verso la Convergenza. L'attivazione dell'energia nell'umanità*, tr. it. di A. Tassone Bernardi, Il Segno dei Gabrielli editori, San Pietro in Cariano (VR) 2004.
- Tresmontant C., *Études de métaphysique biblique*, Gabalda, Paris 1955.
- Whitehead A.N., *La scienza e il mondo moderno*, tr. it. di A. Banfi, Bollati Boringhieri, Milano 2001.

histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
ideeengeschiedenis
история идей
ideeengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
storia delle idee
history of ideas
HISTORY OF IDEAS
historia idei
idéhistorie
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideeengeschichte
historia idei
ideeengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
история идей
historia de las ideas
история идей
STORIA DELLE IDEE
ideeengeschiedenis
storia delle idee
History of Ideas
история идей
historia idei
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideeengeschichte
ideeengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
storia delle idee
история идей
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideeengeschichte
ideeengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
storia delle idee
история идей
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideeengeschichte
ideeengeschiedenis
histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
storia delle idee
история идей
ideeajalugu hugmyndasaga
ideeengeschichte
ideeengeschiedenis
история идей
idéhistorie

Third Section

CONTRIBUTIONS IN POLISH



TECHNOKRYTYKA A RELIGIA: CHRZEŚCIJAŃSTWO, EKOLOGIA A POSTĘP NAUKOWO-TECHNICZNY W DRUGIEJ POŁOWIE XX WIEKU

Marcin Krasnodębski
Polish Academy of Sciences
mkrasnodebski@ihnpn.pl

ENGLISH TITLE: TECHNOCRITICISM AND RELIGION: CHRISTIANITY,
ECOLOGY AND TECHNO-SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS IN THE
SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

ABSTRACT

The latter half of the 20th century marked a period of disillusionment regarding the liberating potential of techno-scientific progress. The ecological crisis, relentless exploitation of Earth's resources, and rapid breakdown of conventional social structures caused by the proliferation of new industries and technologies provided fertile ground for the emergence of a counterculture that was increasingly skeptical of modernity. Among the vocal critics challenging the dominance of technology in contemporary society were non-conformist philosophers, intellectuals, and scientists driven by Christian faith. The radical reinterpretation of the history of technology proposed by Christian technocritics, particularly over the past century, leads to a pessimistic appraisal of our civilization's state. Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker (physicist and philosopher), Jacques Ellul (sociologist and theologian), Ivan Illich (priest and activist), and Ernst Friedrich Schumacher (economist) represent four distinct perspectives on Christian contributions to understanding the ecological crisis, industrialization, technological alienation, and the responsibility for these issues. While all four figures drew upon scholarship in the history of science and technology to substantiate their arguments, their work diverges from the prevailing portrayal of the relationship between science, technology, and religion in existing literature, serving as a bridge between the history of technology and other disciplines like political ecology.

KEYWORDS: Science and religion, History of technology, Sustainability, Environmentalism, Neoluddism

Relacje pomiędzy nauką a religią to jedno z najbardziej klasycznych zagadnień poruszanych przez historyków nauki.¹ Od czasów oświecenia temat ten nieprzerwanie powracał w debacie akademickiej i rozpaliał wyobraźnię apologetów po obu stronach barykady.² Z jednej strony kościoły chrześcijańskie spotykają się krytyką ze względu na ich historyczny sceptycyzm wobec rozwoju astronomii, geologii oraz szczególnie biologii. Do dziś miliony wyznawców Chrystusa, szczególnie w obu Amerykach oraz Afryce, odrzucają teorię ewolucji w imię tzw. kreacjonizmu – dosłownej interpretacji Księgi Rodzaju sugerującej jakoby Bóg stworzył Ziemię i życie na naszej planecie w ciągu siedmiu dni (Baudouin i Brosseau 2013; Numbers 2006). Z drugiej strony postaci takie jak dyrektor Obserwatorium Watykańskiego Guy Consolmagno, a w Polsce Michał Heller czy też Krzysztof Meissner, przekonują nas o komplementarności nauki i wiary oraz o konieczności ich dialogu dla pełnego zrozumienia otaczającego nas świata (Consolmagno 2013; Heller 1994). Szczególnie w ostatnich latach historycy nauki zaczęli się przychylniej przyglądać roli m.in. Kościoła katolickiego w rozwoju nauk i technik astronomicznych w XVII i XVIII wieku oraz religii muzułmańskiej w rozwoju nauk odziedziczonych z antyku, a tezy o konflikcie między nauką a religią ustępują tezom o złożoności i wielowymiarowości ich relacji (np. Saliba 2011; Heilbron 1999).

Trzeba jednak zaznaczyć, że debata ta z reguły dotyczy spójności prawd wiary z hipotezami i teoriami naukowymi, natomiast rzadziej dotyczy komplementarności rozwiązań technicznych z etyką i praktyką tej lub innej religii. Oczywiście, chrześcijańscy filozofowie i teologowie niejednokrotnie wyrażali sceptycyzm wobec industrializacji. Trend ten nabrał szczególnie wyrazistego kształtu po tragicznych doświadczeniach I wojny światowej, co widać chociażby w twórczości Inklingów, między innymi C. S. Lewisa, który wprost krytykował „kult” techniki w swoich książkach o charakterze apologetycznym (Fisher, Hall, Khoddam 2015; Lewis 2001 [1943], 77). Anglikański biskup Edward Borroughs wezwał nawet w 1927 r. do dziesięcioletniego ogólnonarodowego moratorium na prowadzenie badań naukowych zorientowanych na rozwój nowych technologii, by wpierv zrozumieć konsekwencje jakie mogą one mieć dla społeczeństwa (Bud 2018, 16). Tarcia te jednak rzadko kiedy dotyczyły techniki stricte rzecz biorąc, ale pokrywały się w dużej mierze z konfliktem z szeroko rozumianym modernizmem i racjonalizmem światopoglądowym. Dziś konflikty wokół

¹ Opracowań poruszających ten temat jest bardzo wiele, ale szczególnie warto polecić prace historyków nauki Ronalda Numbersa (np. Numbers 2009; Hardin, Numbers i Binzley 2018) oraz Micheale Ruse’a (Ruse 2008; Ruse 2010). Najbardziej wyczerpującym kompendium na temat relacji między chrześcijaństwem a nauką jest prawdopodobnie: Stump i Padgett 2012.

² Teza o konflikcie pomiędzy nauką a religią została utrwalona w drugiej połowie XIX wieku w świecie anglosaskim przez historyków nauki takich jak Andrew Dickson White (1896).

rozwoju technologicznego występują szczególnie w kontekście bioetyki, ale spór „religia vs technika” jest zdecydowanie mniej wyrazisty niż ten pomiędzy religią a nauką. Liderzy kościołów chrześcijańskich nie sprzeciwiają się rozwojowi techniki jako takiemu, ale punktowo wyrażają krytykę wobec tej lub innej technologii, z reguły, gdy dotyczy ona kwestii związanych z ludzkim zdrowiem i życiem (Weiberg-Salzmann i Willems 2020).

Na innym poziomie plasuje się debata dotycząca odpowiedzialności chrześcijaństwa za konsekwencje postępu naukowo-technicznego. Słynny artykuł wybitnego historyka techniki Lynna White’a *The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis* opublikowany na łamach periodyku „Science” w 1967 r. rzucał oskarżenie pod adresem tradycji chrześcijańskiej twierdząc, że jest ona zakorzeniona w antropocentrycznej wizji świata i przyzwala niejako na destruktywną eksploatację natury (White 1967). White podkreślał w swoich pracach, że religia chrześcijańska była siłą napędową wielu innowacji, starając się przy tym wykazać, że narracja o „ciemnych wiekach” i zastoju naukowo-technologicznym w średniowiecznej Europie nie ma oparcia w faktach. Jednocześnie był on przekonany, że to właśnie w myśli chrześcijańskiej znajdujemy elementy ludzkiej hybris, która prowadzi do dewastacji boskiego dzieła stworzenia. Oskarżenie to stanowiło zaczyn do trwających do dziś debat na temat roli religii w kształtowaniu się postaw wobec zagadnień ekologicznych, w których oskarżyciele chrześcijaństwa (szczególnie jego protestancko-kapitalistycznej odmiany) ścierali się ze zwolennikami ekologicznej interpretacji religii takimi jak na przykład katolicka teolożka i ekofeministka Rosemary Ruether czy luterkański duchowny Joseph Sittler (Oh 2014).³ Debata ta jednak dotyczy interpretacji historycznych wpływu religii na mentalność, a nie żywego konfliktu dotyczącego stosunku kościołów chrześcijańskich wobec przyrody, które dziś, przynajmniej nominalnie, wyrażają wsparcie dla polityki ekologicznej.⁴

Wydaje się więc, że po wyłączeniu spod dyskusji karykaturalnych form fundamentalizmu religijnego⁵, liczba punktów zapalnych pomiędzy wiarą

³ Źródeł skomplikowanej relacji pomiędzy myślą proto-ekologiczną oraz teologią chrześcijańską możemy szukać już w czasach antycznych (Campa, Corbally, Boone Rappaport 2022).

⁴ W kontekście Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego, należy zwrócić uwagę na to, że na przełomie lat 60. i 70. kwestia ochrony środowiska pojawiała się w publicznych deklaracjach, encyklikach oraz listach apostolskich Pawła VI (m.in. w przemówieniu na 25. rocznicę powstanie Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych do spraw Wyżywienia i Rolnictwa (FAO), oraz w liście apostolskim „Octogesima adveniens” z 1971 r.) a współcześnie oczywiście u papieża Franciszka w encyklice *Laudato si’* z 2015 r. oraz ekshortacji apostolskiej *Laudate Deum* z 2023 r.

⁵ To nie znaczy, że antynaukowy fundamentalizm opierający się dosłownej interpretacji Pisma Świętego jest zjawiskiem marginalnym i można go po prostu zignorować. Tym nie mniej nie stanowi on szczególnego wyzwania z punktu widzenia filozofii i nauki. Może on być raczej przedmiotem badań socjologów, antropologów, psychologów, lub ewentualnie psychia-

chrześcijańską a postępem naukowo-technicznym na przestrzeni ostatniego stulecia systematycznie się zmniejszała, ograniczając się do sporadycznych konfliktów dotyczących bioetyki lub ewentualnie fundamentalnych ale dosyć abstrakcyjnych sporów metafizycznych (na temat istnienia osobowego Boga z punktu widzenia nauki czy też zagadki świadomości). Innymi słowy, teolodzy i liderzy kościołów chrześcijańskich głównego nurtu nie sprzeciwiają się zasadniczo rozwojowi nauki i techniki jako takiemu. Wręcz przeciwnie, naciskają oni na komplementarność nauki i religii i chętnie adoptują nowinki techniczne w procesie ewangelizacji.

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest zwrócenie uwagi na to, że powyższa wizja nie wyczerpuje tematu relacji pomiędzy nauką, techniką i chrześcijaństwem w XX wieku. Dominujące w literaturze narracje z reguły ignorują postawy radykalnie nonkonformistyczne krytykujące z pozycji chrześcijańskich całościowe rozumienie postępu naukowo-technicznego, i to nie wyłącznie na gruncie etyki, ale też epistemologii. Po 1945 r., a w szczególności w latach 70. i 80., triumfy święciła chrześcijańska myśl technokrytyczna, która odcisnęła piętno na nurtach takich jak ekologia polityczna oraz filozofia ekologiczna, a także wpłynęła na imaginariusz społeczny całych pokoleń, zarówno z prawej jak i lewej strony politycznej. Ta chrześcijańska myśl technokrytyczna była oczywiście fragmentem bardzo szerokiego spektrum lewicowych, anarchistycznych, i kontrkulturowych postaw, idei i ruchów, które wyrażały sceptycyzm wobec dominujących form industrializacji i technicyzacji społeczeństwa, ale jej wpływ był szczególnie wyrazisty.⁶

Artykuł ten przedstawia postawy przyjmowane przez chrześcijańskich technokrytyków poprzez pryzmat piśmiennictwa czterech postaci: Carla Friedricha Weizsäckera, Jacques'a Ellula, Ivana Illicha oraz Ernsta Friedricha Schumachera. Każdy z nich był już przedmiotem niezliczonych opracowań naukowych, wyczerpująco przedstawiających ich indywidualny dorobek, ale nikt nie pokusił się o ujęcie ich myśli jako jednego trendu, którego cechami wspólnymi byłaby zarówno bezkompromisowa wiara religijna, zamiłowanie do ekologii oraz głębokie zainteresowanie historią nauki i techniki.⁷

Jak pogodzić fakt istnienia bogatej literatury na temat każdego z nich z jednej strony, a ich nieobecnością w pracach na temat relacji między nauką i

trów. Warto szczególnie zaznaczyć, że kreacjonizm jest również zjawiskiem powszechnym w religiach niechrześcijańskich takich jak islam oraz hinduizm.

⁶ Na marginesie należy zwrócić uwagę, że owe kontrkulturowe ruchy bardzo często sprzyjały tworzeniu się nowych form wiedzy opartych na alternatywnych epistemologiach, np. Schwerin 2022; Güttler 2022; Kaiser i McCray 2016; Markoff 2005.

⁷ Na temat Weizsäckera np. Bartosch i Braun 2012; Weber 2012. Na temat Ellula np. Chastenet 2019; Latouche 2013. Na temat Illicha np. Paquot 2012; Hoinacki i Mitcham 2002. Na temat np. Schumachera: Schumacher 2011; Wood 1984.

religią z drugiej? Wydaje się, że są ku temu dwa powody. Po pierwsze, praktyczne konsekwencje piśmiennictwa chrześcijańskich technokrytyków dotyczą przede wszystkim techniki w szerokim znaczeniu tego słowa, czyli tematu, który tradycyjnie budził mniejsze emocje niż kompatybilność prawd objawionych z dorobkiem i metodologią nauk empirycznych. Technika jest postrzegana w społeczeństwie jako zjawisko wtórne wobec nauki i nie stawia pod znakiem zapytania, przynajmniej bezpośrednio, prawdziwości treści świętych ksiąg. Po drugie, radykalny nonkonformizm chrześcijańskich technokrytyków wypycha ich poza tradycyjne rozumienie postaw religijnych; mimo żarliwej religijności są oni traktowani przede wszystkim jako świeccy filozofowie reprezentujący szeroko rozumianą kontrkulturę krytyczną wobec kapitalizmu i industrializacji. Dorobek powyższych badaczy, za wyjątkiem być może Weizsäckera, jest częściej analizowany w perspektywie myśli ekokrytycznej, która traktuje motywacje religijne jako drugorzędne. Niniejszy artykuł sprzeciwia się temu odczytywaniu i argumentuje, że w tym przypadku problem religii u bohaterów artykułu jest nierozdzielnie związany z ich percepcją techniki, ekologii i nauki (w tej kolejności).

Owa chrześcijańska technokrytyka jest intrygująca nie tylko dlatego, że oferuje inne, nieobecne dziś w debacie publicznej spojrzenie na szeroko rozumiany postęp, ale także dlatego, że jej przedstawiciele śmiało czerpali z historii nauki i techniki, by bronić swoich tez. Niniejszy artykuł stara się między innymi zwrócić uwagę na to, że nurt ten, o ile możemy mówić o spójnym nurcie, stanowi komentarz do historii nauki i techniki, proponując jej oryginalną i nieoczywistą interpretację.

Artykuł jest podzielony na trzy części, odpowiadające trzem charakterystycznym postawom wobec techniki jakie przyjmowali technokrytyczni filozofowie, naukowcy oraz intelektualiści chrześcijańscy w okresie powojennym. W pierwszej części omawiam problem inspirowanej wiarą indywidualnej odpowiedzialności badacza za konsekwencje jego odkryć na przykładzie C. F. von Weizsäckera. W drugiej części, podzielonej na dwa podrozdziały, zajmuję się chrześcijańskim neoludyzmem na przykładzie Jacques'a Ellula oraz Ivana Illicha. W trzeciej części omawiam katolicki antykapitalizm i radykalne odrzucenie dominujących form epistemologii w naukach ścisłych na przykładzie prac E. F. Schumachera. W podsumowaniu artykułu przedstawiam punkty styczne oraz różnice pomiędzy tymi trzema postawami oraz rozważam ich znaczenie dla obecnej debaty na temat relacji pomiędzy postępem naukowo-technicznym a wiarą w epoce antropocenu.

1. WIARA CHRZEŚCIJAŃSKA JAKO ŹRÓDŁO ODPOWIEDZIALNOŚCI ZA POSTĘP NAUKOWO-TECHNICZNY: PRZYPADEK CARLA FRIEDRICH VON WEIZSÄCKERA

Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker (1912-2007) był niemieckim uczonym pochodzącym ze słynnej arystokratycznej rodziny Weizsäckerów, której członkowie wpływali na kształt niemieckiego życia naukowego, kulturalnego i politycznego przez cały XX wiek (Noack 2019). Warto szczególnie wspomnieć o dwóch jej pozostałych przedstawicielach. Ojciec Carla Friedricha, Ernst von Weizsäcker, był wojskowym i dyplomata, służącym między innymi jako sekretarz stanu w Ministerstwie Spraw Zagranicznych III Rzeszy oraz jako ambasador przy Stolicy Apostolskiej w latach 1943-1945. Został on po wojnie skazany na siedem lat pozbawienia wolności za zbrodnie przeciwko ludzkości w procesach norymberskich, choć wyrok ten wzbudzał wiele kontrowersji. Z kolei brat niemieckiego naukowca, Richard, żołnierz Wehrmachtu zaangażowany w spisek przeciw Hitlerowi w 1943 r. a po wojnie polityk CDU, sprawował w latach 1984-1994 funkcję prezydenta Republiki Federalnej Niemiec.

