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Rituals of the Tantric Traditions of South India – the Text (Canon, Rule) versus the Practice*

Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz
Institute of Oriental Studies
Jagiellonian University in Krakow

Abstract

The text concerns the Tantric traditions of India, especially the South Indian Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra. It addresses some issues connected with the relationship between canonical literature and actual religious practice as well as the reasons for doctrinal and ritualistic changes. Among these reasons were the activity of the great religious teachers and philosophers, but also the changing historical, social and economic situation of the community of followers and of the region in which the tradition was developing. Other reasons for these changes were the controversies as well as the rivalry of the groups representing different sects and priests' families active in the temples.

Słowa kluczowe: indyjskie tradycje tantryczne, literatura kanoniczna, religijne praktyki, zmiany i kontrowersje
Keywords: Tantric traditions of India, canonical literature, religious practice, changes and controversies

How do the traditions existing over a very long span of time refer to their canonical literature vis-à-vis actual religious practice? How do they adjust to differing religious, historical, social and economic situations? How do they deal with the more trivial problems and changes which result from interactions among different groups active within the religious communities and temples? I would like to explore these issues, basing my considerations on specific examples of particular religious traditions of India, namely Tantric ones.[1]

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[1] The issue of specific features of South Asian religious traditions and their rituals has been discussed by some scholars in the field of Indology, and in that respect worth mentioning are for example the volumes edited by J. Timm (*Texts in Context. Traditional Hermeneutics in South India*, New York 1992), by

The Tantric traditions of South India, especially of Tamilnadu, which are mainly Śaivasiddhānta as well as Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra and Vaikhānasa,[2] have over the course of their long history mostly referred to the vast body of religious and ritualistic literature, partially perceived as canonical. Nevertheless, they have also had to react to the problems resulting from the contemporary situation and new challenges. These new challenges were caused by new ideas connected with the appearance of new religious traditions and by new ideas within the old traditions themselves, but there were also many external and non-religious and non-doctrinal reasons. Indologists have already reflected on some of these issues, referring, for example, to the notions of canon and charisma, and pointing to the fact that charisma is embodied in charismatic personages. Stietencron writes, "Thus, while canon stands for permanence, charisma stands for innovation. This leads us directly into the dialectics of timelessness versus time-governed life, of transcendence versus worldly existence, of permanence versus change. They are opposing yet interacting principles that are constitutive for all religions and, indeed, for all human effort at creating and implementing order in a cosmos that is materially and biologically constituted and, therefore, equally liable to chaotic growth and decay. The canon, while attempting to preserve the essential, also fixes it in a particular historical expression: in the language of a certain region and time; in stories, examples, arguments and prescriptions that relate to that particular social and cultural context in which the charismatic founder of the movement or the redactors of the canon lived. The result is a snapshot that preserves for collective memory one moment out of many in cultural evolution."[3] Heinrich von Stietencron also draws attention to the very important role of commentaries, which are sometimes equally important as the canonical scriptures, or even become canons themselves.[4]

In the case of India, the specific features of the growth of religious and philosophical literature has to be considered. This developed through the growth of exegetical literature characteristic for its specific style and language, which made it possible to reconstruct the line of transmission of the texts and presented the opinions of subsequent generations of commentators. This specificity lies, for example, in recalling the opinions of the predecessors, both supporters as well as opponents of the commentator.[5] Thanks to this procedure, it was possible to trace the development of the ideas

J. Gengnagel, U. Huesken and S. Raman (*Words and Deeds. Hindu and Buddhist Rituals in South Asia*, Wiesbaden 2005), and by Huesken and Neubert (*Negotiating Rites*, New York 2012), etc.

[2] These have been developing since the second half of the first millennium AD.