Spośród omówionych w niniejszej pracy technokrytyków, dziedzictwo C. F. Weizsäckera jest najtrudniejsze do oceny. Z jednej strony, jego poglądy były, przynajmniej na pierwszy rzut oka, zdecydowanie mniej kontrowersyjne i przez to mniej wyraziste od tych prezentowanych przez innych bohaterów artykułu. Z drugiej strony, jego wpływ na instytucje i politykę naukową oraz techniczną był najbardziej widoczny, szczególnie w kontekście polityki naszych zachodnich sąsiadów wobec energii atomowej.⁸

Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker rozpoczął karierę naukową jeszcze przed wybuchem II wojny światowej. Studiował on między innymi fizykę, astronomię oraz matematykę w Berlinie, Getyndze i Lipsku współpracując z ojcami fizyki kwantowej, Wernerem Heisenbergiem oraz Nielsem Bohrem. Już w latach 30. XX wieku osiągnął znaczący sukces naukowy, formułując jedną z pierwszych kompletnych teorii na temat powstania Układu Słonecznego. Z punktu widzenia kształtowania się światopoglądu i późniejszej działalności Weizsäckera, przełomem w życiu młodego fizyka była II wojna światowa, podczas której był intensywnie zaangażowany w nazistowski program atomowy. Tak zwana „Uranverein”, grupa robocza zrzeszająca wybitnych niemieckich fizyków jądrowych, miała na celu wyposażenie III Rzeszy w broń masowego rażenia. Weizsäcker był między innymi autorem pierwszego niemieckiego patentu wprost przewidującego możliwość użycia broni jądrowej. Mimo, że sugerował on po wojnie, że on i jego współpracownicy

⁸ Kluczowe informacje na temat dorobku Weizsäckera można znaleźć w: Bartosch 2015a.

celowo spowalniał prace w ramach projektu, jego rzeczywiste intencje pozostają przedmiotem kontrowersji.⁹

Te wydarzenia oraz potencjalna odpowiedzialność, która mogła być ich konsekwencją, gdyby nazistowski program atomowy okazał się sukcesem, odcisnęły się na Weizsäckerze głębokim piętnem. Choć po II wojnie światowej objął on stanowisko dyrektora Wydziału Fizyki Teoretycznej w Instytucie Maxa Plancka w Getyndze, stopniowo jego zainteresowania oraz działalność publiczna przesunęły się ku innym zagadnieniom. Po pierwsze, poświęcił się filozofii, obejmując w 1957 r. katedrę filozofii na Uniwersytecie w Hamburgu. Jego bogata bibliografia w tym zakresie dotyczy w dużej mierze problemów związanych z filozofią fizyki, ale też epistemologią, etyką i filozofią władzy. Po drugie, zajął się działalnością na rzecz pokoju na świecie, występując jako zagorzały przeciwnik proliferacji broni jądrowej. Był on między innymi sygnatariuszem słynnego manifestu z Getyngi z 1957 r., w którym osiemnastu najważniejszych niemieckich fizyków jądrowych wystąpiło przeciw planom kanclerza Konrada Adenauera dotyczącym wyposażenia armii RFN w taktyczną broń jądrową. Ostatnim wielkim obszarem zainteresowań Weizsäckera była religia. Weizsäcker wspominał, że już w dzieciństwie był dogłębnie poruszony kazaniem na górze Jezusa z Nazaretu, a jego pasja wobec Ewangelii dorównywała jedynie jego zamiłowaniu do astronomii (Bartosch 2015a, 5). Jako członek niemieckiego Kościoła Ewangelickiego aktywnie uczestniczył w pracach Światowej Rady Kościołów, brał udział w dialogu międzyreligijnym, szczególnie z religiami Dalekiego Wschodu, oraz oczywiście pisał na temat relacji między nauką i religią. W 1988 r. został uhonorowany nagrodą kontrowersyjnej Fundacji Templetona m.in. za jego wkład w refleksję nad rolą chrześcijaństwa w rozwoju techniki.

W 2015 r. najważniejsze prace Weizsäckera zostały skompilowane i po raz pierwszy wydane w języku angielskim w pięciu tomach (Bartosch 2015a; 2015b; 2015c; 2015d; 2015e). Po tomie wprowadzającym, pozostałe odpowiadały czterem wcześniej wymienionym obszarom zainteresowań niemieckiego uczonego: fizyce, filozofii, politycznemu zaangażowaniu na rzecz pokoju oraz religii. Mimo użyteczności takiego podziału jest on oczywiście do pewnego stopnia sztuczny. Poszczególne tematy nagminnie przenikały się w piśmiennictwie i działalności Weizsäckera. Na przykład, jedną z jego ostatnich wielkich inicjatyw, w której przygotowaniu uczestniczył i której wagę regularnie podkreślał w ostatnich latach swojego życia, była organizacja w 1990 r. słynnego kongresu w Seulu poświęconego sprawiedliwości, pokojowi i integralności stworzenia (*Justice, Peace and the Integrity of*

⁹ Swoją własną perspektywę na te wydarzenia Weizsäcker przedstawił w artykule pod znamennym tytułem „...i nie wódź nas na pokuszenie”, w którym klęskę nazistowskiego programu atomowego określał mianem bożej łaski: Weizsäcker 1957.

Creation) pod egidą Światowej Rady Kościołów. Inicjatywa ta łączyła religię i polityczny pacyfizm z popularnonaukową refleksją na temat ekologii i ochrony środowiska naturalnego.

Na pierwszy rzut oka Weizsäcker wpisuje się w wymienione na wstępie postawy dotyczące relacji między nauką i religią. Był on fizykiem-filozofem postulującym harmonię pomiędzy tymi dwoma aspektami naszej cywilizacji. Co więcej, swoim zaangażowaniem na rzecz ochrony środowiska kontrował narracje plasujące chrześcijaństwo jako źródło utylitarного stosunku cywilizacji zachodniej do zasobów przyrody. Na tle uczonych o podobnym profilu, Weizsäckera wyróżniało przede wszystkim przekonanie, że chrześcijaństwo może i powinno odgrywać aktywną rolę w kształtowaniu kierunku rozwoju nauki i techniki. Jego zdaniem w chrześcijaństwie można wyróżnić dwa nurty: konserwatywny, upatrujący paruzji gdzieś w przyszłości i gotowy na kompromisy w międzyczasie, oraz radykalny, wzywający do walki o przemianę świata tu i teraz (Bartosch 2015a, 35). Sympatie Weizsäckera wyraźnie dryfowały z wiekiem w stronę tego drugiego.

W 1970 r. Weizsäcker, współpracując z filozofem Jürgenem Habermasem, powołał organizację, której celem było rozwiązanie największych wyzwań stojących przed ludzkością poprzez nakierowanie postępu naukowo-technicznego na nowe tory. Max-Planck-Institut zur Erforschung der Lebensbedingungen der wissenschaftlich-technischen Welt (Instytut Maxa Plancka na rzecz Badań na Warunkami Życia w Świecie Naukowo-Technicznym) był jedną z najciekawszych niemieckich instytucji badawczych zajmujących się filozofią, historią nauki i techniki oraz socjologią. Weizsäcker nigdy nie ukrywał swoich ambicji względem podstaw aksjologicznych instytutu. W dokumencie założycielskim wprost pisał o rozczerowaniu marksistowską antropologią i o przekonaniu, że trwały pokój na świecie można zbudować jedynie opierając się na mądrości wielkich tradycji religijnych. I choć Weizsäcker nie narzucał nikomu swojej interpretacji, wyrażał nadzieję, że w nowym instytucie założenia chrześcijańskiej antropologii uda się przekuć na język bardziej zrozumiały dla „świeckiej nauki” (Bartosch 2015a, 35, 51).

Ze względu na konflikty o charakterze światopoglądowym pomiędzy Weizsäckerem a Habermasem, Instytut przestał funkcjonować w 1981 r., ale przez dziesięć lat swojego istnienia dał przestrzeń młodym filozofom do rozwijania niezwykle ciekawych koncepcji. Warto szczególnie wspomnieć o pracach protegowanego Weizsäckera, Gernota Böhme, który pod szyldem pojęć „Finalisierung” i „Soziale Naturwissenschaften” starał się przekuć teorię Tomasza Kuhna o rewolucjach naukowych na praktyczny program z zakresu polityki naukowej (Böhme 1980; Böhme et al. 1983). Pytanie, nad którym głowili się badacze instytutu dotyczyło tego, czy można dla ustabilizowanych dyscyplin naukowych ukuć nową epistemologię zoriento-

waną na opracowywanie technologii służących rozwiązywaniu praktycznych problemów, z którymi musi zmierzyć się ludzkość, nie przyporządkowując jednocześnie badań naukowych wyłącznie logice wolnorynkowej. Innym zagadnieniem, nad którym pracował Böhme była kwestia alternatyw w nauce i wobec nauki. Czy inna nauka empiryczna jest możliwa? Böhme widział taką alternatywę w pracach naukowych Goethego i choć sam Weizsäcker pozostawał bardziej sceptyczny, temat ten był mu bliski. O ile Böhme nigdy wprost nie powoływał się na chrześcijańską antropologię i filozofię, wydaje się, że dobrze uchwycił on kierunek zmian, do którego dążył Weizsäcker, to znaczy stworzenie debaty na temat możliwości zbudowania nowej aksjologii dla postępu naukowo-technicznego.

Jest oczywiście paradoksem to, że wizja Weizsäckera znajdowała tak wiele punktów stycznych z neomarksistowską Szkołą Frankfurcką, chociażby z Herbertem Marcuse, który również spekulował na temat alternatywnej racjonalności, wychodząc z zupełnie innych założeń (Marcuse 1991 [1964], 209). Co nawet bardziej interesujące, zbieżność światopoglądowa konserwatywnego arystokraty Weizsäckera z ruchami wywodzącymi się do pewnego stopnia z Nowej Lewicy (wobec której niemiecki uczyony pozostawał bardzo sceptyczny) pogłębiała się w latach 70. i 80. Niemiecki ruch pokojowy stopniowo przechodził z pozycji krytycznych wobec zbrojeń nuklearnych w stronę aktywizmu ekologicznego oraz krytyki cywilnych zastosowań energii atomowej.

Weizsäcker wyrażał entuzjazm wobec tego kierunku zmian. Choć jeszcze w latach 60. pokładał on w energii atomowej pewne nadzieje, w latach 80. wprost zaczął pisać o swoim sprzeciwie wobec cywilnych zastosowań energii jądrowej. W jego przekonaniu ludzkość stała przed wielkim wyborem pomiędzy żarłocznym wzrostem konsumpcji energii, który wiąże się z rozwojem elektrowni jądrowych, a energią słoneczną i przekierowaniem naszej gospodarki i techniki na tory energooszczędne. Kluczowy argument przeciwko energii atomowej u Weizsäckera nie dotyczył radioaktywnych odpadów ani ryzyka awarii, ale miał charakter polityczny. Po pierwsze podkreślał on, że cywilne zastosowanie energii atomowej trudno w pełni rozdzielić od zastosowań militarnych i ryzyko użycia materiałów rozszczepialnych jako broni pozostaje bardzo trudno do wykluczenia. Ale co jest istotniejsze w logice Weizsäckera, to przekonanie, że postawienie na elektrownie atomowe prowadzi w nieunikniony sposób do centralizacji władzy. Względę bezpieczeństwa, jak i też sama natura elektrowni, wymaga daleko idącej kontroli nad procesem produkcji i dystrybucji energii, dając państwu absolutną kontrolę nad procesami fundamentalnymi dla życia społecznego i gospodarczego. Energia słoneczna (jak i niektóre inne rodzaje energii odnawialnej) ma charakter zdecentralizowany; usamodzielnia i upodmiotawia ludzi, otwierając drogę do pluralizmu i demokracji. Weizsäcker w typowym

dla siebie stylu wplatał w argumentację odniesienia do religii: czy chrześcijaństwo nie przypomina nam o tym, że ludzie są równi przed Bogiem i równość ta powinna stanowić ideał w organizacji życia społecznego? Niemiecki fizyk zdaje się sugerować, że ścieżka do energii atomowej jest wyrazem przedchrześcijańskiej arogancji, przyznającej władcom (aparatu państwa) boskie atrybuty (Bartosch 2015a, 67-72).

Dla Weizsäckera kompatybilność wiary religijnej i nauki nie jest kwestią sporną. Zastanawia się on raczej nad kwestią, co wielkie tradycje religijne, w szczególności chrześcijaństwo, mają do powiedzenia wobec dramatycznych transformacji technologicznych naszych czasów i ryzyka, które stawiają one dla pokoju na świecie i dla środowiska naturalnego. W przekonaniu niemieckiego badacza tradycja chrześcijańska to żywa siła, która może na nowo wyznaczyć tory postępu poprzez przywrócenie zagadnienia długoterminowej odpowiedzialności naukowców, inżynierów, polityków i wszystkich tych, którzy podejmują decyzje dotyczące rozwoju nauki i techniki. Przykład samego Weizsäckera, który był jednym z pionierów badań nad energią atomową, a blisko pół wieku później stał się jednym z jej najzagorzalszych przeciwników, jest wyjątkowo wymowny. Choć poglądy niemieckiego uczonego mogą wydawać się umiarkowane, w rzeczywistości stawiają one pod znakiem zapytania nasz dorobek naukowy i techniczny, sugerując, że inne ścieżki rozwoju, być może dalece odmienne, są możliwe.¹⁰

2. CHRZEŚCJAŃSKI NEOLUDDYZM

Radykalizm myśli Weizsäckera jest w dużej mierze przesłonięty przez jego nieustępliwy optymizm przekonujący nas, że mądrość religii może nam pomóc wydostać się z obecnego kryzysu, jak też i jego pronaukowy racjonalizm sceptyczny wobec kwestionującej nauki empirycznej kontrkultury.¹¹ Dwaj przedstawiciele nurtu, który określam mianem chrześcijańskiego neoluddyzmu, reprezentują dalece odmienną filozofię. Umieszczam francuskiego socjologa Jacques'a Ellula i austriackiego księdza Ivana Illicha w tej samej kategorii, nie tylko ze względu na zbieżność ich poglądów, krytycznych wobec współczesnej techniki i jej konsekwencji, ale również dlatego, że obaj się znali i Illich określał Ellul'a mianem swojego „mistrza” (Illich 1994).

¹⁰ Warto zaznaczyć, że syn Carla Friedricha, Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker, kontynuuje tradycję ojca i od dziesięcioleci zajmuje się jako naukowiec i polityk zagadnieniem kryzysu ekologicznego, odnawialności energii oraz zmianami klimatu: <https://ernst.weizsaecker.de/> [dostęp: 18 grudnia 2023].

¹¹ Więcej na temat klimatu intelektualnego wśród niemieckich środowisk kontrkulturowych w drugiej połowie XX wieku można znaleźć w: Krasnodębski 2023a, 2023b.

Sam termin neoluddyzm, popularny od lat 80., nawiązuje oczywiście do działalności Nedda Ludda, mitycznej postaci, która dowodziła rewoltą rzemieślników-tkaczy niszczących pod osłoną nocy nowoczesne krosna, których upowszechnienie w radykalny sposób zmieniło pejzaż społeczno-gospodarczy dziewiętnastowiecznej Anglii. Abstrahując od kwestii, czy klasyczny luddyzm był rzeczywiście wymierzony w rozwój techniki jako taki, czy też raczej był wyrazem frustracji wobec praktyk wczesnego kapitalizmu, współczesny ruch neoluddystów jest jednoznacznie krytyczny wobec przemian technicznych, szczególnie w epoce informatyzacji. O ile ani Ellul, ani Illich nie określali się mianem neoluddystów, obaj stali się dla ruchu inspiracjami, do których nawiązują jego współcześni przedstawiciele.¹² Chrześcijański neoluddyzm jest więc kategorią analityczną, a nie terminem używanym przez bohaterów tego rozdziału. Tym niemniej, postaram się udowodnić, że jest to kategoria trafna.

2.1. Jacques Ellul – między pesymizmem a nadzieją

Jacques Ellul (1912-1994) był francuskim historykiem prawa, filozofem oraz socjologiem pracującym przez całe swoje życie na wydziale nauk prawnych i ekonomicznych w Bordeaux. Zaliczany do grona najpoczytniejszych francuskich filozofów za oceanem, osiągnął szczyt popularności na amerykańskich kampusach uniwersyteckich w okolicach 1968 r.¹³ Ellul był autorem kilkudziesięciu książek traktujących na temat filozofii i wielkich wyzwań współczesnego społeczeństwa, trudno więc nawet pobieżnie streścić ten niezwykle bogaty dorobek. Za najistotniejsze uchodzą z reguły jego prace dotyczące techniki, w szczególności *La Technique ou l'Enjeu du siècle* (Technika lub wyzwanie stulecia) z 1954 r., *Le système technicien* (System techniczny) z 1977 r. oraz *Le bluff technologique* (Blef technologiczny) z 1988 r.

Technika, a raczej technicyzacja społeczeństwa (tytuł jego pierwszej książki miał pierwotnie brzmieć „Społeczeństwo technologiczne” i tak też brzmi jego anglojęzyczne tłumaczenie – *The Technological Society*), była głównym przedmiotem ataków Ellula. Należy podkreślić fakt, że Ellul rozumie technikę bardzo szeroko. Technicyzacja naszej cywilizacji nie polega jedynie na upowszechnianiu się maszyn, które głęboko ingerują w naturalne stosunki społeczne, choć zdaniem Ellula jest to również szalenie poważny

¹² Np. niesławny Unabomber, patrz: Fleming 2002; warto też zwrócić uwagę na częste odniesienia do Ellula w publikacjach grupy Anti-Tech Resistance (<https://antitechresistance.org/principes/>) [dostęp: 18 grudnia 2023]

¹³ To nie znaczy, że Ellul został później zapomniany. Wręcz przeciwnie, pisarz z Bordeaux wciąż budzi emocje, a jego dorobek jest przedmiotem żywiołowych dyskusji szczególnie w swojej ojczyźnie: Charbonnier 2015; Cérizuelle 2019.

problem. Dla Ellula technika to przede wszystkim cały system zależności zorientowany na optymalizację środków bez refleksji nad celami. Pod szyldem techniki można więc rozumieć racjonalizację wszystkich procesów, które kiedyś tej racjonalizacji się wymykały, poczynawszy od produkcji przedmiotów materialnych, przez organizację państwa i gospodarki, aż po edukację i wychowanie dzieci.

Niektóre z uwag Ellula mogą szczególnie zainteresować historyków idei. Na przykład Ellul podkreśla, że problem współczesności nie polega na samym fakcie istnienia maszyn, narzędzi czy określonych technik jako takich – takowe istniały przecież od zawsze w rzemiośle. Problem tkwi w fakcie, że aż do XIX wieku technika była podporządkowana kulturze; była ona częścią większej całości powiązanej z religią, obyczajowością, polityką czy sztuką. Poczynawszy od XIX wieku relacja ta uległa przemianom. Uprzemysłowienie wyrwało technikę z objęć kultury. Ta pierwsza zdominowała tę ostatnią. Nastąpiła więc jakościowa zmiana w naszym sposobie postrzegania świata. Racjonalizacja środków stała się uniwersalną aspiracją, nowoczesną religią, która w sposób nieunikniony pochłania każdy aspekt naszej egzystencji i spod której władzy nie sposób się wyrwać. W latach 50. Ellul przewidywał, że podział na kapitalizm i komunizm jest jedynie powierzchowny i prędzej czy później potrzeba racjonalizacji doprowadzi do unifikacji systemów politycznych. Jednocześnie, zdaniem Ellula, prymat techniki doprowadzi do zniszczenia kultury; w społeczeństwie całkowicie zrationalizowanym nie będzie miejsca na tę ostatnią. Ellul pozostawał w szczególności wielkim krytykiem przemysłu rozrywkowego, który wykształcił się po II wojnie światowej.

Co ciekawe, Ellul niewiele uwagi poświęcał nauce jako takiej. To technika była siłą, która zmienia nasz świat, nie nauka. W przeciwieństwie do tego, co określa się linearnym modelem innowacji, zgodnie z którym technika to jedynie nauka stosowana, Ellul twierdził, że relacja jest odwrotna. To technika wyznacza horyzont poznawczy nauki. Nauka jest podporządkowana technice dwojako. Z jednej strony, inwestycje nakierowane są przede wszystkim na badania, które mają potencjalne zastosowanie techniczne, z drugiej zaś współczesna nauka nie może po prostu istnieć bez coraz to bardziej skomplikowanej maszyneryi i wyszukanych narzędzi technicznych. Fizyk chcący badać naturę materii musi posługiwać się akceleratorem cząstek; odkryć może tylko tyle, na ile pozwala mu maszyna, która wyznacza granice poznania naukowego. Maszyna zajmuje centralne miejsce w procesie produkcji wiedzy, który również staje się też coraz bardziej sformalizowany i zrationalizowany. W ten sposób postęp naukowy jest drugorzędny wobec rozwoju techniki.

Dla Ellula nie ma więc wątpliwości, że technika to forma (meta)totalitaryzmu. Każdy aspekt naszego życia – od pracy, przez rozrywkę aż

po pożycie rodzinne – zostaje stopniowo jej podporządkowany. W stechniczowanym społeczeństwie wolność jest jedynie złudzeniem, bo wszystko staje się przedmiotem wszechobecnej racjonalizacji, a maszyny („gadżety” powiedziałby Ellul) wyznaczają nasz rytm życia. Należy podkreślić, że u Ellula krytyka techniki jest totalna. W jego przekonaniu postęp techniczny nigdy nie jest wart swojej ceny, nawet w medycynie, co oczywiście jest podstawą dalece kontrowersyjną i nie zawsze pamiętaną przez sympatyków Ellula.¹⁴ Historia współczesnej techniki jest zdaniem Ellula historią utraty wolności i stopniowej dehumanizacji społeczeństwa.

Ellul był zaangażowany w liczne inicjatywy w duchu swojej epoki: lokalizm, demokracja bezpośrednia, ochrona przyrody, decentralizacja władzy... Wszystkie te aktywności wyrażały sprzeciw wobec prymatu techniki w naszej cywilizacji. Z sympatią odnosił się do myśli politycznej anarchistów – Bakunina i Proudhona – oraz działalności grecko-francuskiego filozofa Corneliusa Castoriadis, jednego z ojców ideowych francuskich ruchów studenckich podczas wydarzeń 1968 r. Ale na etapie publikacji *Błefu technologicznego*, pod koniec swojego życia, Ellul twierdził, że wyzbył się złudzeń co do możliwości powstrzymania techniki. Jego zdaniem w okolicach 1968 r. istniała szansa na zmianę kierunku postępu, na budowę jakiegoś rodzaju alternatywy dla naszej cywilizacji, ale szansę tę przegapiliśmy. Racjonalizacja techniczna stała się więc procesem nieuniknionym. Wizja Ellula wydaje się być niezwykle przynębiająca.

Czy nie ma więc dla ludzkości żadnej nadziei? W swoich pracach socjologicznych Ellul nie dawał czytelnikom pola do optymizmu. Ale socjologia i historia techniki to zaledwie połowa twórczości francuskiego humanisty. Druga połowa, nie mniej ważna, rzuca nowe światło na to, co Ellul myślał naprawdę. Z równą pasją co analizie społeczeństwa technicznego poświęcał się on egzegezie biblijnej i studiowaniu historii doktryn Kościoła. Ellul był teologiem tradycji reformowanej przekonany, że jedną z ostatnich możliwości do wyrażenia i zachowania wolności w dobie totalitarnego technicznego konformizmu jest przyjęcie, wyznawanie i głoszenie Ewangelii Jezusa Chrystusa.¹⁵

Ellul nie był postacią marginalną z obrzeży francuskiego chrześcijaństwa, nawet jeśli określał się mianem chrześcijańskiego anarchisty. Wręcz przeciwnie, był on aktywnym członkiem francuskiego Kościoła reformowanego (dziś już nieistniejącego ze względu na fuzję z Kościołem ewangelickim) oraz wieloletnim redaktorem naczelnym największego francuskiego

¹⁴ Choć Ellul sprzeciwiał się jakiegokolwiek formie eugeniki i ostrzegał, że rozwój techniki w sposób nieunikniony doprowadzi do prób ulepszania rasy ludzkiej, to podkreślał również, że ta sama technika doprowadziła do przeludnienia bo daje możliwość przeżycia ludziom, którzy w „naturalnych” warunkach tej szansy by nie mieli.

¹⁵ Podsumowanie światopoglądu religijnego Ellula można znaleźć w: Ellul 1987.

pan-protestanckiego czasopisma „Foi et Vie” (Wiara i życie).¹⁶ Jego teologia i postrzeganie wiary wywarło wpływ na rozwój francuskich wspólnot protestanckich przez dziesięciolecia. Warto zaznaczyć, że Ellul w większym zdecydowanie stopniu niż Weizsäcker oddzielał w swoich pracach socjologię/filozofię od teologii/apologetyki. „Świeckie” prace Ellula można czytać nie podejrzewając go o zainteresowanie religią, ale mimo to dopiero poprzez jego prace o tematyce religijnej można w pełni zrozumieć konsekwencje jakie wyciąga ze swojej diagnozy społeczeństwa technicznego.¹⁷

Pozornie wydawać się może, że między Weizsäckerem i Ellulem istnieje kilka punktów wspólnych, jeśli chodzi o ich stosunek wobec techniki i religii. Obaj wykazywali sceptycyzm wobec kierunku przyjętego przez postęp naukowo-techniczny i obaj widzieli religię jako potencjalną odpowiedź. Obaj reprezentowali, zgodnie z moją terminologią, chrześcijańską myśl technokrytyczną. W praktyce jednak wyciągali z niej radykalnie odmienne wnioski. Weizsäcker był optymistą i wierzył w możliwość pokierowania nauką i techniką w innym kierunku pod warunkiem, że ludzkość wyciągnie lekcje z mądrości wielkich religii, a w szczególności z chrześcijańskiej antropologii. Ellul był natomiast skrajnym pesymistą i nie tylko twierdził, że na zmiany jest już za późno, ale również, że wielkie tradycje religijne niewiele nam mogą dzisiaj zaoferować. Ellul, w przeciwieństwie do Weizsäckera, był nie tylko zdecydowanie mniej entuzjastyczny wobec religii wschodu¹⁸, ale podkreślał też daleko idące rozczarowanie kościołami chrześcijańskimi, które jego zdaniem skapitulowały wobec techniki. Ani duchowni katoliccy ani protestanczy nie mają, jego zdaniem, nic do powiedzenia w sprawie ekspansji społeczeństwa technicyzowanego. Używając języka Ellula oraz drugiego bohatera tego rozdziału, Ivana Illicha, technika jest niczym głodny krwi ofiar starotestamentowy Moloch, w którego heretyckim kulcie współuczestniczą dziś również chrześcijanie. Krytyka Ellula dotyczy zresztą całej tradycji i doktryny Kościoła na przestrzeni ostatnich dwóch tysięcy lat czemu daje wyraz w książce pod zaniennym tytułem *La subversion du christianisme* (Wypaczenie chrześcijaństwa), w której twierdzi, że

¹⁶ Więcej na temat Ellula w kontekście francuskiego protestantyzmu można znaleźć np. w numerze specjalnym czasopisma na jego temat: *Jacques Ellul : la jeunesse, intuitions prophétiques*, „Foi et Vie” 2012, nr 1.

¹⁷ Była to decyzja w pełni świadoma. Znamienym jest, że jedyna chyba jego książka łącząca płynnie teologię i technokrytykę, choć napisana w 1975 r., została wydana dopiero przez syna Ellula w 2014 r. (Ellul 2014).

¹⁸ Ellul jest oskarżany w szczególności o islamofobię. Nie tylko krytykował napływ imigrantów muzułmańskich do Europy pisząc w latach 1980, że stanowią oni zagrożenie dla francuskiej kultury i tożsamości, ale był również zaciekle krytykiem teologii islamu podkreślając, że chrześcijaństwo nieświadomie inkorporowało do swoich doktryn muzułmańskie tradycje wypaczając przesłanie Ewangelii, np. ideał świętej wojny (Ellul 1986, 95-112).

współczesne chrześcijaństwo stanowi zaprzeczenie przekazu ewangelicznego (Ellul 1984).

W duchu swojej kalwinistycznej tradycji, Ellul wzywa do lektury Pisma Świętego i indywidualnego petyzmu. Jego zdaniem chrześcijanin powinien się skupić nie na zmienianiu otaczającego go świata (czego chrześcijanie na przestrzeni wieków próbowali i w efekcie to chrześcijaństwo uległo zmianie, nie świat), ale na dawaniu świadectwa Ewangelii swoją własną postawą. To świadectwo jest jedyną namiastką wolności, która pozostaje człowiekowi w społeczeństwie stechnicyzowanym. I to właśnie w takim podejściu do religii Ellul widział potencjalną odpowiedź na kierunek przyjęty przez postęp naukowo-techniczny.

2.2. *Ivan Illich: cofnąć postęp, by pójść do przodu*

Ivan Illich urodził się w 1926 r. w Wiedniu, ale w przeciwieństwie do Ellula, który cały swoje życie spędził w Bordeaux, Illich aż do śmierci w 2002 r. nieustannie podróżował. Ze względu na swoje żydowskie pochodzenie podczas wojny musiał się salwować ucieczką z Austrii i zamieszkał we Włoszech, we Florencji, gdzie ukończył liceum oraz studiował histologię i krytalografię. Po wojnie wrócił do rodzinnej Austrii, do Salzburga, gdzie napisał doktorat z historii, ale jeszcze w trakcie doktoratu podjął studia z filozofii i teologii na Papieskim Uniwersytecie Gregoriańskim w Rzymie. W 1951 r. przyjął święcenia kapłańskie. Plotka głosi, że Giovanni Montini, przyszły papież Paweł VI, liczył na to, że młody kapłan zostanie w Rzymie i rozpocznie pracę w administracji Stolicy Apostolskiej, ale pchany powołaniem Ivan Illich wyjechał do Nowego Jorku do pracy z hiszpańskojęzycznymi imigrantami z Portoryko (Illich był poliglotą mówiącym w blisko dziesięciu językach). W 1956 r. został wicerektorem katolickiego Uniwersytetu w Portoryko, a w 1961 r. utworzył centrum formacji misjonarskiej w Meksyku. Ze względu na konflikty z przełożonymi, przestał aktywnie pełnić posługę kapłańską pod koniec lat 60., ale nigdy formalnie nie odebrano mu święceń. Przez kolejne pięćdziesiąt lat podróżował przede wszystkim po Ameryce Łacińskiej oraz Azji Południowo-Wschodniej, wygłaszając wykłady i pracując charytatywnie. Illich był również bywalcem salonów i znał osobiście postacie takie jak premier Kanady Pierre Trudeau, premier Indii Indira Gandhi oraz młoda królowa Holandii Beatrix. Zmarł podczas pobytu w Niemczech u swojej przyjaciółki, znanej feministycznej historyczki, Barbary Duden (Paquot 2012).

Sławę Illichowi przyniosła seria książek napisana w latach 70., które położyły podwaliny pod najważniejsze trendy kontrkultury drugiej połowy XX wieku. Jego być może najsłynniejsza praca *Deschooling Society* (Odszkolnić społeczeństwo) to krytyka systemu edukacji publicznej, który zdaniem Illi-

cha nie tylko utrwała, ale i pogłębia nierówności społeczne dając złudzenie merytokracji. Receptą Illicha nie jest reforma systemu edukacji, ale zniesienie jej obowiązku. Szkoła, zdaniem Illicha, niszczy tradycyjne więzi społeczne i pochłania kolosalną ilość czasu, nie przygotowując młodego człowieka w żaden sposób do prawdziwego życia. Illich dodaje, że wydatki na edukację nieustająco rosną, ze względu na wydłużanie obowiązku szkolnego, podważając sensowność całego systemu. Standardem, zdaniem Illicha, powinna być nauka zdecentralizowana, zorientowana na konkretne problemy, zaczepona, o ile to możliwe, w praktykach lokalnych społeczności, ale przede wszystkim egalitarna. Zamiast systemu przekazywania wiedzy w dzieciństwie w sposób zhierarchizowany, nauka powinna być procesem trwającym całe życie, odbywającym się nie w szkolnej klasie, ale w dobrowolnych grupach roboczych (Illich 1971).

Drugą ważną książką była *Medical Nemesis* (Medyczna Nemezis) z 1974 r., w której autor poddawał w wątpliwość wartość współczesnej medycyny. Równie obrazoburcza jak *Deschooling Society*, Ivan Illich argumentował w niej, że za zdrowie w pierwszej kolejności odpowiedzialne są warunki życia człowieka, na drugim miejscu higiena i dopiero na trzecim miejscu medycyna. Austriacki ksiądz sugerował, że hierarchia jest dziś odwrócona i to medycyna jest dziś postrzegana jako fundament polityki zdrowotnej, podczas gdy, jego zdaniem, placówki medyczne tworzą dziś więcej problemów zdrowotnych niż rozwiązują, dając przy okazji człowiekowi złudną nadzieję na nieśmiertelność (Illich 1974a).

Po radykalnej krytyce szkolnictwa i medycyny trzecią największą patologią świata współczesnego był, zdaniem Illicha, nowoczesny transport, którym Illich zajmuje się między innymi w pracy *Energy and Equity* (1974b). Illich był zaciekle przeciwnikiem motoryzacji, uważając samochody za jedno z największych oszustw jakimi mamy się ludzkość. Jego zdaniem coraz szybsze środki transportu zostały pierwotnie skonstruowane, a następnie udoskonalone, w szczytnym celu, by zaoszczędzić ludziom czas w podróży. W praktyce jednak nie tylko nie zaoszczędziły ludziom czasu, ale wręcz go odebrały; cel, któremu służyć miała technika motoryzacyjna, uległ wypaczeniu. Przekształcenie się architektury miast np. poprzez oddalanie się zakładów pracy od miejsca zamieszkania doprowadziło do sytuacji, w której samochody stały się niezbędne do komunikacji, niwelując ich pierwotne zalety. Illich nie ma tu na myśli tylko straconych godzin, które pracownicy muszą każdego dnia poświęcić na transport, ale również godziny stracone na zarobienie pieniędzy potrzebnych na kupno i użytkowanie samochodów, nie wspominając o pieniądzach, które pracownicy muszą oddać w podatkach na utrzymanie sieci drogowej. Do tego dochodzi fakt, że proliferacja motoryzacji prowadzi do permanentnego wykluczenia społecznego i zawodowego osób, których na samochód nie stać, pogłębiając nierówności społeczne. W

jego przekonaniu upowszechnianie się motoryzacji jest kontrproduktywne i powinno być aktywnie zwalczane. Dla Illicha idealnym środkiem transportu jest rower i to wokół roweru powinniśmy tworzyć naszą infrastrukturę i środowisko miejskie. Samochody i transport zbiorowy powinny być zarezerwowane dla osób starszych i niepełnosprawnych, a pociągi do komunikacji na dłuższy dystans. Wiele współczesnych ruchów na rzecz transportu rowerowego ma swoje korzenie w pracach Illicha.

Dochodzimy tu do rozważań ciekawych z punktu widzenia historii nauki i techniki. Illich opracował pewnego rodzaju teorię postępu technicznego, który można jego zdaniem podzielić na trzy fazy w ramach wielkich dziedzin takich jak właśnie medycyna czy transport.¹⁹ W pierwszej fazie technika rozwija się w sposób powolny i inkrementalny, często dając złudzenie pewnej stagnacji. Medycyna XVIII-wieczna mogła być pod pewnymi względami doskonalsza od tej z XV wieku, ale nie była od niej radykalnie odmienna, a zawodowi lekarze nie leczyli wyraźnie skuteczniej od wiejskich znachorów. Sieć dróg mogła być ulepszana na przestrzeni stuleci, drożki udoskonalane, ale górny limit prędkości na lądzie wyznaczała prędkość galopującego konia. Kolejna faza to moment radykalnego przyspieszenia postępu technicznego, przynoszący ludziom wymierne korzyści. Upowszechnienie się zasad higieny oraz wiedzy na temat fizjologii miało kolosalne zalety z punktu widzenia zdrowia ludzkiego. Na podobnej zasadzie, kolej i rower ułatwiły życie milionom ludzi. Nie znaczy to, że w okresie tym technika nie miała negatywnych skutków (np. dla środowiska), ale że zalety zasadniczo przeważały nad wadami. W trzeciej fazie wreszcie rozwój techniki napędza się samoistnie w oderwaniu od potrzeb ludzkości, a jej negatywne konsekwencje przeważają nad potencjalnymi zaletami.

Z punktu widzenia Illicha tę analizę poszczególnych sfer aktywności można rozciągnąć na cały system techniczny. Jego zdaniem (pisał to w latach 70.), dla społeczeństwa zachodniego jest już za późno i będzie musiało ono wykonać krok wstecz, jeśli chce przetrwać. Illich tłumaczy to barwną metaforą o energii. Człowiek potrzebuje kalorii by móc funkcjonować. Im więcej kalorii skonsumuje tym efektywniej może wykonać coraz to większą pracę. Ale w pewnym momencie dochodzimy do granicy: kolejne kalorie przestają służyć, a zaczynają szkodzić zdrowiu. Podobnie jest ze społeczeństwami. Nadmiar kalorii otrzymywanych z paliw kopalnych i elektrowni atomowych nie przynosi społeczeństwom wymiernych korzyści. Widzimy tu zdecydowanie dalej idącą krytykę niż u Weizsäckera. Weizsäcker był zwolennikiem odnawialności energii i racjonalizacji jej użycia. Dla Illicha jedynym ratunkiem dla naszej cywilizacji jest wykonanie kroku wstecz i przebu-

¹⁹ Ściśle rzecz biorąc, Illich określa swoją teorię mianem teorii dwóch „przełomów” („watersheds”) koncentrując się na fazach granicznych pomiędzy erami (Illich 1973, 14-22).

dowa naszej gospodarki i stylu życia, by radykalnie ograniczyć nasze uzależnienie od kalorii (Illich 1974b).

Dla Illicha niezwykle istotnym było to, że o ile świat zachodni jest już zepsuty, to należy zrobić wszystko co możliwe, by kraje rozwijające się nie podążyły tą samą drogą i nie powtórzyły błędów Europy i Ameryki Północnej. Illich wierzył, że aby to osiągnąć, rozwój techniki musi podążyć inną drogą; muszą powstać technologie operujące inną logiką użyteczności niż te tworzone w świecie zachodnim. Rzec w tym, by te nowe maszyny, urządzenia oraz narzędzia wymagały niskiego nakładu energii, najlepiej siły ludzkich rąk, i by ich obsługi i naprawy mógł się nauczyć każdy. Illich nadaje tego typu urządzeniom nazwę *tools of conviviality* (narzędzia serdeczności). Jest to też tytuł jednej z jego najważniejszych książek. Takie technologie przywracają jednostkom autonomię oraz podmiotowość i stanowią, zdaniem Illicha, niezbędny warunek kształtowania się prawdziwej demokracji. We wstępie do wyżej wspomnianej książki podkreśla on, że techniki te są owszem wyrazem pewnej surowości (*austerity*), ale jednak jest to surowość w znaczeniu używanym przez Tomasza z Akwinu w *Summie Teologicznej*, rozumiana jako rozsądna wstrzeźliwość (Illich 1973, 5).

Ellula i Illicha bardzo wiele łączy. Obaj znali nawzajem swoje prace oraz podzielali krytyczną ocenę współczesnej techniki, którą rozumieli jako system zniewolenia ludzkości. Obaj, uważam, zasługują z tego względu na miano neoluddystów ze względu na ich daleko idący sprzeciw wobec motoryzacji, nowoczesnej medycyny, czy też obowiązkowego szkolnictwa, czyli technik bez których nie wyobrażamy sobie dzisiejszego społeczeństwa. Podkreślmy jeszcze raz: Illich nie chciał w zgodzie ze współczesną modą ograniczenia ruchu samochodowego w centrach miast i wzmocnienia transportu publicznego, ale po prostu zakazania używania samochodów. Nie chciał ulepszać szkolnictwa, ale je znieść. Ellul z entuzjazmem wracał do tez Illicha w swoich własnych pracach, nie szczędząc krytyki tym samym zjawiskom. Zarówno Illich jak i Ellul stali się ojcami chrzestnymi kontrkulturowych ruchów anty-technologicznych i radykalnie ekologicznych (często anarcho-prymitywistycznych). Obaj byli zwolennikami deindustrializacji i pionierami filozofii *degrowth*.