[3] I mentioned this issue in my book, *Studia nad pańćaratrą*, cz. 2, *W poszukiwaniu tożsamości*, Kraków 2011 (p. 11), and in one of the footnotes (no. 9) I referred to the opinion of some scholars, among them Stietencron, and his essay entitled *Charisma and Canon: The Dynamics of Legitimization and Innovation in Indian Religions* [in:] *Charisma and Canon. Essays on the Religious History of the Indian Subcontinent*, V. Dalmia, A. Malinar, M. Christof (eds.), Oxford 2003, pp. 15–16.

[4] Further (*Charisma and Canon*..., pp. 15–16) Stietencron writes, "It is here that charisma comes again. The original message must be translated, transformed and made meaningful for a changed society and altered circumstances. The commentary now becomes an exegetic tool of prime importance, so much so that it too requires charismatic legitimization. Often it becomes canonic scripture in its own right, as evident in India, for instance, in the various Vedānta traditions."

[5] See for example M. Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, *Studia nad pańćaratrą. Tradycja i współczesność*..., chapter II.

as well as to identify the methods of argument used by a given commentator.[6] Due to its specific exegetical tradition, Indian culture addresses its canonical literature in a specific way – while commenting on the canon, it introduces new ideas and even enlarges the canon by adding new texts. Exegesis was connected with the direct transmission from the teacher (*guru*) to the disciple in the framework of the traditional line of transmission (*saṃpradāya*) as well as succession of teachers (*guruparaṃparā*). Its specific procedures mentioned above made it possible to introduce quite radical changes within a canon. Even in the case of the Vedic literature, exegetical literature permitted many speculations.[7]

The specific exegetical tradition of India was also strengthened by the peculiarity of Sanskrit language. Its richness and ambiguity led to the very prolific development of commentaries which modified many elements of the philosophical and religious traditions.[8]

In this process, an important role is played by Brahmins, for whom the commentary stands for a tool for their re-interpreting of the doctrines. This effort was undertaken in order to relate the tradition to the changing world. It is the commentary which has the ability and authority to introduce innovation.[9]

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[6] The need for more substantial usage of the traditional Indian hermeneutical perspective appears more and more frequently in the works of indologists. An interesting contribution to the research on the Indian exegesis and hermeneutics is the texts collected in the volume *Texts in Context. Traditional Hermeneutics in South India* edited by Jeffrey R. Timm (New York 1992). In the Introduction (p. 5), Timm writes, "The most recent scholarship on scripture, coupled with J.Z. Smith's urgings to listen to the voice of native exegetical traditions, has shaped each chapter in the present volume. In one manner or another, from the standpoint of varied interests and diverse methodological sensibilities, each author is committed to the view that traditional hermeneutical perspectives may no longer be ignored if something meaningful is to be said about sacred texts in the South Asian context. (...) In an important sense each chapter may be viewed as a collaboration with the native exegete, giving voice to our traditional counterparts who themselves engaged in a self-conscious reflection on the sacred words of their own text traditions."

[7] See for example W. Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection. Explorations in Indian Thought*, Albany 1991, chapter *The Idea of the Veda and the Identity of Hinduism*, p. 3.

[8] See for example M. Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, *O problemach przekładu indyjskich tekstów religijnych* [*Problems with translating the Indian religious texts*] [in:] *Oriental Languages in Translation*, *No 2, Second Cracow Conference May 20–21st, 2005*, B. Podolak, A. Zaborski, G. Zając (eds.), Kraków 2005.

[9] Christof writes in his essay entitled *The Legitimation of Textual Authority in the* Bhāgavatapurāṇa (*Charisma and Canon*..., pp. 63–64): 'Most traditional cultures have specialists whose task it is to interpret the canon and relate it to the changing world. In the Indian tradition, the prototype of these specialists is the brahmin. A central method of fulfilling his function is the writing of a commentary. The canonic commentary must relate the text to the world, mediate between the closure of a canon and the openness of reality – which it claims to interpret comprehensively. To put it differently, the canon is the result of an often arbitrary limitation whereas the commentary represents an effort to overcome this limitation by ingenuity on the part of an exegete, whose task it is to extend the domain of the closed canon over everything that is known or exists (...). The commentary, in turn, serves as the legitimizing basis for innovation. Thus, the conservation of meaning – if it does not end in dogmatism – may lead to new interpretations and new meanings."