Mimo to między oboma badaczami były też znaczące światopoglądowe różnice. O ile Ellul twierdził, że technika zdominowała kulturę w XIX wieku i przypisywał tej przemianie jednoznacznie negatywną konotację, Illich w większym stopniu doceniał postęp techniczny. Co więcej, o ile Ellul ostatecznie popadł w rezygnację, przyjmując pewną formę eskapizmu w religię, Illich aktywnie wierzył w możliwość zmiany społeczeństwa poprzez rozwijanie technologii bardziej przyjaznych ludzkości. Szczególnie ciekawe są konsekwencje tych postaw z punktu widzenia rozwoju techniki w drugiej połowie XX wieku. Dla Ellula dramatycznym wyrazem technicyzacji społeczeń-

czeństwa i gwoździem do trumny naszej cywilizacji było upowszechnienie się w latach osiemdziesiątych komputerów osobistych. Ellul był między innymi zaciekle krytykiem gier wideo, upatrując w nich najniższej i najbardziej destrukcyjnej formy rozrywki. Szczególnie ironizował on na temat nastoletnich geniuszy informatyki, którzy utwierdzali go w przekonaniu, że komputer osobisty jest infantylną zabawką. Obserwował on proliferację we Francji sieci Minitel, poprzedzającej Internet, i ostrzegał w latach osiemdziesiątych, że stanie się ona narzędziem rozpowszechniania pornografii prowadząc do dalszego zepsucia społeczeństwa (Ellul 1988, 64).

Illich z kolei już w *Deschooling Society* spekulował na temat bardziej demokratycznej formy nauczania przy użyciu zdecentralizowanych sieci elektronicznych, antycypując tym samym edukację internetową, a jego książka *Tools of Conviviality* stanowiła inspirację między innymi dla Lee Felsensteina, jednego z ojców komputerów osobistych, który widział w tej nowej technologii narzędzie egalitaryzmu i demokratyzacji, ponieważ każdy mógł nauczyć się funkcjonowania i obsługi komputera na własną rękę (Hansen 2020, 11). Zostawiając czytelnikom do rozstrzygnięcia czy bliższy prawdzie był Ellul czy Illich, warto jednak zaznaczyć, że komputer osobisty to sztandarowy przykład technologii, której historia naznaczona jest nieustającym napięciem pomiędzy anarchią i emancypacją jednostki z jednej strony, a rozciągającym swoją kontrolę monopolem technogigantów z drugiej. Temat ten na pewno wymaga dalszego pogłębienia.

Mimo że jako jedyny bohater niniejszego artykułu Illich był nie tylko duchownym, ale również posiadał formalne wykształcenie teologiczne, na temat religii jako takiej pisał stosunkowo niewiele. Co więcej, gdy już poruszał ten temat, pozostawał on często krytyczny wobec Kościoła instytucjonalnego i jego doktryn. Nie tylko nie zgadzał się z nauczaniem Kościoła katolickiego w sprawie antykoncepcji, ale oskarżał chrześcijaństwo o utrwalanie patologii systemu technicznego. Jego zdaniem misjonarze w krajach rozwijających się często byli najpierw krzewicielami stechnicyzowanej cywilizacji zachodniej, a dopiero w drugiej kolejności głosicielami Ewangelii.

Mimo tej surowej krytyki chrześcijaństwa głównego nurtu, nie można zapomnieć, że filozofia Illicha była głęboko zakorzeniona w myśli katolickiej wywodzącej się od Tomasza z Akwinu aż do Jacques'a Maritaina (ten ostatni był dla Illicha ważnym mentorem). Od czasu do czasu widoczny był także jego konserwatyzm obyczajowy. Illich ściągnął na siebie na przykład krytykę środowisk feministycznych po publikacji w 1983 r. książki pod tytułem *Gender*, którą odczytywano jako afirmację tradycyjnych ról płciowych (Illich 1983). Illich twierdził między innymi, że seksizm jest produktem społeczeństwa technicznego, ponieważ tworzy ono nowe role i zawody, które są teoretycznie otwarte dla obu płci, ale w praktyce desygnowane męzczyznom,

pogłębiając w istocie nierówności. Dostrzegał on natomiast harmonię w funkcjonowaniu społeczności w średniowiecznej Europie, w której, jego zdaniem, mężczyźni i kobiety nie konkutowali o ten sam kapitał symboliczny. Abstrahując od oceny powyższych tez, interesujące u Illicha jest nieuniknione powiązanie problemów obyczajowych z rozwojem techniki. W przeciwieństwie do niektórych innych chrześcijańskich krytyków modernizmu, nie upatruje on źródeł „kryzysu moralności” w rewolucji seksualnej (ani bolszewickiej, ani francuskiej), to jest w przemianach kulturowo-politycznych, ale w postępie technologicznym. W wizji austriackiego filozofa warunkiem wstępnym odnowy moralnej w duchu nauczania Kościoła, powrotu do ewangelicznej prostoty i „przyjaznej surowości” chrześcijańskiego średniowiecza jest zmiana środka transportu z samochodu na rower.

Wydaje się, że dla Illicha jego wiara i praktyka religijna była oczywistym tłem dla refleksji na temat społeczeństwa technicznego i jego historii, ale nie czuł on nigdy powołania do uprawiania apologetyki. Poza nielicznymi wyjątkami odniesienia do jego przekonań religijnych pozostają w pracach Illicha stosunkowo dyskretne.

3. PRZECIW KAPITALIZMOWI, TECHNICE I WSPÓŁCZESNEJ NAUCE: EKONOMIA I EPISTEMOLOGIA E.F. SCHUMACHERA

W zdecydowanie bardziej wyrazisty sposób apologetyce poświęcił się ostatni bohater niniejszego artykułu, urodzony w Bonn w Niemczech – Ernst Friedrich Schumacher (1911-1977). W latach trzydziestych studiował ekonomię między innymi w Berlinie, w Oksfordzie oraz na Uniwersytecie Columbia w Nowym Jorku. W przededniu II wojny światowej definitywnie opuścił rodzinne Niemcy i resztę kariery spędził w Wielkiej Brytanii, którą uważał za swoją prawdziwą ojczyznę. Schumacher był protegowanym słynnego ekonomisty Johna Maynarda Keynesa i szybko wspiął się po szczeblach brytyjskiej administracji, zajmując liczne ważne stanowiska doradcze, szczególnie w instytucjach zajmujących się wydobywaniem i wykorzystaniem węgla (Wood 1984).

W życiu Schumachera możemy mówić o dwóch punktach zwrotnych. Pierwszym była jego wizyta w Birmie w 1955 r., która przekonała go do tego, że kraje rozwijające się powinny podążać inną drogą rozwoju ekonomicznego niż kraje zachodu, by nie popełnić błędów tych ostatnich. Schumacher był głęboko zainspirowany filozofią i religią dalekiego wschodu, w szczególności koncepcjami społeczno-gospodarczymi Mahatmy Gandhiego. Drugim kluczowym momentem było w 1971 r. przejście na katolicyzm, powiązane z odkryciem społecznej nauki Kościoła katolickiego.

W przeciwieństwie do Wiezsäckera, Ellula i Illicha, Schumacher był zdecydowanie mniej płodny jeśli chodzi o dorobek twórczy. Pamiętany jest głównie z dwóch książek: wydanej w 1973 r. *Small Is Beautiful: A Study of Economics As If People Mattered*, będącej zbiorem esejów na temat gospodarki, społeczeństwa i techniki oraz *A Guide for the Perplexed* z 1977 r. będącej pełnoprawnym traktatem filozoficznym (Schumacher 1973; 1977). Na pierwszy rzut oka w obu pracach narzucają się podobieństwa z filozofią Iwana Illicha. Podczas gdy Illich opisywał swoją filozofię społeczno-gospodarczo-kulturową używając pojęcia *conviviality* oraz postulował upowszechnianie *tools of conviviality*, Schumacher używał odpowiednio pojęć *Buddhist economy* oraz *appropriate technologies*. Buddyjska gospodarka, w ujęciu Schumachera to gospodarka zdecentralizowana, nastawiona na współpracę, a nie na konkurencję, rozwijana w ramach lokalnych wspólnot w harmonii z przyrodą. Inspiracją dla Schumachera były (jak sugeruje nazwa) obserwacje poczynione na temat funkcjonowania wiejskich społeczności w Azji Południo-Wschodniej. Jego zdaniem to ich model gospodarczy powinien służyć za wzór dla krajów zachodnich, a nie na odwrót. Jeśli chodzi o *appropriate technologies*, to są to rozwiązania organizacyjno-techniczne, które są proste w implementacji, niskoenergetyczne, a w przypadku gdy chodzi o maszyny, powinny być one łatwe do serwisowania i obsługi przez ludzi bez wyspecjalizowanego wykształcenia. Rower, pompa, ale też cała gama technologii wykorzystujących energię słoneczną może być zakwalifikowana jako *appropriate technology*. Schumacher intensywnie wspierał powstawanie lokalnych struktur mających na celu rozwijanie i implementowanie owych „adekwatnych technologii” w krajach rozwijających się. Po jego śmierci na całym świecie powołane zostały do życia instytucje inspirowane pracami Schumachera zorientowane na refleksję na tematy ekologiczne i technologiczne w kontekście zrównoważonego rozwoju.²⁰ Warto zauważyć, że obok Illicha i Schumachera podobną terminologią posługiwał się również niemiecki fizyk Amory Lovins, który mówił o miękkich technologiach i miękkich energiach, jak i wielu innych aktywistów w ramach ruchów na rzecz miękkich technologii (Clarke 1972; Harper 1973; Lovins 1979).

Schumacher pozostaje popularny również wśród polityków głównego nurtu. Powoływał się na niego między innymi brytyjski premier David Cameron, nawiązując do nacisku, jaki kładł Schumacher na rozwój tradycyjnych przedsiębiorstw w lokalnych społecznościach (McCrum 2011). Pod wieloma względami Schumacher może wydawać się postacią bardziej umiarkowaną od Illicha ze względu na fakt, że nie proponował całkowitej

²⁰ <https://centerforneweconomics.org/>; <https://schumacher-gesellschaft.de/> [dostęp: 18 grudnia 2023]

deindustrializacji i porzucenia nowoczesnej techniki, medycyny czy szkolnictwa, a jedynie podkreślał, że kraje rozwijające się powinny wybrać inny model rozwoju. To umiarkowane odczytanie Schumachera jest jednak lekturą powierzchowną.

Należy w tym momencie zwrócić uwagę na to, jak wiele uwag i obserwacji Schumachera wydaje się zupełnie nie przystawać do naszych współczesnych realiów. Na przykład, Schumacher był zagorzałym zwolennikiem wydobywania i eksploatacji węgla do produkcji elektryczności. Z jednej strony sprzeciwiał się on cywilnym zastosowaniom energii atomowej ze względu na ryzyko związane z przechowywaniem odpadów radioaktywnych oraz ze względu na centralizację władzy i poziom kontroli ze strony państwa, z którymi wiąże się funkcjonowanie odpowiedniej infrastruktury. Pod tym względem, jego argumentacja podobna była do tej użytej przez Weizsäckera. Z drugiej strony był przeciwnikiem pokładania nadziei w ropie naftowej. Jego zdaniem szacowane zasoby ropy naftowej są nie tylko zbyt małe, by sensowne było dokonywanie transformacji naszych gospodarek na ich rzecz, ale też znajdują się w niestabilnych politycznie regionach, co grozi regularnymi kryzysami energetycznymi. W opinii Schumachera, którego dziś wiele osób uważa za patrona ruchów ekologicznych, węgiel powinien pozostać trzonem miksu energetycznego. Zaciekle krytykował on politykę brytyjskich laburzystów zamykających kopalnie, ale zmarł przed dojściem do władzy toryski Margaret Thatcher, która proces dekarbonizacji Zjednoczonego Królestwa gwałtownie przyspieszyła.

Innym interesującym anachronizmem w pracach Schumachera był jego stosunek do swojego mentora Keynesa. Dla Schumachera Keynes był twarzą bezdusznego kapitalistycznego modelu gospodarczego, w którym liczył się tylko zysk. I znów, gdyby Schumacher zmarł dziesięć lat później, mógłby być świadkiem zwrotu neoliberalnego i sukcesów ekonomistów takich jak Hayek czy Friedman, z których punktu widzenia interwencjonistyczne propozycje Keynesa ocierały się o socjalizm. Sam Schumacher nie miał co prawda złudzeń co do radzieckiego komunizmu, ale pozostawał zwolennikiem gospodarki partycypacyjnej, zdecentralizowanej, nakierowanej na ekologię i na współwłasność środków produkcji. Schumacher bywa dziś identyfikowany z nurtem ekosocjalizmu, a na pewno jest przedstawicielem nurtów kwestionujących prymat gospodarki wolnorynkowej (Widyanta 2013). Skąd u Schumachera tak wyraziste odrzucenie kapitalizmu? Odpowiedź jest prosta: siłą napędową kapitalizmu jest chciwość, a chciwość jest jednym z siedmiu grzechów głównych, o których, zdaniem Schumachera, świat chętnie zapomniał.

W przeciwieństwie do Weizsäckera, który do swoich prac subtelnie wplatał wątki religijne, Ellul który ostro rozdzielał pracę teologa i filozofa, oraz Illicha, który pozostawał w sprawach wiary i religii dyskretny, Schu-

macher wykazuje w swoich pracach zapał neofity i nie stroni od apologetyki. W swoich argumentach przeciwko kapitalizmowi i współczesnej technice regularnie podpira się autorytetem biskupów Rzymu oraz tradycji dystrybucjonizmu w duchu wielkich brytyjskich katolickich intelektualistów takich jak Gilbert Chesterton czy Hilaire Belloc. Jego zainteresowanie filozofią katolicką nie ograniczało się jednak bynajmniej do kwestii gospodarczych. Schumacher pozostawał również konserwatystą w sprawach obyczajowych. W przeciwieństwie do Illicha, który kwestionował kościelne nauczanie w sprawie antykoncepcji, Schumacher był wielkim entuzjastą kontrowersyjnej encykliki *Humanae Vitae* Pawła VI, które zamknęła debatę na ten temat w Kościele katolickim (Pearce 2011). To właśnie z przywiązania do katolickiej tradycji i petyzmu Schumacher czerpał przekonanie, że kapitalizm jest ideologią destrukcyjną, stanowiącą zagrożenie zarówno dla nieśmiertelnej duszy, jak i dla najwyższej wartości jaką jest ludzkie życie ze względu na dewastację środowiska naturalnego.

O ile jego książka *Small is Beautiful* pozostawała stosunkowo ekumeniczna i zorientowana na refleksję nad wyzwaniem ekonomii w duchu ekologii i antykapitalizmu, wydana tuż przed jego śmiercią praca *Guide for Perplexed* to nie tylko dzieło wprost apologetyczne i zanurzone w tradycji chrześcijańskiej, ale też radykalnie antymodernistyczne i antynaukowe, wykraczające daleko poza to, co pisali neoluddyści tacy jak Illich i Ellul. Schumacher próbuje w swojej pracy zbudować nową ontologię i epistemologię inspirowaną filozofią scholastyczną średniowiecza. Twierdzi on między innymi, że współczesna nauka została skażona pół milenium temu przez filozofię Kartezjusza i Bacona. Kartezjusz doprowadził do oddzielenia ducha i materii, dając badaczom złudzenie, że prawda naukowa jest osiągalna przez matematyzację przyrody; racjonalizm zniszczył zdaniem Schumachera średniowieczną harmonię pomiędzy wiedzą a mądrością. Bacon z kolei wzywał naukowców do „torturowania” natury celem wydarcia jej sekretów, otwierając drogę do kryzysu ekologicznego. O ironio, w pracach lewicowych i kontrkulturowych badaczy, np. historyczki Carolyn Merchant, Kartezjusz i Bacon byli oskarżani o to samo (Merchant 1980).

Schumacher upatruje źródeł kryzysu ekologicznego, społecznego, gospodarczego i moralnego nie tylko w opartej na chciwości ideologii kapitalizmu, nie tylko w technice służącej industrializacji na wielką skalę, ale w filozofii nauk empirycznych ukształtowanej podczas rewolucji naukowej już w XVI i XVII wieku. Co więcej, Schumacher w pełni przejął język katolickich antymodernistów XIX wieku, krytykując zawzięcie materializm, psy-

choanalizę, ale także... teorię ewolucji Darwina. W swojej radykalnej krytyce nauki, zajmuje pozycje zbliżające go momentami do kreacjonistów.²¹

Po to, by wyjść z kryzysu współczesności, zarówno duchowego, jak i ekologicznego, potrzeba, zdaniem Schumachera, nowej epistemologii zakorzenionej w wielkich tradycjach starożytności i średniowiecza, a także odnowy moralnej w duchu nauczania Kościoła. Tylko w takich warunkach będzie możliwe stworzenie nowych technologii przyjaznych środowisku naturalnemu i nowego modelu gospodarczego nieopartego na wyzysku. Innymi słowy, choć pozornie Schumacher może uchodzić za umiarkowanego ekologicznego modernizatora i krytyka pewnych form kapitalizmu, w praktyce jego przekonania religijne popchnęły go ku postawie radykalnie rewolucyjnej i zorientowanej na całkowitą przebudowę otaczającej nas rzeczywistości, w tym fundamentów nauk empirycznych; jest to krok, na który nie zdecydowali się inni bohaterowie niniejszego artykułu.

PODSUMOWANIE

Lata 60. i 70. to okres formowania się filozofii ekologicznej, rozlania się kolejnej fali krytyki kapitalizmu oraz gorącej debaty na temat zagrożeń technokracji. To początek kryzysu wiary w model postępu naukowo-techniczno-gospodarczego, na którym zbudowany został powojenny ład w świecie zachodnim. Z tej kształtującej się powoli bogatej kontrkultury czerpały różne środowiska, a podziały polityczno-ideowe przebiegały wobec innych linii niż obecnie. W niniejszym artykule zaprezentowany został niezwykle eklektyczny, ale wyrazisty prąd, dla którego najtrafniejszą nazwą wydaje się chrześcijańska technokrytyka. Jego przedstawiciele byli zgodni w dwóch sprawach. Po pierwsze, rozwój naukowy, gospodarczy, ale w szczególności techniczny poszedł w złym kierunku. Jego rezultatem jest masowe zanieczyszczenie środowiska i katastrofy ekologiczne, alienacja człowieka i wykorzenienie tradycyjnych wspólnot, oraz prowadząca do zagłady cywilizacji nieokiełznana eksploatacja zasobów naszej planety. Ich zdaniem błędem jest pokładanie nadziei na rozwiązanie naszych problemów w cudownych technologiach przyszłości takich jak komputery czy energia atomowa, ponieważ rozwiązania te są w rzeczywistości symptomami tej samej choroby. Drugim elementem wspólnym było przekonanie, że religia ma w tych sprawach coś do powiedzenia. Zdaniem bohaterów niniejszego artykułu, tradycja chrześci-

²¹ Teoretycznie Schumacher nie kwestionował istnienia procesów ewolucyjnych jako takich, twierdząc że krytykuje wyłącznie „ideologię ewolucjonizmu” a nie samą teorię. W praktyce jednak, jego sposób rozumienia wielu zjawisk biologicznych, w tym początków życia, sugeruje znacznie bardziej anty-ewolucjonistyczną postawę (Schumacher 1977, 111-123).

jańska jest wręcz niezbędna, by zrozumieć źródła obecnego kryzysu i zaproponować rozwiązania.