See e.g. M. Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, *Studia nad pańćaratrą. Część 2*..., chapter II – *A few Remarks about Indian Religious Literature and Its Exegesis* [*Kilka uwag o indyjskiej literaturze religijnej i jej egzegezie*]; and also M. Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, *Studia nad pańćaratrą. Część 2*..., part II.

Apart from the commentaries, which address mostly theological, theoretical and doctrinal issues, many texts of more practical usage existed and still exist, namely different types of manuals called, for example, *paddhatis* or *prayogas*, in which more detailed descriptions of the ritualistic procedures were given. Appearing over a long span of time, they also document the changes in the ritualistic procedures.

In the case of the Pāñcarātra, one of the most important Tantric Vaishnava cults, which possibly has its roots in the North of India but flourishes especially in the South, several important factors had an impact on the further development of this tradition and influenced the relationship between scripture and actual practice. One of these factors was the need to prove Pāñcarātra's consistency with the brahmanical orthodoxy. Pāñcarātra therefore had to discuss the crucial theological points of its doctrine, explaining them in accordance with the main orthodox ideas. Apart from addressing these issues in the Pāñcarātrika texts themselves, namely in the canonical *saṃhitā*s, Pāñcarātra found its exponents and supporters among the great religious teachers and philosophers active from around the 10th century AD, especially Yamunācārya, Rāmānuja and Vedānta Deśika. In modern times, the discussion was undertaken by the famous South Indian Śrīvaiṣṇava pundit, Uttamūr Virarāghavācārya.[10] These authors tried to explain and prove that the Pāñcarātra is as authoritative as the unquestionably orthodox Smārta and Vedic traditions.

I have already referred to this issue, for example in my paper presented at the *World Sanskrit Conference* in New Delhi in 2012, when I talked about the concept of the *Ekāyanaveda* (*The Only Veda*, *The Veda of the One*). This notion is mentioned several times in the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātrika sources as well as in the texts that undertake the problem of the authority of the Pāñcarātra tradition. It is the concept of the lost, authoritative Veda which was the source for the Pāñcarātra and its literature, *saṃhitā*s. This concept was used to strengthen the position of the Pāñcarātra, especially where the objections formulated by the orthodox tradition are concerned. The discussion begun with the Śaṅkara's critique based on the statement of the Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtra*s, expressing doubts over the status of the Pāñcarātra. Śaṅkara commented on four particular *sūtra*s[11] and presented several objections concerning the relationship of the highest god and his forms. These objections were subsequently discussed and removed by later thinkers, especially by South Indian philosophers, Śrīvaiṣṇavācāryas, beginning from one of the first, Yāmunamuni (Yāmunācārya), who commented on this issue in the Āgamaprāmāṇya (*Authoritativeness of* āgama [*texts*]; 10th/11th c. AD). The subject was then continued by Rāmānuja in his Śrībhāṣya (12th c. AD), and then Veṅkaṭanātha in his *Pāñcarātrarakṣā* (*Defence of Pāñcarātra*; 13th/14th c. AD). Nevertheless, the critical opinion expressed by Bādarāyaṇa in his *Brahmasūtra*s (usually dated to c. 200 BC–200 AD)[12] and then undertaken by

[10] See e.g. M. Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, *Studia nad pańćaratrą. Część 2*..., part I.

[11] 1) *Utpattyasaṃbhavādhikaraṇa*, Tarka-pāda, *Vedāntasūtra* II.2.42–45: *utpattyasaṃbhavāt*, 2) *na ca kartuḥ karaṇam* 3) *vijñānādibhāve vā tadapratiṣedhaḥ* and 4) *vipratiṣedhāt*. About this discussion see e.g. M. Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, *Studia nad pańćaratrą. Część 2*..., part I.