Punkty styczne nie powinny przyćmić jednak wewnętrznej różnorodności chrześcijańskiej technokrytyki. Przedstawiciele tego nurtu nie zgadzali się bowiem ani gdzie, ani jak zblądziła konkretnie nasza cywilizacja, ani co konkretnie oferuje tradycja chrześcijańska. Czy źródłem kryzysu jest błędna epistemologia XVI-wiecznej rewolucji naukowej (Schumacher), czy też technologiczna reakcja łańcuchowa zainicjowana przez XIX-wieczną rewolucję przemysłową, która sprawiła, że ludzkość po prostu straciła panowanie nad rozwojem techniki (Ellul i Illich)? Czy aby rozwiązać problemy jutra powinniśmy spojrzeć w przeszłość na mądrość wielkich światowych religii (Weizsäcker) czy też na harmonię średniowiecznej Europa Christiana (Schumacher i Illich)? A może za późno już na zmiany i jedyne co pozostaje chrześcijanom w świecie opanowanym przez siły ciemności to świadczyć Ewangelię swoją postawą (Ellul)?

Należy jeszcze raz podkreślić, że postawy naszych bohaterów nie dają się łatwo uplasować pod kątem politycznym. Pochodzący z arystokratycznej rodziny Weizsäcker niechętnie odnosił się do ruchów tzw. Nowej Lewicy, ale był też zagorzałym zwolennikiem dialogu międzyreligijnego, współpracującym z przedstawicielami hinduizmu i buddyzmu przyjmując bardzo uniwersalistyczną perspektywę na przesłanie chrześcijaństwa. Z kolei Ellul był zdecydowanie mniej otwarty pod tym kątem, a żarliwego języka niektórych jego prac teologicznych nie powstydzilby się sam Jan Kalwin, ale z wielkim entuzjazmem odnosił się on do francuskiej myśli neo- i postmarksistowskiej. Wreszcie, zarówno Illich jak i Schumacher bronili tradycyjnych ról płci, przyjmując jednocześnie, że do „naturalnych” relacji pomiędzy kobietami i mężczyznami można wrócić jedynie pod warunkiem odejścia od systemu kapitalistycznego i zbudowania nowej (para/quasi)socjalistycznej gospodarki. Ten kolaż światopoglądowy wymyka się współczesnym podziałom na prawicę i lewicę.

Jest jednak jeszcze trzeci punkt wspólny dla całej myśli chrześcijańskich technokrytyków, tym razem o charakterze metodologicznym. Ich filozofia, w tym przekonania religijne, były bezpośrednio powiązane z interpretacją dziejów postępu naukowo-technicznego. Dla Weizsäckera, zawodowego fizyka, prymat nauk empirycznych był w połowie XX wieku oczywistością. Ewentualny konflikt z religią był sprawą z odległej przeszłości i wynikiem nieporozumień. Dla Schumachera z kolei te same nauki empiryczne są z samej definicji wypaczone i skażone filozofią materializmu sprzeczną z centralnymi wartościami chrześcijaństwa. To, co ich łączy, to fakt, że obaj rozumieli naukę empiryczną jako punkt wyjścia dla rozwoju techniki (oraz ekonomii u Schumachera) i że to od zmiany w nauce i epistemologii powinniśmy rozpocząć transformację świata.

Ellul i Illich odczytywali historię nauki i techniki zupełnie odmiennie. Dla nich nauka jako taka nie była szczególnie interesująca. Nadrzędną siłą była technika, która, dokonując transformacji naszego społeczeństwa, pochłonęła i podporządkowała sobie zarówno naukę, jak i kulturę. Zdaniem tych dwóch chrześcijańskich luddystów, przemiana polityki naukowej nie może wystarczyć sama w sobie, dlatego że techniki nie da się zredukować do „nauki stosowanej”. Innymi słowy, żeby zrozumieć historię nauki, trzeba w pierwszej kolejności zrozumieć historię techniki, bo to technika wyznacza horyzont nauki, a nie odwrotnie, jak chciałaby, upraszczając, oświeceniowo-pozytywistyczna tradycja.

Z punktu widzenia historyków i filozofów idei, nie ma żadnego znaczenia, czy zgadzamy się z tymi lub innymi tezami chrześcijańskich technokrytyków (dotyczącymi religii, techniki czy ekologii), które mogą być jak najbardziej przedmiotem bardzo ostrej krytyki. Dorobek tych badaczy stawia jednak przed nami dwa ważne pytania. Po pierwsze, spekulują oni czy historia nauki i techniki mogłaby potoczyć się inaczej, prowadząc nas do „innej” nauki i techniki. Czy można było dokonać transformacji energetycznej już pół wieku temu? Czy można sobie wyobrazić transport i architekturę miejską zbudowaną wokół roweru, w świecie, w którym samochód pozostawałby tylko ciekawostką? Czy można sobie wyobrazić naukę wyemancypowaną spod pryncypiów filozoficznych Kartezjusza i Bacona? Niemieccy zwolennicy tzw. miękkiej chemii byli w latach osiemdziesiątych przekonani, że taka inna, bardziej fenomenologiczna chemia, jest możliwa (Krasnodębski 2023a, 2023b). Wydaje się, że historyk nie może tych spekulacji po prostu zignorować, nie popadając w naiwny determinizm.

Drugie pytanie ma charakter bardziej metodologiczny: czy chrześcijańska technokrytyka nie powinna zająć bardziej prominentnego miejsca w pracach na temat konfliktu pomiędzy nauką a religią? Można odnieść wrażenie, że konflikt ten jest w literaturze historycznej przedstawiany w sposób karykaturalny. Badacze dzielą się na dwa obozy: zwolenników tezy o konflikcie podkreślających, że religia stanowi hamulec dla rozwoju ludzkości, oraz przeciwników tej tezy naciskających na kompatybilność religii i postępu. Nawet najbardziej zagorzali kreacjoniści próbują ubrać swoje tezy w język (pseudo)naukowy. Chrześcijańska technokrytyka stawia ten stan rzeczy na głowie, kwestionując *explicite* samą wartość nauki i techniki i otwarcie twierdząc, że religia i postęp w obecnej formie są niekompatybilne. Odnajduje ona jednocześnie wspólny język z przedstawicielami lewicowej i proekologicznej kontrkultury, krytycznymi wobec dziedzictwa oświecenia.

Podsumowując, wydaje się, że studia nad chrześcijańską technokrytyką mogą otworzyć nowe perspektywy badawcze, podważając liczne popularne, uproszczone narracje dominujące w niektórych gałęziach historii, nauki i techniki. Co więcej, przedstawiciele tego nurtu są dziś uznawani za pionie-

rów prądu intelektualnego znanego jako ekologia polityczna, i to w tym kontekście są z reguły studiowane ich prace. Chrześcijańska technokrytyka może stać się więc intrygującym pomostem łączącym historyków nauki i techniki z filozofami i socjologami ekologii, pomagając w lepszym zrozumieniu źródeł, konsekwencji i perspektyw na rozwiązanie współczesnego kryzysu ekologicznego.

ŹRÓDŁA FINANSOWANIA PUBLIKACJI

Artykuł został napisany w ramach projektu „Zielona Chemia avant la lettre: Historyczne i epistemologiczne fundamenty praktyk na rzecz zrównoważonego rozwoju w chemii przemysłowej” sfinansowanego ze środków Narodowego Centrum Nauki przyznanych w ramach grantu Sonata 16 na podstawie decyzji 2019/35/D/HS3/00614.

BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Bartosch U. (2015a). *Carl Friedrich Von Weizsäcker: Pioneer of Physics, Philosophy, Religion, Politics and Peace Research*. Cham: Springer.
- Bartosch U. (2015b). *Carl Friedrich Von Weizsäcker: Major Texts in Philosophy*. Cham: Springer.
- Bartosch U. (2015c). *Carl Friedrich Von Weizsäcker: Major Texts in Physics*. Cham: Springer.
- Bartosch U. (2015d). *Carl Friedrich Von Weizsäcker: Major Texts on Politics and Peace Research*. Cham: Springer.
- Bartosch U. (2015e). *Carl Friedrich Von Weizsäcker: Major Texts on Religion*. Cham: Springer.
- Bartosch U. i Braun R. (2012). *Perspektiven und Begegnungen - Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker zum 100. Geburtstag*. Berlin: Lit.
- Baudouin C. i Brosseau O. (2013). *Enquête sur les créationnismes: réseaux, stratégies et objectifs politiques*. Paryż: Belin Pour la Science.
- Böhme G. (1980). *Alternativen der Wissenschaft*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Böhme G., Daele W., Hohlfeld R., Krohn W., Schäfer W. (1983). *Finalization in Science: The Social Orientation of Scientific Progress*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Bud R. (2018). *Modernity and the ambivalent significance of applied science: motors, wireless, telephones and poison gas [w:] Being Modern: The Cultural Impact of Science in the Early Twentieth Century*, F. James, M. Shiach, P. Greenhalgh, R. Bud (red.), 95-129. Londyn: UCL Press.
- Campa R., Corbally C, Boone Rappaport M. (2022). *Searching for the Roots of Western Ecotheology: Pliny the Elder, Paul the Apostle, Boethius*, „Gregorianum”, nr. 103, 833-856.
- Cérézuelle D. (2019). *Ellul, pionnier d'une écologie réactionnaire*, „Écologie & Politique”, nr 59, 123-132.

- Charbonnier P. (2015). *Jacques Ellul ou l'écologie contre la modernité*, „Écologie & Politique”, nr 50, 127-146.
- Chastenet P. (2019). *Introduction à Jacques Ellul*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Clarke R. (1972). *Soft Technology: Blueprint for a Research Community*, „Undercurrents”, t. 2, 17-20.
- Consolmagno G. (2022). *Finding God in the Universe*. Minneapolis: 1517 Media.
- Ellul J. (1954). *La Technique ou l'Enjeu du siècle*. Paryż: A. Colin.
- Ellul J. (1977). *Le Système technicien*. Paryż: Calmann-Lévy.
- Ellul J. (1984). *La subversion du Christianisme*. Paryż: Éditions du Cerf.
- Ellul J. (1986). *The Subversion of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Ellul J. (1987). *Ce que je crois*. Paryż: B. Grasset.
- Ellul J. (1988). *Le bluff technologique*. Paryż: Hachette.
- Ellul J. (2014). *Théologie et technique: Pour une éthique de la non-puissance*. Geneva: Labor et Fides.
- Fisher J., Hall M. R., Khoddam S. (2015). *C. S. Lewis and the Inklings: Reflections on Faith, Imagination, and Modern Technology*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Fleming S. (2022). *The Unabomber and the origins of anti-tech radicalism*, „Journal of Political Ideologies”, t. 27, 207-225.
- Guinn D. E. (2006). *Handbook of Bioethics and Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Güttler N. (2022). *Gegenexpert*innen: Umwelt, Aktivismus und die regionalen Epistemologien des Widerstandes*, „N.T.M.”, t. 30, 541-67.
- Hansen S. B. (2020). *Philosophers of Technology*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Hardin J., Numbers R. L. i Binzley R. A. (2018). *The Warfare Between Science and Religion: The Idea That Wouldn't Die*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Harper P. (1973). 'Soft Technology' and Criticism of the Western Model of Development, „Prospects”, t. 3, 183-192.
- Heilbron J. L. (1999). *The sun in the Church: cathedrals as solar observatories*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Heller M. (1994). *Wszechświat i słowo*. Kraków: Znak.
- Hoinacki L. i Mitcham C. (2002). *The challenges of Ivan Illich: a collective reflection*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Illich I. (1971). *Deschooling Society*. Nowy Jork: Harper & Row.
- Illich I. (1973). *Tools for Conviviality*. Nowy Jork: Harper & Row.
- Illich I. (1974a). *Medical Nemesis*. Londyn: Calder & Boyars.
- Illich I. (1974b). *Energy and equity*. Nowy Jork: Harper & Row.
- Illich I. (1983). *Gender*. Nowy Jork: Marion Boyars.
- Illich I. (1994). *Hommage à Jacques Ellul*, „L'Agora”, lipiec-sierpień, t. 1 (http://agora.qc.ca/documents/technique--hommage_a_jacques_ellul_par_ivan_illich) [dostęp: 18 grudnia 2023].
- Kaiser D. i McCray W. P. (2016). *Groovy Science: Knowledge, Innovation, and American Counterculture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Krasnołębski M. (2023a). *Beyond green chemistry: Radical environmental transformation through Sanfte Chemie (1985-1995)*, „History of Science”, doi: 10.1177/00732753231194801.
- Krasnołębski M. (2023b). *Ideologiczne, polityczne i filozoficzne podstawy polityki naukowej i przemysłowej niemieckiej partii Zielonych w latach 80. i 90.: przypadek „miękkiej chemii” (sanfte Chemie)*, „Studia Historiae Scientiarum”, n. 22 (first view), doi: 10.4467/2543702XSHS.23.015.17706.
- Latouche S. (2013). *Jacques Ellul contre le totalitarisme technicien*. Paryż: Passager clandestin.
- Lewis C. S. (2001 [1943]). *The Abolition of Man*. Harper: Nowy Jork.
- Lovins A. B. (1979). *The Energy Controversy: Soft Path Questions & Answers*. San Francisco: Friends of the Earth.
- Marcuse H. (1991 [1964]). *Człowiek Jednowymiarowy*. Warszawa: PWN.
- Markoff J. (2005). *What the Dormouse Said: How the Sixties Counterculture Shaped the Personal Computer Industry*. London: Penguin.
- McCrum R. (2011). *E. F. Schumacher: Cameron's choice*, „The Guardian”, 27 marca, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2011/mar/27/schumacher-david-cameron-small-beautiful> [dostęp: 18 grudnia 2023].
- Merchant C. (1980). *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Noack H. (2019). *Die Weizsäckers. Eine deutsche Familie*. Monachium: Siedler.
- Numbers R. L. (2006). *The creationists: from scientific creationism to intelligent design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Numbers R. L. (2009). *Galileo Goes to Jail, and Other Myths About Science and Religion*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Oh K. S. (2014). *Ecology and Christianity*, [w:] *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion*, Leeming, D. A. (red.), 561-566. Boston: Springer.
- Paquot T. (2012). *Introduction à Ivan Illich*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Pearce J. (2011). *The Vision of E. F. Schumacher*, „National Catholic Register”, 16 sierpnia. (<https://www.ncregister.com/news/the-vision-of-e-f-schumacher>) [dostęp: 18 grudnia 2023].
- Ruse M. (2010). *Science and spirituality: making room for faith in the age of science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ruse M. (2008). *Evolution and Religion: A Dialogue*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Schumacher D. (2011). *Small is Beautiful in the 21st Century: The Legacy of E.F. Schumacher*. Devon: Green Books.
- Schumacher E. F. (1973). *Small Is Beautiful: A Study of Economics As If People Mattered*. Londyn: Blond & Briggs.
- Schumacher E. F. (1978). *A Guide for the Perplexed*. Nowy Jork: Harper & Row.
- Schwerin A. (2022). *Gegenwissen. Die Neuen Sozialen Bewegungen in der Bundesrepublik und die Grundlagen ihrer Wirkung*, „N.T.M.”, t. 30, 529-540.
- Stump J. B. i Padgett A. G. (2012). *The Blackwell companion to science and Christianity*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Weber I. (2012). *Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker: ein Leben zwischen Physik und Philosophie*. Amerang: Crotona.

- Weiberg-Salzmann M. i Willems U. (2020). *Religion and Biopolitics*. Cham: Springer.
- Weizsäcker C. F. von. (1957). ... und führe uns nicht in Versuchung: Vom gespaltenen Atom zum gespaltenen Gewissen – Die Geschichte einer menscheits gefährdenden Waffe, „Der Spiegel”, nr 19, 45-53.
- White A. D. (1896). *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*. Londyn: Macmillan and Company.
- White L. (1967). *The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis*, „Science”, t. 155, 1203-1207.
- Widyanta A. B. (2013). *Ecosocialism: Reinventing Ernest Friedrich Schumacher's Thought on Political Economy of The Environment*, rozprawa doktorska na uniwersytecie Gadjah Mada.
- Wood B. (1984). *E. F. Schumacher, His Life and Thought*. Nowy Jork: Harper & Row.



SYNTETYCZNE SZALEŃSTWO: Z NAJNOWSZEJ HISTORII PROBLEMU NARKOTYKOWEGO

Dawid Wieczorek

University of the National Education Commission, Krakow
dawid.wieczorek@up.krakow.pl

ENGLISH TITLE: SYNTHETIC MADNESS: FROM THE NEWEST HISTORY OF
A DRUG PROBLEM

ABSTRACT

The increased recent popularity of synthetic drugs provokes a need to rethink the complex relation between humans and drugs throughout history to date. Considering the development of a drug problem predominantly based on the idea of use and abuse of both legal and illegal substances, this paper traces various functions that drugs played in human life, beginning from the earliest history of mankind. In the context of the latest developments, the analysis focuses on the emergence of new, often synthetic psychoactive substances, along with legislation and drug policies implemented in different countries. This provides a basis for considering the cultural, social and health consequences of drug abuse. Since the “synthetic turn” starting at the end of the 19th century, it seems that additional efforts need to be taken in order to meet the related challenges. This latest turn in the historical development of drugs is perceived as one of the most important moments when it comes to understanding coeval drug problems. Expanding the social awareness of the effects of drug consumption seems to lie among the crucial factors preventing societies from solving drug-related problems, including crime, health, social exclusion, poverty, overdoses, and death. The paper concludes that, while political and social endeavors are generally aimed at prevention, an equally important task may lie in the provision of high-quality, mass drug education.

KEYWORDS: Synthetic drugs, Drug use, Drug abuse, Drug policy, Narcotic, Transgression, Drug policy, Drug education

WPROWADZENIE

W społecznej świadomości używanie substancji psychoaktywnych zwykle kojarzy się z indukowaniem odmiennych stanów psychicznych – od relaksacji, znieczulenia, pobudzenia, poprzez euforię, ekstazę, aż po doświadczenia mistyczne, religijne i duchowe. W istocie rzeczy, stany te mogą przypominać coś w rodzaju amoku, zamroczenia, czy wręcz szaleństwa. Zarówno opisy medyczne, jak i dostępne w kulturze masowej ilustracje stanów odurzenia narkotykami zdają się uzasadniać podobne skojarzenia. Zespół Johna Reada w książce zatytułowanej *Models of Madness: Psychological, Social and Biological Approaches to Psychosis* (2013) wskazuje na psychologiczne, społeczne i biologiczne podejścia do tego, czym jest szaleństwo (a konkretniej psychoza). Podejście to jest mocno osadzone w medycynie i psychiatrii, ale funkcjonują także inne ujęcia, jak to zaprezentowane przez Andrew Scull'a w książce *Madness in Civilization. A Cultural History of Insanity, from the Bible to Freud, from the Madhouse to Modern Medicine* (2016), gdzie można znaleźć spojrzenie historyczno-kulturowe. Zagadnienie to stało się również przedmiotem analiz badaczy z obrębu historii idei, z Michele Foucaultem na czele, który zasłynął między innymi próbą rekonstrukcji historii szaleństwa (Foucault 2006). Namysł nad tym pojęciem towarzyszy ludzkości od dawna, wciąż budząc liczne niejasności, kontrowersje i semantyczne nieostrości. Pojęcie to wykorzystywane jest do rozgraniczenia tego, co nie mieści się w społecznych i kulturowych normach, wykracza poza określone rozumienie zdrowia – zwłaszcza psychicznego, oraz kreśli granice zrozumienia złożonej natury człowieka: jego przekonań, sposobów rozumienia świata, postrzegania rzeczywistości i zachowań będących tego następstwem.

Ponadto, pojęcie szaleństwa wielokrotnie było wykorzystywane jako metafora do opisu pewnych stanów rzeczywistości oraz kondycji poszczególnych jednostek – odmiennych, niezrozumiałych, tajemniczych, czy wręcz szkodliwych lub niebezpiecznych. Szaleńcami okrzykiwano przestępców, zbrodniarzy, ale też osoby chorujące psychicznie. Szaleństwem określano sytuacje czy działania niezrozumiałe, niedorzeczne, irracjonalne, wymykające się dostępnym klasyfikacjom, conceptualizacjom i pojęciom. Z tego też powodu metafora szaleństwa wydaje się dość trafną, jeśli mówić o tym, co dzieje się w obszarze używania przez człowieka substancji psychoaktywnych, a szczególnie od momentu pojawienia się narkotyków syntetycznych, które obecnie stanowią coraz większy problem społeczny o zasięgu globalnym. Niniejszy tekst ma tym samym na celu prześledzenie drogi rozwoju tych substancji w kontekście ich używania, nadużywania, współczesnej specyfiki rozwoju uzależnień, a także wskazania istotnych dla tych fenomenów zwrotów historycznych. Idea używania substancji psychoaktywnych miała w historii wiele obliczy, a współcześnie ukazuje swoją szczególnie niepokojącą

odslonę. Skala tego zjawiska bynajmniej nie jest marginalna. Używanie narkotyków przestaje być elementem kontrkultury; nie jest zarezerwowane dla ekskluzywnych, elitarnych grup społecznych, a zaczyna przybierać postać powszechnego, zbiorowego szaleństwa.

CZŁOWIEK A SUBSTANCJE PSYCHOAKTYWNE – RELACJA ZŁOŻONA

Dzieje używania substancji psychoaktywnych są prawdopodobnie dłuższe, niż historia człowieka. Jeden z bardziej znanych, ale też kontrowersyjnych badaczy narkotyków i kulturowych uwarunkowań ich stosowania, botanik i filozof – Terence McKenna – zwracał uwagę na symbiotyczną relację człowieka i świata roślin (McKenna 2007, 35sq). Relacja ta nie zawsze była łatwa, zakładała też pewien konflikt, rywalizację świata zwierząt ze światem roślin. Człowiek w poszukiwaniu nowych pokarmów niejednokrotnie bardzo ryzykował zdrowiem, a nawet życiem, wystawiając się na działanie toksyn. W ten sposób, w pewnym sensie przypadkowo, mógł jednak odkryć substancje, które nie tyle stanowiły wartość odżywczą zwiększającą szanse na przetrwanie, nie były zabójcze, ale indukowały odmienne stany świadomości bądź wywoływały specyficzne reakcje organizmu. W wielu przypadkach rośliny te mogły pomagać człowiekowi, na przykład uśmierzać ból, jak miało to miejsce w przypadku alkoholu, maku (opium), czy konopi indyjskich. McKenna zauważa ponadto, że niektóre rośliny mogły pomagać w rozwijaniu świadomości człowieka jako fundamentalnej struktury psychicznej. Stopniowe wchodzenie człowieka w symbiozę nie tylko z roślinami, ale również innymi zwierzętami, mogło przyczyniać się do tego procesu. Kiedy formowały się afrykańskie, nomadyczne społeczności pasterskie, obecność bydła na danym obszarze mogła ułatwiać rozprzestrzenianie się grzybów, w tym tych o właściwościach halucynogennych (Ibid., 41), które znacząco wpływają na percepcję i funkcjonowanie układu nerwowego. Rośliny o działaniu psychoaktywnym często pomagały w codziennym funkcjonowaniu, co do tej pory widać chociażby w Ameryce Południowej, gdzie życie na dużych wysokościach nad poziomem morza czy wykonywanie intensywnej pracy fizycznej może być łatwiejsze za sprawą żucia liści koki. Zawarte w nich substancje mogą bowiem wyęzzać koncentrację, tłumić łaknienie, podnosić ciśnienie i ułatwiać oddychanie. Dotyczy to również innych roślin, jak kawa czy khat (*Catha edulis*), które pobudzają ośrodkowy układ nerwowy, co jest szczególnie pożądane w świetle konieczności utrzymania długotrwałej koncentracji czy podczas wzmożonego wysiłku. Kawa zresztą na dobre zagościła w świecie Zachodu, stając się znormalizowaną i powszechnie stosowaną używką.

Kiedy na długiej drodze ewolucji człowiek coraz bardziej rozumiał, jak używać poszczególnych substancji, zaczęły one mu regularnie towarzyszyć w rozmaitych okolicznościach i sytuacjach życiowych. Były wykorzystywane przez szamanów w plemiennych rytuałach, służyły jako leki, pożywienie, środki odstraszenia szkodników, jak również narzędzia do rozrywki i relaksu. Profesor botaniki Uniwersytetu Hawajskiego – Mark Merlin – podjął próbę znalezienia dowodów na stosowanie narkotyków na obszarze starego kontynentu (Merlin 2003). Powołując się na wcześniejsze badania międzykulturowe zauważył, że wśród 488 zbadanych społeczności niemal w 90% zidentyfikowano zrytualizowane formy osiągania odmiennych stanów świadomości, a środki do tego wykorzystywane były czymś powszechnym w tradycyjnych społecznościach – dokładnie tak, jak współczesna cywilizacja napędzana jest kofeiną, alkoholem i nikotyną. O ile jednak zamierzchle społeczności upatrywały w używaniu substancji psychoaktywnych drogi do osiągnięcia stanów uniesień religijnych, duchowych i zastosowań medycznych, a rozrywka wydawała się być na dalszym planie, tak w przypadku współczesnych społeczeństw, coraz częściej zauważa się dominację funkcji hedonistycznej (Ibid., 295).

Na ten moment istnieją w nauce dwie dominujące ścieżki poznania genezy używania substancji psychoaktywnych. Jedna z nich wiąże się z archeologicznymi odkryciami szczątków, które je zawierają oraz artefaktów, w których je przetrzymywano lub konsumowano. Drugi sposób to poznanie paleobotaniczne (Brinkhof 2022). Wciąż niewiadomą jest dokładne znaczenie, jakie przypisywano poszczególnym substancjom. Na terenie współczesnej Italii odnaleziono nasiona maku i konopi, które mogą mieć około osiem tysięcy lat. To jak dotąd jedno z najstarszych znalezisk, ale nie sposób wykluczyć wcześniejszej obecności tych substancji w życiu ówczesnych społeczności. Jak twierdzi Tim Brinkhof (Ibid.), rośliny psychoaktywne mogły służyć celom gospodarczym (tkaniny, liny), spożywczym – zarówno człowiekowi, jak i jego zwierzętom, a ponadto przypuszcza się, że mogły być stosowane w rytuałach i ceremoniach. Wielu badaczy wskazuje na wysokie prawdopodobieństwo, że substancje psychoaktywne towarzyszyły człowiekowi na długo przed powstaniem pisma, czyli jeszcze w prehistorii (Gahlinger 2004, 5; Escohotado 2010; Faupel, Horowitz, & Weaver 2010; Goodman, Sherratt, & Lovejoy 2007). Dowody historyczne i archeologiczne wskazują ponadto na stosowanie w podobnych celach sfermentowanego miodu, owoców, czy tytoniu. Współczesne estymacje wskazują, że wczesne homonidy (człowiekowate) żyjące ponad 200 milionów lat temu, już wtedy mogły używać substancji psychoaktywnych.

Na przestrzeni dziejów człowiek całkiem nieźle rozeznał się w działaniu poszczególnych substancji, zwłaszcza tych, które zwykle były dlań dostępne, atrakcyjne lub pożyteczne w swoim działaniu. Czasem prowadziło to do po-

wstawania nałogów i uzależnienia, o czym wiadomo na przykład z podań rzymskiego historyka greckiego pochodzenia, Kasjusza Diona, który opisał negatywne następstwa nadużywania opium przez filozofa na tronie, Marka Aureliusza (Africa 1961, 97). Zachowały się też liczne źródła – zwłaszcza archiwa medyczne, gdzie można odszukać informacji na temat wykorzystywania tej substancji w celach medycznych, a także potencjalnego ryzyka jej nadużywania. Pisał o tym między innymi włoski lekarz, Pietro d'Abano (1475), opisując rozliczne trucizny i odtrutki. Podobne rozważania na temat substancji o właściwościach psychoaktywnych można odnaleźć u średnio-wiecznego lekarza, Gilbertusa Anglicusa, znanego ze słynnego kompendium medycyny datowanego na pierwszą połowę XIII wieku, a wydane go drukiem trzysta lat później (Anglicus 1510). Dość wczesne publikacje można również znaleźć na temat zastosowań konopi indyjskich. Pisał o tym Rembert Dodoens (Dodoens 1578, s. 71sq), Filippo Beroaldo (1494), a nawet starożytny historyk – Pliniusz Starszy – w znanym dziele, *Naturalis historiae* (1483, s. 490). Człowiek najwidoczniej zdawał sobie sprawę z potencjalnie negatywnych następstw stosowania substancji psychoaktywnych, ale był to tylko jeden z wielu aspektów ich stosowania. Debaty na temat utraty kontroli nad używaniem substancji, co rozumiano przez uzależnienie, sięgają przynajmniej XVII wieku (Crocq 2007).

Nie zawsze jednak używanie prowadziło do uzależnienia. Ludzie ponadto mają dość zróżnicowany stosunek do tych substancji – od zachowania abstynencji, przez eksperymentowanie, aż po nadmierne używanie i uzależnienie. Przyczyny tego mogą być bardzo złożone, podobnie jak złożona jest etiologia uzależnień. Należałoby zapewne uwzględnić zarówno czynniki biologiczne (predyspozycje genetyczne do rozwinięcia uzależnienia), neurobiologiczne (Erickson/Wilcox 2001), psychologiczne oraz społeczne, co zresztą odzwierciedla wielość teorii starających się wyjaśnić zjawisko uzależnienia (Davies 1998). Zasadniczo, spektrum form i rodzajów relacji człowieka z substancjami psychoaktywnymi można by nakreślić w formie skali. Na jednym biegunie należałoby umieścić pełną abstynencję, na drugim nadużywanie, uzależnienie i zupełną utratę kontroli.

- 1) Gdy mowa o krytycznym, sceptycznym stosunku do substancji psychoaktywnych, to na pierwszy plan wysuwać się będzie podejście abstynencyjne. Dana jednostka (z różnych przyczyn) będzie stroniła od używania tych substancji, będzie unikała środowisk, w których to zjawisko występuje, czy wręcz będzie się angażować w społeczne kampanie i inicjatywy proabstynencyjne. Motywy dla takiej postawy mogą wynikać z modelu wychowania, otrzymanej edukacji, warunków kulturowych danej społeczności, obecności w najbliższym otoczeniu środowisk, gdzie używa się substancji, czy osobistej trau-

my, niechęci lub strachu przed negatywnymi następstwami używania.

- 2) Są jednak osoby, które wyrażają pewne szczególne zainteresowanie substancjami psychoaktywnymi. Zanim jeszcze po nie sięgną, mogą fantazjować, rozmyślać na temat ich działania lub używania. Znaczącym czynnikiem sprzyjającym takiej postawie może być naturalne zainteresowanie nieznanym, typowe zresztą dla młodego wieku bądź okresu buntu młodzieńczego. Dążenie dzieci i młodzieży do poznawania nowego, a zwłaszcza czegoś zakazanego, może w tym przypadku być skierowane ku narkotykom. Również osoby dorosłe mogą wyrażać takie zainteresowanie, na przykład ze względu na lecznicze czy potencjalnie terapeutyczne, ale i rozrywkowe zastosowanie poszczególnych substancji. Nie bez znaczenia pozostaje kwestia wpływu rówieśniczego i indywidualnych predyspozycji, które mogą prowadzić do kolejnego stadium.
- 3) Dwa wcześniejsze stadia zakładają, że nie doszło do spożycia czy użycia narkotyków. W pewnym momencie może to jednak nastąpić. Są osoby, które na własnej skórze zdecydują się przetestować ich działanie, ale po jednorazowym czy kilkukrotnym doświadczeniu wrócą do abstynencji. W tym i kolejnych z zaproponowanych stadiów można zauważyć pewną analogię do stopni uzależnienia (Niewiadomska / Stanisławczyk 2004, 168). Przyczyny i skutki podejmowania takich eksperymentów będą zapewne mocno zróżnicowane i zależne od czynników biologicznych, psychologicznych oraz społecznych.
- 4) Podążając za analogią do stopni uzależnienia, kolejny etap oznaczać będzie używanie okazjonalne. Z pewnością będą osoby, które pozostaną na poziomie eksperymentu, aczkolwiek nie będą utrzymywać abstynencji. Wtedy można mówić o używaniu okazjonalnym, czyli okresowo, w pewnych (zwykle większych) interwałach czasowych. W tym stadium uzależnienie będzie trudne do zidentyfikowania, o ile w ogóle wystąpi. Z czasem częstotliwość używania może wzrastać, co będzie prowadziło do wykształcenia nawyku, nałogu, pewnej regularności stosowania.
- 5) Następnym krokiem będzie więc regularne bądź codzienne używanie. Na tym etapie mogą wystąpić znaczne, negatywne konsekwencje zdrowotne, psychologiczne i społeczne mające bezpośredni lub pośredni związek z daną substancją. Charakterystyka tych problemów będzie w znacznej mierze uzależniona od rodzaju i ilości przyjmowanej substancji, jak i determinant indywidualnych oraz społecznych. Najprawdopodobniej będzie możliwe zdiagnozowanie

uzależnienia, choć jednostka może być jeszcze przez jakiś czas wysoko funkcjonująca.

- 6) W dalszej kolejności używanie (a właściwie nadużywanie) substancji będzie oznaczało podporządkowanie im życia, zmianę dotychczasowych nawyków i przyzwyczajeń na rzecz nadużywania. Pełnoobjawowe uzależnienie na tym etapie zwykle będzie oznaczało wycieńczenie psychofizyczne, marginalizację i wycofanie społeczne; znacznie zwiększy się prawdopodobieństwo podejmowania zachowań ryzykownych, niebezpiecznych, w tym destruktywnych i autodestruktywnych. Trudno będzie mówić o jakiegokolwiek kontroli nad substancją, a narkotyki mogą nawet być stosowane w zamiarze samobójczym – faktycznym czy manifestacyjnym.

Stosunek do substancji i ich używania jest więc zróżnicowany. Na różnych stadiach nakreślonej wyżej skali możliwe jest wskazanie zarówno stosunku afirmatywnego, jak i krytycznego, przy czym nie jest to zależne od stopnia uwikłania w stosowanie substancji czy utrzymywania abstynencji. Ścieżki rozwoju uzależnienia zależą ponadto od szeregu dodatkowych elementów: rodzaju i dostępności używanej substancji, wieku inicjacji, sytuacji rodzinnej, rówieśniczej, szkolnej, poziomu wykształcenia, indywidualnych predyspozycji, stanu zdrowia jednostki, wpływu środowiska czy mediów (gdzie bez problemu można znaleźć treści przedstawiające narkotyki w dobrym, atrakcyjnym świetle). Równie istotna wydaje się polityka społeczna (narkotykowa) danego państwa. Czy dana substancja będzie legalna, kontrolowana, czy nielegalna i penalizowana może mieć istotne przełożenie na stosunek obywateli do jej używania, podobnie jak strategie edukacyjne i profilaktyczne wynikające z przyjęcia określonych rozwiązań prawnych. Do tego warto dodać ogólnoswiatowe trendy dotyczące kreowania wizerunku samych substancji, ich konsumpcji, a także produkcji i podaży. Nie można zapominać, że wiele legalnych substancji, nazywanych lekami, też ma działanie psychoaktywne. Co więcej, są one powszechnie stosowane. Dlatego zasadna wydaje się teza, że dla człowieka używanie substancji psychoaktywnych jest czymś integralnym, by nie rzec naturalnym.

Jak zatem kształtuje się skala używania substancji psychoaktywnych? Jeśli wierzyć *Raportowi o stanie narkomanii w Polsce* (2020), w grupie wiekowej między 15 a 34 rokiem życia, w przeciągu ostatniego roku niemal 80% używało alkoholu, a 5,4% narkotyków (Ibid., 7). Jeśli chodzi o osoby problemowo używające narkotyków, to szacunki na rok 2019 oscylowały wokół 100 tysięcy osób, co stanowi współczynnik 3,7 na tysiąc mieszkańców (Ibid., 22). Dane te pokazują, że Polska znajduje się pomiędzy skrajnymi wartościami reprezentowanymi przez kraje europejskie. Interesujący może się wydawać spadek zainteresowania nowymi substancjami

psychoaktywnymi, podczas gdy jeszcze nie tak dawno, bo w okolicach 2015 roku, odnotowano najwyższą ilość (7238) interwencji medycznych związanych z zatruciem, zaś w roku 2020 było to 1070 przypadków (Ibid., 25). O ile wskaźniki używania narkotyków nie są najgorsze, tak szczególnie martwiący może wydawać się fakt, że zdecydowana większość młodych ludzi w ostatnim roku miała kontakt z alkoholem. Co ciekawe, nikotyna w rzeczonym raporcie w ogóle nie jest brana pod uwagę, podobnie jak inne znane używki zawierające de facto substancje psychoaktywne – kawa, herbata, oraz rozmaite leki. Dla porównania, w Stanach Zjednoczonych, w ubiegłym roku około 13,5% ludzi w wieku 18-25 lat wykazywało zaburzenia związane z używaniem tego typu substancji, a nawet 50% osób od 12 roku życia i starszych miało jakikolwiek kontakt z substancjami nielegalnymi (NCDAS 2023).

Powyższe statystyki wskazują, że kontakty z substancjami psychoaktywnymi są dość powszechnym zjawiskiem, zarówno w Polsce, jak i na świecie. Wciąż najpopularniejszym narkotykiem jest alkohol, który góruje w statystykach, najprawdopodobniej z uwagi na legalność i dostępność. Gdy spojrzeć na statystyki dotyczące samego spożycia alkoholu w Polsce, to dane wyglądają dość zatrważająco, ponieważ szacuje się, że około 800 tysięcy osób jest od niego uzależnionych, a niemal 2,5 miliona używa go szkodliwie lub ryzykownie. W skali światowej szacuje się natomiast, że problem alkoholowy dotyczy niemal 240 milionów osób, czyli 5% światowej populacji (Gowing et al. 2015, 904sq). Nie jest to więc zjawisko marginalne, a w połączeniu ze skalą używania innych substancji będzie znacznie większe, aniżeli wskaźniki dotyczące samego alkoholu.