[12] The date of the *Brahmasūtra* is of import inasmuch as the appearance of the reference to the Pāñcarātra attests that the tradition had already been known and worthy of the attention of Bādarāyaṇa.

Śaṅkara, prejudiced later attitudes towards Pāñcarātra. Even in modern times, the discussion was taken up by traditional pundits connected with the Śrīvaiṣṇava milieu as well as, in a way, by Indologists commenting on the discussion of Indian philosophers and religious teachers.[13]

The changes, as we said, were also connected with charismatic individuals. An important input into the theology, but also the ritual of the Pāñcarātrikas is connected with the activities of religious teachers and philosophers, among them the abovementioned Śrīvaiṣṇavācāryas. They built a theological system which continues to dominate among the Vaiṣṇavas of South India even today. Apart from that, they added to the development of the temple cult through their personal involvement in temple life – they not only visited several important Vaiṣṇava shrines, but were the priests and organisers of the religious communities based around particular temples. Such was the case of Rāmānuja, who spent many years in Śrīraṅgam, and Melkoṭe or Vedāntadeśika, active in Kāñcīpūram and in Śrīraṅgam.

The case of Rāmānuja is especially important, since it was he who reorganised the temple life and temple routine of many South Indian temples, introducing the Pāñcarātrika ritual as dominant. He was a great reformer of the temple life of the one of the biggest and most influential temples of India, the Śrī Raṅganātha temple in Śrīraṅgam. His reforms were described, for example, in the temple chronicle *Koil Olugu*. Rāmānuja structured temple life by organising various groups of temple functionaries: priests, musicians, umbrella holders, fan and lamp holders, etc. He also classified the groups of Brahmins connected with the temple and described their rights and obligations there. The rules introduced by Rāmānuja in this particular temple created the point of reference for subsequent generations.[14] As Jagannathan observes, "No other temple of Viṣṇu has an administrative system so complex and so meticulously attentive to the procedural details of the method of worship as has been in vogue there. The credit for it goes entirely to Rāmānuja."[15]

Tradition has it that Rāmānuja was invited by another distinguished Śrī ācārya, Yāmunamuni, to take a pontifical seat in the Srīraṅgam temple. Rāmānuja, known there under the name of Uḍayavar, from the very beginning started to reform the temple administration. Though he had to overcome the problems and dissatisfaction of the existing temple staff, he managed to reorganise temple life completely and, as Jagannathan writes, "It is no exaggeration to say that it could have taken thousand years perhaps for a legislative institution to accomplish through enactment of laws and regulations and proper implementation – whatever Rāmānuja, a single dynamic religious administrator had achieved within his own lifetime."[16]

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[13] In all these discussions the notion of *Ekāyanavedaḥ* has been one of the most important ones, and in the 20th century it was undertaken in the work of the knowledgeable pundit Uttamūr Vīrarāghavācārya, presented in his text entitled *Ekāyanavedaḥ*, published in his volume entitled *Śrīpañcarātrapāramyam* (U. Viraraghavacharya, *Śrīpāñcarātraparāmya*, L. Bhatta (ed.), Tirupati 1991).

[14] S. Jagannathan, *Impact of* Śrī *Rāmānujācārya on Temple Worship*, Delhi 1994, especially the chapter *Temple Organisation by Rāmānuja, Namely the Four Temples* – Śrīraṅgam, *Tirupati, Melkoṭe and Kāñcīpuram*; also the *Nityagrantha* of Rāmānuja.

[15] *Ibidem*, p. 92.

[16] *Ibidem*.

Apart from administration, Rāmānuja introduced the Pāñcarātra ritualistic scheme as obligatory, instead of previous Vaikhānasa rituals. In Srīraṅgam the temple ritual was then performed according to the prescripts of the *Pārameśvarasaṃhitā*, one of the crucial Pāñcarātrika texts. Rāmānuja also put in order and prescribed a specific system of daily rites for the individual Vaiṣṇava devotees in his work called the *Nityagrantha*.[17]

As for the temple rituals, it was Rāmānuja who introduced, not without objections, the recitation festival – *adhyayanotsava* – and in his time the recitation of the *Divyaprabandham*, a collection of Tamil hymns of Ālvārs, was introduced. At this time, the images of Nammālvār and other saints were established in the temples and the *gośālas* (cowsheds) for constant supply of milk for offerings were created on the temple premises. Rāmānuja also added to the temple organisation of another important South Indian Vaishnava temple – Varadarājā in Kāñcīpuram.[18] Therefore, he is without doubt one of the most important figures in the history of the development of the temple cult of the Vaiṣṇavas in the South of India.

Apart from this field, namely the activity of great religious teachers and reformers, the other reason for modifications and adaptations was the mutual relationship between the canon, represented in the case of the Pāñcarātra by a vast body of texts called *saṃhitā*s,[19] and practice, which includes the way in which the canonical rules were practically applied to the ritual. This aspect is also connected with the changing religious, but also historical/political and economic, situation. Tantric traditions often had to adjust to the more orthodox milieu which resulted in a diminished role of purely Tantric rites, especially of the *kāmya* type, which were intentional rituals performed for the accomplishment of supernatural powers. The texts sometimes even abandon the portions describing such rites, or change the meaning of them, and such was probably the case of the *narasiṃhakalpa* described in the *Sātvatasaṃhitā*. The rite, which was probably originally connected with the accomplishment of the supernatural powers and was available for advanced devotees, with the passage of time was transformed into an element of the regular initiation.[20] This process of adjusting

[17] See e.g. M. Rastelli, *Unaltered Ritual in Transformed Religion. The pūjā According to Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā 28 and the Nityagrantha* [in:] *Words and Deeds. Hindu and Buddhist Rituals in South Asia*, J. Gengnagel, U. Huesken, S. Raman (eds.), Wiesbaden 2005, pp. 115–152.

[18] Some research on the ritualistic system of this temple as well as the way of negotiating and introducing ritualistic changes has been done by my colleague Ute Huesken; see e.g. U. Huesken, *Pavitrotsava, Rectifying Ritual Lapses* [in:] *Jaina-Itihāsa-Ratna. Festschrift für Gustav Roth zum 90. Geburtstag*, U. Huesken, P. Kieffer-Puelz, A. Peters (eds.), Indica et Tibetica 47, Marburg 2006, pp. 265–281 and U. Huesken, *Contested Ritual Property. Conflicts over Correct Ritual Procedures in a South Indian Viṣṇu Temple* [in:] *When Rituals Go Wrong. Mistakes, Failure, and the Dynamics of Ritual*, U. Huesken (ed.), Leiden 2007, pp. 273–290.

[19] Tradition speaks of more than 200 texts of this class. Apart from Smith's catalogue of 1978, the most recent catalogue is that of Sadhu Paramapurushdas: *Catalogue of Pañcarātra Saṃhitā*, Sadhu Paramapurushdas, Sadhu Shrutiprakashdas (eds.), Amdavad 2002.

[20] See e.g. E. Dębicka-Borek, *Ritual Worship of the mantra as depicted in the Sātvatasaṃhitā* [in:] „Cracow Indological Studies" 2013, no. 15, pp. 167–207 and *idem*, *To Borrow or not to Borrow? Some Remarks on vaibhavīyanarasiṃhakalpa of Sātvatasaṃhitā*, „Journal of Indian Philosophy" 2014, doi:10.1007/s10781-014-9248-1).

to more orthodox rules can be observed in the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātrika sources, which, with the passage of time, lost their Tantric flavour, at the same time reinforcing a devotional, *bhakti* element.[21]

The changes in the ritualistic procedures, and sometimes incoherence with the canonical sources, also resulted from the interactions and rivalry of different groups active within the temples. Examples of such interactions might be the Vaṭakalai and Teṅkalai controversies, as well as the rivalry of the groups representing various priests' families.