Śledząc historię używania substancji psychoaktywnych przez człowieka, a szczególnie zważywszy na bardzo wczesne ślady potwierdzające to zjawisko, uzasadnione wydaje się wnioskowanie, że przez tysiące lat człowiek wyodrębnił określone funkcje stosowania narkotyków. Były to głównie funkcje medyczne, terapeutyczne, religijne, duchowe, czy rozrywkowe, ludyczne. Elementem je łączącym wydaje się być pewna potrzeba transgresji – zmieniania, poszerzania świadomości, zbliżania się do utopii, osiągnięcia nowych perspektyw poznawczych, wyzwolenia z bólu, cierpienia i codziennych trosk, które rzeczona świadomość może przysparzać. Tego rodzaju potrzeba jawi się jako niezależna od wyznania, koloru skóry, pochodzenia czy innych cech osobniczych; zdaje się charakterystyczna dla gatunku *Homo Sapiens*. Dlatego też potencjalne negatywne następstwa nadużywania substancji, w mniejszym lub większym stopniu, również będą demokratycznie dotyczyć całego gatunku.

PROBLEM NARKOTYKOWY – GENEZA I ZWROT SYNTETYCZNY

Opisana wyżej przypadłość człowieka ilustruje równocześnie pewną ideę – stosowania określonych substancji w celu osiągnięcia zróżnicowanych stanów psychofizycznych. Idea ta, oprócz korzyści, przysporzyła człowiekowi szereg trudności i problemów. Z punktu widzenia historii idei, zastanawiające jest użycie poszczególnych określeń i terminów do opisywania substancji psychoaktywnych. Kiedy mowa o lekach, budzą one raczej pozytywne skojarzenia. Jest to coś, co ma człowiekowi służyć i pomagać. Gdy zaś mowa o narkotykach, pojawiają się raczej konotacje negatywne. Kulturowo, narkotyki niejednokrotnie są utożsamiane z czymś niebezpiecznym, nielegalnym, niegdyś też tabuizowanym. Najbardziej neutralnym określeniem wydają się substancje chemiczne o działaniu psychoaktywnym, co zresztą jest przyjmowane w dyskursach medycznych. Co więcej, gdy spojrzeć na funkcjonujące typologie, to obok grupy leków psychotropowych i środków odurzających istnieje kategoria leków narkotycznych, na przykład w *Wykazie substancji psychotropowych, środków odurzających oraz nowych substancji psychoaktywnych* (Dz. U. 2023). Kryterium różnicującym poszczególne kategorie jest poziom ryzyka uzależnienia, możliwości zastosowania medycznego, naukowego i przemysłowego, oraz potencjał do produkcji narkotyków. Polskie prawo koresponduje z międzynarodowymi konwencjami, które dodatkowo nowe substancje psychoaktywne włączają w definicję narkotyku. Pojęciem, które może zwracać w tym kontekście uwagę, jest odurzenie, czyli stan po użyciu narkotyków. Substancje powodujące taki skutek mogą także zostać dopuszczone do użytku medycznego.

Dostrzegalne jest więc dwoiste rozumienie działania poszczególnych substancji – pożądane, terapeutyczne, oraz niepożądane, odurzające, narkotyczne, potencjalnie nielegalne. We wspomnianym *Wykazie* wymienia się setki rozmaitych substancji, zarówno pochodzenia roślinnego, półsyntetycznego, jak i czysto syntetycznego, a rzeczona lista jest stale aktualizowana. Proces regulacji i kontroli substancji psychoaktywnych jest coraz bardziej zaawansowany. W tym miejscu pojawia się zasadnicze pytanie – co takiego się podziało, że problem nadużywania stał się problemem społecznym o globalnym zasięgu?

Aby odpowiedzieć na to pytanie, należałoby zwrócić uwagę nie tylko na funkcje stosowania, ale i na odkrycia coraz to nowszych substancji, zwłaszcza pochodzenia syntetycznego. Przez dziesiątki, jak nie setki lat, katalog dostępnych narkotyków był dość wąski i były to substancje głównie pochodzenia roślinnego. Jednak wraz z rozwojem nauki i technologii, katalog ten zaczął bardzo szybko się rozrastać. Pierwszym oficjalnie syntetycznym lekiem o właściwościach psychoaktywnych był wodzian chloralu. W 1832 roku dokonał jego odkrycia Justus von Liebig, badacz związany z Uniwersyte-

tem w Giesen w Niemczech (Liebig 1832). Głównym przeznaczeniem tej substancji o działaniu uspokajającym i nasennym była terapia bólu, stanów padaczkowych czy bezsenności. Do użytku wprowadzono ją w 1869 roku, jednak szybko okazało się, że stwarza ona wysokie ryzyko, jeśli chodzi o nadużywanie, i może być niebezpieczna dla zdrowia i życia.

Podobne problemy pojawiły się po tym, jak udało się wyizolować substancje aktywne z materiału roślinnego, mianowicie z maku i liści koki. Morfina została wyizolowana między 1803 a 1805 rokiem. (Courtwright 2009), a kokaina w roku 1860 (Pomara et al. 2012). Wraz z tym dokonaniem zmieniła się forma przyjmowania tych substancji. Zamiast palenia, żucia, czy spożywania materiału roślinnego, coraz bardziej popularną formą przyjmowania tych substancji była droga iniekcyjna i wziewna. Co więcej, ich wysokie stężenie powodowało zintensyfikowane doznania, znacznie silniejsze odurzenie. To z kolei zwiększało ryzyko wystąpienia uzależnienia, z czego wtedy jeszcze nie zdawano sobie do końca sprawy. Podobnie zresztą wyglądała sytuacja ze spożywaniem alkoholu. Istnieją pewne kulturowe schematy używania (Crocq 2007) i przynoszą one odmienne skutki. Jeśli alkohol jest spożywany w małych stężeniach, na przykład w napojach niskalkoholowych, jak piwo czy wino, to absorpcja alkoholu jest wydłużona. Jeśli zaś spożywany jest napój destylowany, wysokoprocentowy, jak wódka, to absorpcja alkoholu jest zdecydowanie szybsza i prędzej dojdzie do upojenia. Podobnie zaczęło się dzieć z wyizolowanymi narkotykami, co zwiastowało postępującą utratę kontroli nad używaniem.

Na przełomie XIX i XX wieku zaczęło powstawać coraz więcej nowych substancji uznawanych za leki. Okres ten oznaczał pojawienie się nitrogliceryny, kwasu acetylosalicylowego, a także całej rodziny barbituranów (Jones 2011). Nie można jednak zapominać o rodzinie stymulantów. Pod koniec XIX wieku po obu stronach globu (początkowo w Niemczech i Japonii) pojawiła się metamfetamina, która zadziałała jak bomba z opóźnionym zapłonem w II wojnie światowej. Farmakopea uległa dotąd niespotykanemu rozszerzeniu, tym samym kontrola nad substancjami była coraz trudniejsza. Do I wojny światowej można było mówić o entuzjazmie i optymizmie względem potencjałów terapeutycznych tkwiących w nowo odkrytych substancjach (Musto 1996), ale problem nadużywania – szczególnie morfiny, kokainy, opium i heroiny – spowodował wprowadzenie pierwszych dalekosiężnych regulacji tych substancji, przede wszystkim w Stanach Zjednoczonych. Podczas Wielkiej Wojny stosowano na masową skalę morfinę w celu uśmierzania bólu związanego z obrażeniami wojennymi, co po zakończeniu konfliktu wygenerowało falę uzależnionych weteranów. Regulacje wdrażane za oceanem zaczęły pojawiać się na Starym Kontynencie. Zaczęły się pojawiać kolejne badania nad uzależnieniem, a sam problem stawał się coraz bardziej widoczny. Nie przeszkodziło to w masowym zastosowaniu substancji psy-

choaktywnych podczas II wojny światowej, kiedy to żołnierzom niemieckim podawano stymulanty w celu przyspieszenia ekspansji Nazistów, a w szpitalach nadal stosowano morfinę czy heroinę w celu łagodzenia bólu. Meskalinę stosowano eksperymentalnie w przesłuchaniach, a oddziały straceńcze napędzane były kokainowymi gumami do żucia. Sam Adolf Hitler, o ile był przeciwny używaniu nikotyny i alkoholu, to pod koniec wojny był skrajnie wycieńczony, co spowodowane było między innymi długoletnim przyjmowaniem koktajli narkotykowych, bezpośrednio od osobistego lekarza, Theodora Morella (Ohler 2021).

Kolejny przełom w drodze do dzisiejszego kryzysu wiąże się z pojawieniem się kontrkultury w latach sześćdziesiątych XX wieku i popularyzacją tak zwanych psychodelików, a szczególnie syntetycznego LSD. Substancje te działały nieco inaczej, aniżeli te dotychczas znane – stymulujące bądź spowalniające. Te zresztą nadal były w użyciu. Donald Wesson zwracał ponadto uwagę na zmianę dotychczasowych schematów używania substancji psychoaktywnych (Wesson 2011). W efekcie obyczajowej rewolucji, która wyrażała afirmatywny stosunek do narkotyków, a wręcz promowała ich używanie, przy równoczesnym pogłębianiu się problemu nadużywania, kolejna dekada oznaczała zainicjowanie wieloletniej kampanii na rzecz kryminalizacji i zwalczania narkotyków. Coraz bardziej popularne było używanie kokainy i *cracku* – jej tańszej, lecz szczególnie niebezpiecznej formy, która przez kolejne lata 80. i 90. dziesiątkowała społeczeństwo amerykańskie, szczególnie środowisko Afroamerykanów. Kolejny znaczący wzrost popularności substancji syntetycznych w kontrkulturze odnotowano na przełomie lat 80. i 90., gdzie szczególną popularnością cieszyły się stymulanty, empatogeny, a szczególnie MDMA (3,4-Metylenodioksymetamfetamina) – substancja, która była znana już z początku wieku, ale dopiero w tym okresie zyskała szerokie grono zwolenników. Katalog substancji syntetycznych sukcesywnie się rozszerzał, a używanie kontrkulturowe (a wcześniej nieraz i militarne) powoli przeistaczało się w używanie powszechne, mainstreamowe.

Kosztowna i długofalowa *Wojna z narkotykami* rozpoczęta w 1971 roku w Stanach Zjednoczonych zakładała podniesienie wymiaru kar za przestępstwa narkotykowe. Problem nadużywania takich substancji, jak kokaina, heroina, opium, tytoń i alkohol zauważony został już pod koniec XIX i na początku XX wieku, jednak substancje te właściwie były legalne (Hollingshed 2019, 4). Z czasem rozwijały się idee kontrolowania i regulowania posiadania, używania i handlu poszczególnymi narkotykami. Tak też zaczęto nazywać szereg substancji, tworząc rozmaite klasy i kategorie substancji. Proces ten zaczął się jeszcze od walki z opium (Haska Konwencja Opiumowa z 1912 roku) oraz opodatkowania handlu tą i innymi substancjami, jak liście koki i ich pochodne (*Harrison Narcotics Tax Act* z 1914 roku). Jak zauważa Sherrod Hollingshed, rząd Stanów Zjednoczonych początkowo postrzegał

problem używania narkotyków za indywidualny, jednostkowy (Ibid., 4). Dopiero z czasem zaczął widzieć w nim istotny problem społeczny. Dalsze regulacje ukierunkowane były więc na prohibicjonizm, który rodził kolejne przestępstwa i negatywne następstwa społeczne (np. zatrucia nielegalnym alkoholem, rozkwit handlu i nielegalnej działalności, zorganizowanych grup przestępczych etc.). Fiasko tej polityki zmusiło władze do częściowego odstąpienia od całkowitej prohibicji i poszukiwania nowych rozwiązań. Lata siedemdziesiąte priorytetyzowały problem narkotykowy i oznaczały podjęcie działań kryminalizujących na skalę dotychczas niespotykaną. Konsekwencją przyjęcia takiej polityki społecznej było zablokowanie na długie lata oficjalnych badań nad substancjami, co sprzyjało rozwojowi podziemia narkotykowego.

Wiele rejonów świata nadal przesiąkniętych jest tą ideą. Pomimo ewidentnego przegrywania tej *Wojny*, ale też powolnego, lecz zauważalnego rozwoju badań i wiedzy w zakresie profilaktyki narkomanii czy działania poszczególnych substancji, a wreszcie mimo pojawienia się nowych idei i polityk narkotykowych, nadal kryminalizacja oraz represja znajdują poczesne miejsce wśród środków zaradczych stosowanych wobec omawianego problemu. Podejście punitywne, kryminalizujące przy okazji szereg zachowań społecznych nie stanowiących de facto zagrożenia społecznego, zbiera żniwo w postaci przeludnienia więzień, pogłębiania się problemu uzależnień i szeroko rozumianej przestępczości narkotykowej. Dodatkowo, przedstawianie używania narkotyków w kategorii przestępstwa doprowadziło do stygmatyzacji i wykluczenia poszczególnych grup społecznych.

Aktualny stan rzeczy, zarówno w perspektywie globalnej, jak i lokalnej, budzi sporo obaw nie tylko z punktu widzenia zdrowia i bezpieczeństwa publicznego, ale stanowi jednocześnie istotne wyzwanie dla profilaktyki i edukacji. Wysiłki podejmowane w kierunku przeformułowywania polityk narkotykowych czy strategii rozwiązywania problemu narkotykowego według najnowszej wiedzy naukowej wydają się niewystarczające. Zapewne dlatego w czerwcu 2023 roku, sekretarz stanu USA – Anthony Blinken – na rządowych stronach internetowych wydał oświadczenie prasowe, gdzie wzywa do utworzenia międzynarodowej koalicji (*Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drugs*), która miałaby na celu podjęcie globalnych działań w celu przeciwdziałenia postępującego problemu stosowania narkotyków, szczególnie tych syntetycznych (Blinken 2023). Kolejne badania wskazują, że obecnie to właśnie ten rodzaj substancji stanowi największe zagrożenie. Jak wskazują autorzy *World Drug Report* (2023) opublikowanego przez Biuro do spraw Narkotyków i Przestępczości Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych, problemy związane z nielegalnymi substancjami psychoaktywnymi wciąż należą do istotniejszych zagrożeń o charakterze globalnym. Nie chodzi jedynie o problem nadużywania i uzależnień, ale również o szereg innych przestępstw z

tym związanych. Obok indywidualnych, psychologicznych i społecznych negatywnych następstw nadużywania stoi jednocześnie nielegalna produkcja, handel i dystrybucja. Specyfika funkcjonowania nielegalnych rynków substancji odznacza się współwystępowaniem w ich obrębie wielu innych kategorii przestępstw. Są one skierowane między innymi przeciwko zdrowiu i życiu człowieka, jego mieniu, a także środowisku naturalnemu (nielegalne wycinki lasów – zwłaszcza amazońskich, przesiedlenia lokalnej ludności, dewastacja środowiska naturalnego). Nieodłącznie towarzyszą temu okoliczności coraz liczniejszych kryzysów humanitarnych i naturalnych, recesji ekonomicznych, konfliktów zbrojnych, pandemii, inflacji czy migracji, co dodatkowo sprzyja pogłębianiu się problemu konsumpcji oraz nielegalnego obrotu narkotykami. W nawiązaniu do przywołanego raportu można wywnioskować, że konsumpcja i produkcja substancji psychoaktywnych na świecie lokuje się na wysokim poziomie, a destabilizacja polityczno-ekonomiczna poszczególnych regionów świata sprzyja nasilaniu problemu narkotykowego. Autorzy raportu zwracają ponadto uwagę, że czynnikiem sprzyjającym rozwojowi uzależnień są przesiedlenia. Tylko do połowy 2022 roku ponad 100 milionów ludzi na świecie zostało zmuszonych do opuszczenia swoich domostw, tymczasowo lub na stałe (*World Drug Report* 2023). Są to często osoby zmarginalizowane, cierpiące na zaburzenia psychiczne, znajdujące się w trudnej sytuacji socjoekonomicznej, uchodzące z obszarów objętych działaniami zbrojnymi oraz doświadczające różnego rodzaju traum, zespołu stresu pourazowego, lęków czy stanów depresyjnych.

W omawianym raporcie podkreśla się nieustanne pojawianie na rynku kolejnych substancji syntetycznych. Nader często odnosi się to do tańszych substancji, imitujących między innymi konopie indyjskie. Te z kolei są nadal najpopularniejszym i najczęściej stosowanym narkotykiem na świecie, co stwarza poważne zagrożenie dla zdrowia użytkowników konopi szukających tańszej alternatywy. Rozkwit substancji syntetycznych oznacza ponadto zredefiniowanie dotychczasowych kanałów dystrybucyjnych, jak również rewaluację zagrożeń płynących z nowych, nieznanych i niezbadanych substancji. W krajach azjatyckich, na Bliskim Wschodzie, w Afryce, Europie czy Ameryce Północnej powstaje coraz więcej nielegalnych laboratoriów produkujących zarówno syntetyczne stymulanty, psychodeliki, jak i depresanty (Ibid., 22). Koszty prowadzenia takiej działalności są zdecydowanie niższe w porównaniu z produkcją opartą na roślinach. Łańcuchy dostaw mogą być skrócone, ryzyko dekonspiracji jest mniejsze, mobilność takich laboratoriów jest większa, a zdolność do wytwarzania chemicznych analogów substancji niedozwolonych otwiera szereg problemów prawnych związanych z klasyfikacją i kontrolą. Co więcej, substancje te, przez to że nie sposób ich dokładnie zbadać, stwarzają dotąd niespotykane zagrożenie dla zdrowia i życia ich użytkowników. Nieznane mechanizmy działania, brak antidotum, trudności z

identyfikacją substancji, nieznajomość dawkowania, ale też coraz częstsze łączenie nowych substancji (dla zwiększenia mocy efektu odurzającego) powoduje, że problem staje się coraz poważniejszy.