The two sects within South Indian Vaiṣnava tradition (Śrīvaiṣṇava, Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra), namely Vaṭakalai and Teṅkalai, though referring to the same body of scripture, differentiate mostly with respect to their understanding of the attitude of the devotee towards god, which is described in two terms: *bhakti* and *prapatti*. The first term (*bhakti*) describes the devotional attitude, yet this implies the active engagement of the devotee in worshipping god and accomplishing his grace. Such an attitude, characteristic of the Vaṭakalai, is described as an analogy to the baby monkey, which has to cling firmly to his mother (*markata nyāya*). The other attitude was that with the dominant element of *prapatti*, namely total dedication to god, with a strong feeling of the devotee's own imperfection. It is characteristic of the Teṅkalai sect, and described as the analogy to the cat (*marjara nyāya*), which refers to the position of the kitten being always assisted and carried by its mother, despite its own efforts.

The predilection to the Tamil religious hymns of the Ālvārs, very emotional in their attitude towards god, and their more frequent usage in the ritual, differentiate Teṅkalais from Vaṭakalais, who have a predilection to Vedic texts and using mantras in the ritual; they both, however, refer to the same canonical Āgama texts. Nevertheless, between these two sects there is a long-lasting rivalry. Huesken describes some examples of such rivalry in the case of the Śrī Varādarāja temple in Kāñcīpuram. Referring to the rectifying rite – *pavitrotsava* – she writes about the dissonance between text and performance. Though the temple uses the *Pādmasaṃhitā* as the main scripture, the actual performance of some elements of the rite, for example the way the *pavitra*s (holy threads) are prepared, is different from what the scripture says. However, such deviations are possible only if done by ritual specialists.[22] Huesken writes, "With regard to the ritual specialists it is safe to say that in many cases it is only the performer himself or herself who decides whether a ritual – or a part of it – is 'correct' or 'distorted'. Instances of unsanctioned 'deviations from the norm' on the part of the performer can also be viewed as pointing to the core of the ritual specialists' ritual competence: only they are in the position to 'make the right mistakes'. It is largely through their legitimate deviation from the norm that their superior ritual authority is made apparent."[23]

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[21] See e.g. M. Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, *Pāñcarātra Scripture in the Process of Change. A Study of the Paramasaṃhitā*, Vienna 2003.

[22] U. Huesken, *Pavitrotsava...*, p. 270.

[23] *Idem*, *Contested Ritual Property. Conflicts over Correct Ritual Procedures in a South Indian Viṣṇu Temple* [in:] *When Rituals Go Wrong. Mistakes, Failure, and the Dynamics of Ritual*, U. Huesken (ed.), Leiden 2007, pp. 273–290, p. 272.

Huesken also speaks about additional Vedic recitations, not prescribed in the scripture, but giving an opportunity to appear in the ritual of the representatives of the Vaṭakalai community involved in the temple life. She closely observes the problem of the existence of the community of Teṅkalais in the temple dominated by the Vaṭakalais, and presents not only the problems of "deviations" and "failures" in the ritualistic procedures, but also the complicated net of "shares" (*paṅku*) and honours (*mariyāṭai*) connected with the redistribution of the temple property.[24]

The description of the fascinating network of mutual relations of the two groups and the ways they try to solve the contentious, often ritualistic points which can be found in Huesken's articles introduces us to the field of the internal situation within the temple community. The problems of organisation of the temples, distribution of the property and negotiations concerning shares and rights were also the subjects of works not only of indologists, but also sociologists and cultural anthropologists, for example Appadurai and Breckenridge. [25]

Sometimes the only way to solve the conflicts within the temples is to submit cases to court. Also worth noticing is the fact that the South Indian temples are nowadays under the supervision of the government operating through the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department, and that these cases concern the interests of many temple functionaries and families traditionally active in the temples for many centuries. Court cases connected with ritualistic issues are a not unusual element of the religious and temple life in South India. When the conflicts cannot be solved by the religious leaders – ācārya*s* – especially in modern times, they become regular court cases. Some examples are described by Ramaswamy,[26] who refers for example to several cases from Kāñcīpuram. While in the past it was often the ruler who decided on debatable cases, in the 19th century the British decided to introduce their rules and bureaucracy into temples, although this was only for about 20 years. The cases were then sent to the court and became subjects to the British judicial system.

One of the early court cases referred to by Ramaswamy is the Krishnaswami Tatacharyar and others versus Krishnamacharyar and others (1882). This concerns the right of a particular group of Brahmins active in the Śrīvaṣṇava community of the Varadarāja temple in Kāñcīpuram, namely Tatacharyas. This particular group claims the right to recite the hymns of Tamil saints, Ālvārs from time immemorial. This case also concerned the formulae which commence the recitation. However, it was not just the problem of depriving Tatacharyas, being Teṅkalais, of their hereditary right of recitation of the particular texts, but was also connected with a particular income that was a result of this office. Though the court, after several appeals, stated that it was not its role to interfere in religious tenets and to regulate religious ceremonies, it nevertheless ascribed to Tatacharyas the right they claimed and mandated

[24] U. Huesken, *Pavitrotsava...*, p. 270.

[25] A. Appadurai, *The Past as a Scarce Resource* [in:] *Temples, Kings and Peasants: Perceptions of South India's Past*, G.W. Spencer (ed.), Madras 1987, pp. 196–221, A. Appadurai, C. Breckenridge, *The South Indian Temple: Authority, Honor and Redistribution* [in:] "Contributions to Indian Sociology", (n.s.) vol. 10/2, pp. 187–211.

[26] T.S. Ramaswamy, *Juridical Solutions for Temple Disputes. A Critical Analysis*, Chennai 2003.

Vaṭakalais not to interfere with Teṅkalais in the recital of the mantras and Tamil *Prabandham*.

There were, however, also court cases in which the representatives of the same family were rivals, and Ramaswamy gives the example of the 1912 case between two Tatacharya groups quarrelling about some particular hereditary rights. The solution of the court, following the demands of many representatives of the community of devotees connected with the Varadarāja temple, was to establish a board of supervision consisting of three people from different groups.

To conclude: Tantric traditions, for example those developing in the South of India, during their long history had to face problems arising from the mutual relationship of the canonical sources and their actual, practical application to religious life, especially to the ritualistic system. The traditions were subject to many changes documenting the changing situation in which they existed. The changes thus concern scriptures, but also the temple cult, which developed as the most typical element of South Indian religiosity. The management of the big religious institutions, such as South Indian temples, is the task joining purely religious and theological issues with the more practical needs of many individuals active in temple life. The religious needs, adjustment and allegiance to the theological ideas and canonical literature, had and still have to be harmonised with the needs of the changing culture and society. Smooth management, guaranteeing the proper functioning of the temples, on the one hand demands that the scriptures be followed, but on the other it requires that the obligations and rights of the priests, administrative functionaries and various kinds of devotees with different, hereditary roles and rights be dealt with carefully and acknowledged.

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The Quasi-Linguistic Structure of Iyengar Yoga Āsana Practice. An Analysis from the Perspective of Cognitive Grammar

Matylda Ciołkosz
Institute for the Study of Religion
Jagiellonian University

Abstract

The objective of the paper is to draw attention to the possible relevance of the categories of cognitive linguistics for the structural analysis of ritual. Taking the Iyengar Yoga *āsana* practice as an example, the author proposes to treat it as a quasi-linguistic phenomenon and analyses the symbolic structure of its elements (single *āsanāni*). The tools applied in this pursuit are the basic categories of Langacker's cognitive grammar. By pointing to the key tenets of cognitive linguistics, including the claim concerning the symbolic (and, thus, semantic) nature of grammar, the author attempts to rephrase Staal's thesis concerning the meaninglessness of ritual to accommodate it to the cognitive (or, more precisely, enactive) paradigm. She suggests a possible relationship between the schematic symbolic nature of ritual and the specific symbolic nature of doctrine. After some of the most salient linguistic phenomena within Iyengar Yoga *āsana* practice are described, their coherence with certain doctrinal interpretations is briefly discussed.