Dobłą ilustracją tego, w jaką stronę dziś poszedł rynek narkotykowy, jest aktualny kryzys opioidowy w Stanach Zjednoczonych i Kanadzie. Jeśli spojrzeć na statystyki zgonów spowodowanych opioidami między 1999 a 2021 rokiem, to notowany wzrost wynosi niemal 80 tysięcy zgonów, z czego ponad 70 tysięcy to przypadki, gdzie zidentyfikowaną substancją odpowiedzialną za zgon był Fentanyl – syntetyczny opioid, który dziś stanowi tańszą i pięćdziesięciokrotnie silniejszą alternatywę dla heroiny (Ibid.). Warto przy tym zauważyć słabnący wzrost populacji Stanów Zjednoczonych na poziomie mniejszym niż 10% w stosunku do dekady (Census 2023). W roku 2022 w wyniku przedawkowania zmarło już 107,888 obywateli USA, z czego prawie 74 tysiące z powodu Fentanylu (Katz et al. 2023). Co więcej, lekarze wspierani przez koncerny farmaceutyczne coraz chętniej wypisują recepty na kolejne, bardzo silne opioidy, co generuje nową falę uzależnień. Wbrew przekonaniu o bezpieczeństwie stosowania opioidów, zależność fizyczna może wystąpić już po kilkukrotnym zastosowaniu, więc w celu uniknięcia nieprzyjemnych objawów abstynencyjnych, pacjenci nadal deklarują lekarzom wysoki poziom bólu, żeby otrzymać kolejną receptę. Kwitnie także rynek fałszywych recept, gdzie według DEA, w 6 na 10 przypadków ilość narkotyku w jednej pigułce jest potencjalnie śmiertelna. Fentanyl zalewa obecnie ulice USA i Kanady. Ponadto, jest często łączony z Ksylazyną, co generuje dodatkowe ryzyko zdrowotne. Między innymi tego typu kombinacja jest odpowiedzialna za zjawisko tak zwanych „Zombie” – narkomanów zastrykniętych w jednej pozie; którzy zupełnie utracili kontakt z rzeczywistością. Niestety jest to współczesna rzeczywistość wielu amerykańskich miast. Co więcej, Fentanyl pojawia się również w innych narkotykach. Kolejne badania substancji pojawiających się na czarnym rynku pokazują, że o ile kiedyś dostanie czystej substancji było raczej łatwe, tak obecnie spora część innych narkotyków zawiera również Fentanyl. Można więc przyjąć tę substancję w nieświadomy sposób, co niejednokrotnie skutkuje przedawkowaniem śmiertelnym (Yousif 2023).

Do tego należy dodać cały szereg innych substancji syntetycznych, które popularyzują się w wielu środowiskach – i problem ten dotyczy także Europy i innych kontynentów. Coraz trudniej mówić tu o zastosowaniach stricte medycznych. Wydaje się, że dominującą funkcją jest obecnie przede wszystkim funkcja hedonistyczna. Pomimo, że niektóre z syntetycznych substancji psychoaktywnych są badane pod kątem wykorzystania terapeutycznego, bądź już zostały dopuszczone do użycia medycznego lub weterynaryjnego (MDMA, Metylofenidat, Ketamina), to zauważa się niespotykany wzrost zainteresowania nimi. Nowa Zelandia zmaga się z syntetycznymi kannabinoidami.

dami, Europa przeżywa renesans Mefedronu (3-MMC) i podobnych w działaniu substancji, a w Afryce i Azji obserwuje się postępujący problem z opioidami, takimi jak Tramadol. Wciąż rośnie też podaż rozmaitych narkotyków. Na 618 zidentyfikowanych substancji w *World Drug Report* 87 było zupełnie nowych w stosunku do roku poprzedniego, a ich łączna liczba w 2022 roku wynosiła 1184 (Ibid. 2023). Co istotne, podczas gdy w krajach Zachodnich ich użycie raczej się stabilizuje, tak zauważalny wzrost spożycia odnotowuje się w Azji i Europie Wschodniej.

NOWY-STARY PROBLEM. PERSPEKTYWY NA PRZYSZŁOŚĆ

Przeglądając się historycznym i obecnym trendom w używaniu, nadużywaniu i dystrybucji rozmaitych substancji psychoaktywnych, możliwe wydaje się wyciągnięcie kilku wniosków. Człowiek od zarania dziejów używał substancji psychoaktywnych w różnych celach, zaś przez większość czasu były one pochodzenia roślinnego. To nie oznacza, że nie miał z nimi problemów, ponieważ już w starożytności zauważono negatywne skutki zdrowotne nadużywania – alkoholu czy opium. Z czasem zaczęto też mówić o uzależnieniu od tych substancji.

Zmieniał się również stosunek do tych substancji. Stosowano je leczniczo, religijnie, duchowo, jako pokarm, doping, oraz środek do osiągnięcia szeroko rozumianej transgresji. Jedną z takich funkcji było również osiągnięcie przyjemności, co można określić funkcją hedonistyczną. Z uwagi na różnorodne funkcje używania, a szczególnie w celach leczniczych, nie sposób oceniać to obcowanie w kategoriach moralnych. Choć potrzeba osiągnięcia odmiennych stanów świadomości wydaje się ogólnoludzka, gatunkowa, to spektrum relacji człowieka z substancjami jest zróżnicowane i mieści się między zupełną abstynencją czy wręcz awersją, aż po fascynację, afirmację i utratę kontroli – uzależnienie, zaś przyczyny wykształcenia tej czy innej relacji są złożone. To zróżnicowanie podejść do substancji zauważa się także w języku, kiedy nazywa się je lekami, narkotykami, używkami, reguluje ich status prawny oraz dyskutuje się nad ich przydatnością dla człowieka i społeczeństwa.

Na przełomie XIX i XX wieku nastąpił dynamiczny rozwój medycyny oraz technologii, co umożliwiło między innymi wyizolowanie substancji czynnych z materiału roślinnego. Od tego momentu używanie stawało się coraz bardziej niebezpieczne. Wynikało to z nowych schematów użytkowania, ale też intensyfikacji efektu odurzającego. U progu XX wieku panowało jeszcze przekonanie o zbawieniach właściwościach izolowanych substancji, co nie tylko zachęcało do poszukiwań kolejnych, ale wdrażano je do użycia na masową skalę. Negatywne następstwa takich działań zaczęły być coraz

bardziej dostrzegalne w kolejnych latach, co spowodowało postrzeganie stosowania narkotyków w kategorii nie tyle problemu indywidualnego, co społecznego. Z tą zmianą wiązało się kształtowanie i wprowadzanie polityk antynarkotykowych, które w dużej mierze opierały się na kryminalizacji, piętnowaniu, a dopiero w ostatnich latach na leczeniu, redukcji szkód, kontroli i normalizacji stosowania wybranych substancji.

Pomimo, że substancje syntetyczne, takie jak Metamfetamina, LSD-25, czy MDMA znane były już w pierwszej połowie XX wieku, to dopiero ostatnie dekady przyniosły niepokojący zwrot w charakterystyce i wzorcach stosowania substancji psychoaktywnych. Obecnie odnotowuje się znaczący, globalny wzrost konsumpcji substancji syntetycznych, uzależnień nimi spowodowanych oraz przestępstw powiązanych z ich obrotem i konsumpcją. Dotyczy to właściwie wszystkich znanych grup substancji: opioidów, dysocjantów, tryptamin i halucynogenów, środków sedatywnych (depresantów), kannabinoidów, stymulantów, i innych, o działaniu krzyżowym. W każdej z nich zauważa się rosnącą podaż syntetycznych analogów substancji pochodzenia naturalnego, które zaczynają dominować rynek narkotykowy. Regulacja tych trendów jest niezwykle trudna, by nie rzec nieskuteczna, zwłaszcza, że część substancji syntetycznych występuje w legalnym, medycznym obrocie. Korzyści finansowe czerpane z obrotu syntetykami czerpią więc tak nielegalne kartele, jak i koncerny farmaceutyczne, a rozwój technologii, medycyny i badań nad substancjami sprzyja popularyzacji ich stosowania. Jednakowoż pokusa szybkiego zysku materialnego może stwarzać ryzyko zaniedbań w obszarze badań i dokładnego poznania nowych środków chemicznych, a zwłaszcza w zakresie bezpieczeństwa ich stosowania. W odróżnieniu od substancji pochodzenia roślinnego, co do których użycia człowiek mógł ewolucyjnie wykształcić pewne mechanizmy adaptacyjne lub obronne, nowe środki syntetyczne są właściwie nieznane.

Głośnym echem odbiła się afera z OxyContinem, opioidową substancją masowo wdrażaną na rynek amerykański przez koncern Purdue Frederick, zarządzany przez rodzinę Sacklerów. Przedstawianie tej substancji jako bezpiecznej, przy równoczesnym korumpowaniu lekarzy, którzy masowo wystawiali recepty na każdy możliwy rodzaj bólu, spowodowało ogromny kryzys zdrowotny, z którym Stany Zjednoczone zmagają się do dziś. Świetnie opisuje to Patrick Keefe w niedawno przetłumaczonej na język polski bestsellerowej i nagradzanej książce, *Imperium bólu. Baronowie przemysłu farmaceutycznego* (2023). Ci, którzy mieli służyć obronie zdrowia, stali się jednym z najpotężniejszych karteli narkotykowych na świecie. Przykład ten ilustruje również to, jak niebezpieczna może być komercjalizacja rynku farmaceutycznego. W wyniku tego procesu, potencjalnie niebezpieczne substancje mogą być dostarczane na masową skalę zarówno przez nielegalnych dilerów, jak i zupełnie legalne firmy farmaceutyczne.

Zważywszy na skalę tego zjawiska – upowszechniania zarówno leków, jak i narkotyków syntetycznych, oraz towarzyszących temu negatywnych konsekwencji społecznych, jak przedawkowania śmiertelne, trafna wydaje się metafora „syntetycznego zwrotu”, a wręcz „syntetycznego szaleństwa”, w jakie wpada właśnie ludzkość. Jest to zjawisko dotąd w historii niespotykane, a jego następstwa mogą mieć długofalowe, a przede wszystkim dramatyczne skutki. Nadto, sprzyjają temu uwarunkowania socjoekonomiczne. Narkotyki syntetyczne, tańsze i łatwiejsze w produkcji, niosą potencjał bycia substancjami dla mas i nieuniknionym wydaje się postępowanie tego trendu. Dlatego oprócz regulacji i kontroli, szczególnie ważne dla minimalizacji potencjalnego ryzyka ich stosowania będzie rozwijanie odpowiedniej świadomości społecznej. To zaś wiąże się z gruntownym przebudowaniem dotychczasowej, wątej i fragmentarycznej świadomości społecznej w tym zakresie, a podstawowym narzędziem do osiągnięcia tego celu, oprócz długofalowych badań naukowych, jest po pierwsze – transdyscyplinarna debata publiczna, a po drugie – masowa i rzetelna edukacja. Edukacja zresztą staje się coraz bardziej ekskluzywnym dobrem, dlatego niewykluczone, że owa inherentna potrzeba obcowania z transgresją, przy obecnym rozwarstwieniu społecznym, coraz bardziej dychotomizującym biednych i bogatych, skutkować będzie słabo uświadomionym, autodestruktywnym używaniem narkotyków syntetycznych przez masy i ekskluzywnym, bezpieczniejszym używaniem substancji bliższych naturze przez klasy wyższe, zamożniejsze. To, co dzieje się obecnie, w 1992 roku przewidywał wspomniany na wstępie Terence McKenna. Pisał on, krytykując wojnę z narkotykami:

Jak dotąd mamy do czynienia z bardzo niską świadomością społeczną dotyczącą zagadnień związanych z narkotykami. Opinia społeczna jest przez to bardzo łatwo manipulowana. Sytuacja ta musi ulec zmianie. Powinniśmy nareszcie nauczyć się postępowania z substancjami psychoaktywnymi. W tym celu nie wolno sięgać po nieludzkie standardy zachowania, usiłujące za wszelką cenę wbić do świadomości zbiorowej metafory dominacji. Nie można ‘po prostu mówić nie’ narkotynom, ponieważ wywołuje to odwrotny skutek. Nie powinniśmy także poddać się pokusie rozmaitych rozkosznych wizji łatwej pogoni za przyjemnościami, przedstawiających hedonizm jako Święty Graal organizacji społecznej. (McKenna 2007, 258)

Uznając więc, że odwieczna relacja człowieka z substancjami psychoaktywnymi najprawdopodobniej będzie miała swój dalszy i zapewne bardziej niebezpieczny bieg, już teraz jednym z pierwszorzędnych zadań winno być wypracowanie nowych, racjonalnych i ugruntowanych w nauce rozwiązań profilaktycznych oraz terapeutycznych, co zresztą zostało zauważone przez rządy państw najdotkliwiej doświadczonych problemem narkotykowym. Wypracowanie konstruktywnych rozwiązań należy zapewne do przyszłości,

a postępująca medykalizacja społeczeństwa i upowszechnianie stosowania rozmaitych leków nie ułatwia tego zadania. Być może więc warto zrewidować także samo podejście społeczeństwa do substancji psychoaktywnych, co jawi się jako szczególnie pedagogiczne, edukacyjne zadanie na kolejne lata.

BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Africa, T.W. (1961). "The Opium Addiction of Marcus Aurelius" [w:] *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 22(1), s. 97-102.
- Anglicus, G. (1510). *Compendium medicine Gilberti anglici tam morboru[m] vniuersaliu[m] qua[m] particularium nondum medicis sed & cyrurgicis vtilissimum*. Lugduni, Impressum per Jacobum Sacconum, expensis Vincentii de Portonariis. Nr katalogowy 2247008R.
- Beroaldo, F. et al. (1494). *Opera agricolationum*. Bologna: Benedictus Hectoris.
- Blinken, A. (2023). "Secretary Antony J. Blinken Opening Remarks at a Virtual Ministerial Meeting to Launch the Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drugs". <https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-opening-remarks-at-a-virtual-ministerial-meeting-to-launch-the-global-coalition-to-address-synthetic-drugs/> [08.12.2023].
- Brinkhof, T. (2022). "The high life: Doing drugs with ancient Greeks and Romans" [w:] Big Think. <https://bigthink.com/the-past/history-of-drugs-ancient-greece-rome/> [16.11.2023].
- Census (2023). United States Census Bureau. *Historical Population Change Data (1910-2020)*. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/popchange-data-text.html> [31.12.2023].
- Courtwright, D.T. (2009). *Forces of habit drugs and the making of the modern world* (1 ed.). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Crocq, M.A. (2007). "Historical and cultural aspects of man's relationship with addictive drugs" [w:] *Dialogues Clin Neuroscience*, 9(4), s. 355-61. doi: 10.31887/DCNS.2007.9.4/macroq. PMID: 18286796; PMCID: PMC3202501.
- d'Abano, P. (1475). *Tractatus Petri de Abano de Remediis uenenorum*. The National Library of Medicine USA, nr katalogowy 9414474. <http://resource.nlm.nih.gov/9414474> [14.12.2023].
- Davies, J.B. (1998). *Myth of Addiction*. London: Routledge.
- Dodoens, R. (1578). *A nievve herball, or Historie of plantes: wherein is containned the whole discourse and perfect description of all sortes of herbes and plantes : their divers & sundry kindes ... and that not onely of those whiche are here growyng in this our countrie of Englande, but of all others also of forrayne realmes commonly used in physicke ; first set foorth in the Doutche or Almaigne tongue*. London: By Mr. Gerard Dewes, dwelling in Pawles Churchyarde at the signe of the Swanne. The National Library of Medicine USA, nr katalogowy 2232003R.
- Dz. U. (2023). *Wykaz substancji psychotropowych, środków odurzających oraz nowych substancji psychoaktywnych*, Dz.U.2022.1665 t.j.

- Erickson, C.K. / Wilcox, R.E. (2001). "Neurobiological Causes of Addiction" [w:] *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 1(3), s. 7-22, doi: 10.1300/J160v01n03_02.
- Escobedo, A. (2010). *The general history of drugs* (G. W. Robinette, Trans.). Valparaiso, Chile: Graffiti Milante Press.
- Faupel, C.E., Horowitz, A.M., & Weaver, G.S. (2010). *The sociology of American drug use*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Foucault, M. (2006). *History of Madness* (J. Murphy, & J. Khalfa, & J. Khalfa, Trans.; 1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203642603>.
- Gahlinger, P. (2004). *Illegal drugs: A complete guide to their history, chemistry, use, and abuse*. New York: Penguin.
- Gowing, L., Ali, R., Allsop, S., Marsden, J., Turf, E., West, R., Witton, J. (2015). "Global statistics on addictive behaviours: 2014 status report" [w:] *Global Statistics on Addiction*, 110(6), s. 904-919.
- Hollingshed S. (2019). "The Drug War in America: How Much Damage Has it Done?" *Honors College Theses*, 409.
- Jones, A.W. (2011). "Early drug discovery and the rise of pharmaceutical chemistry" [w:] *Drug Test Analysis*, 3(6), s. 337-44. doi: 10.1002/dta.301. PMID: 21698778.
- Katz, J., Sanger-Katz, M., Sullivan, E. (2023). "Some Key Facts About Fentanyl" [w:] New York Times / Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Center for Health Statistics. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/05/upshot/fentanyl-opioids-mexico-explainer.html> [15.12.2023].
- Keefe, P.R. (2023). *Imperium bólu. Baronowie przemysłu farmaceutycznego*. Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne.
- Liebig, J. (1832). "Ueber die Zersetzung des Alkohols durch Chlor" [w:] *Annalen der Pharmacie* 1(1), s. 31-32.
- Malczewski, A. / Jabłoński, P. (red.) (2020). *Raport o stanie narkomanii w Polsce*. Warszawa: Krajowe Biuro do Spraw Przeciwdziałania Narkomanii.
- Merlin, M. (2003). "Archeological Evidence for the Tradition of Psychoactive Plant Use in the Old World" [w:] *Economic Botany*, 57(3), s. 296-323.
- Musto, D.F. (1996). "Pathways of Addiction: Opportunities in Drug Abuse Research". Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Opportunities in Drug Abuse Research. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US).
- NCDAS (2023). National Center of Drug Abuse Statistics: <https://drugabusestatistics.org/> [30.11.2023].
- Niewiadomska, I. / Stanisławczyk, P. (2004). *Narkotyki*. Lublin: KUL.
- Ohler, N. (2021). *Trzecia Rzesza na haju. Narkotyki w hitlerowskich Niemczech*. Wydawnictwo Poznańskie.
- Pliniusz Starszy (1483). *Caii Plinii secundi Naturalis hystoriae liber primus*. Wenecja: Raynaldus de Novimagio.
- Pomara, C., Cassano, T., D'Errico, S., Bello, S., Romano, A.D., Riezzo, I., Serviddio, G. (2012). "Data available on the extent of cocaine use and dependence: biochemistry, pharmacologic effects and global burden of disease of cocaine abusers" [w:] *Current Medicinal Chemistry*, 19(33), s. 5647-57.

- Read, J., Bentall, R., Mosher, L., Dillon, J. (2013). *Models of Madness. Psychological, Social and Biological Approaches to Psychosis*. Routledge.
- Wesson, D.R. (2011). "Psychedelic drugs, hippie counterculture, speed and phenobarbital treatment of sedative-hypnotic dependence: a journey to the Haight Ashbury in the Sixties" [w:] *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 43(2), s. 153-64. doi: 10.1080/02791072.2011.587708. PMID: 21858961.
- Yousif, N. (2023). "How the fentanyl crisis' fourth wave has hit every corner of the US" [w:] BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-66826895> [15.12.2023].

History of Ideas Research Centre
Jagiellonian Library
22 Adam Mickiewicz Boulevard
30-059 Krakow
Poland

STORY OF
STORIA DELLE IDEE
Ideen-geschichte
istoria idei
Ideen-geschichte
histoire des idées
СТОРІЯ ІДЕЙ
historia de las ideas
STORIA IDEI
Ideen-geschichte
STORIA DELLE IDEE
Ideen-geschichte
histoire des idées
STORY OF IDEAS
STORY OF IDEAS
СТОРІЯ ІДЕЙ
STORIA IDEI
STORY OF IDEAS
Ideen-geschichte
Ideen-geschichte
dehistoire
histoire des idées
historia de las ideas
STORIA DELLE IDEE
СТОРІЯ ІДЕЙ

December 2023



History of Ideas
Research Centre
at the Jagiellonian University
in Krakow