Słowa kluczowe: Iyengar, nowoczesna joga posturalna, asana, enaktywizm, gramatyka kognitywna, rytuał
Keywords: Iyengar, Modern Postural Yoga, *āsana*, enactivism, cognitive grammar, ritual

The objective of the present paper is to indicate the possible relevance of the categories of cognitive linguistics for the structural analysis of ritual. The analysed ritual is the *āsana* practice in so-called Iyengar Yoga. The main thesis, proven through the application of the categories of Ronald Langacker's cognitive grammar, is that this practice is a structured phenomenon, and that its structure corresponds to the structure of language. Treating yogic postures and their sequences as quasi-linguistic, symbolic phenomena opens up perspectives for the study of the relationship between

ritual structure and doctrinal interpretations. Finding coherence between the schematic semantic structures underlying Iyengar Yoga *āsana* practice and the specific semantic structures of Iyengar's exposition of the categories of *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* may point to the significance of the embodied experience acquired during practice for the understanding of some of the most basic Indian religio-philosophical notions.

The main tenets of cognitive linguistics

Cognitive linguistics has garnered attention in recent years as a useful analytical device within the study of religions.[1] However, it seems that the main focus so far has been the cognitive theory of conceptual metaphor, as proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson.[2] Apparently, the ingenuity and universal applicability of this theory has rendered it so popular that some outside observers come to equate it with cognitive linguistics in general. It must be stressed, however, that the cognitive theory of tropes is not the very core of cognitive linguistics, but rather a necessary implication of its most basic tenets.

At the core of the cognitive approach to language is the observation that all linguistic meaning is built upon the embodied experience. As all cognitive structures are derived from recurrent sensorimotor patterns,[3] also linguistic structures are constructed and interpreted based on these patterns. The most rudimentary experience of the body – its orientation in and movement through space, its perceptive activity and interaction with the environment – provides the basis for language. Linguistic expressions are assembled from and interpreted through embodied schematic models. Mark Johnson calls the schematic units of embodied meaning *image schemata.*[4] They are recurrent structures of perceptive and motor programmes abstracted from everyday experience, in the form of general templates. They are complex, *i.e.* made up of parts and relations. They are also malleable, so they may be modified and filled with any amount of detail to create an infinite number of what Johnson calls "rich images". For example, a schema of an object moving into a container may be applied to interpret and model an expression such as "John entered the room", but also "an infection entered the wound" or "the two countries entered into an agreement".

The other important assumption of the cognitive approach towards language is that grammar is semantic. According to Langacker, all grammatical categories – starting with such basics as a noun or a verb and ending with composite structures – are grounded in the embodied experience, based on the embodied schemata, and thus

[1] See *e.g.* J. Jurewicz, *Kosmogonia Rygwedy. Myśl i metafora,* Warszawa 2001; E. Slingerland, *Effortless Action. Wu-wei as Conceptual Metaphor and Spiritual Ideal in Early China*, Oxford 2003.

[2] G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago 1980.

[3] This is the main claim of an approach referred to by Varela *et al.* as "enactive". See F.J. Varela, E.T. Thompson, E. Rosch, *The Embodied Mind. Cognitive Science and Human Experience*, Cambridge 1993, p. 172 ff.

[4] M. Johnson, *The Body in the Mind. The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination and Reason*, Chicago 1987, pp. 18–40.

meaningful.[5] For the present discussion, the schematic background of some rudimentary grammatical phenomena is of importance.[6] A noun, for instance, is schematically represented by what Langacker refers to as a "thing". Prototypically it is a material object, but generally it is any product of the mental capacity of grouping and reification. By virtue of this capacity, a notion as abstract as "yoga" can be construed as a "thing", being a delimited set of practices based on a delimited set of religio-philosophical assumptions and represented as a group of entities bound together on the basis of their historical, cultural and phenomenological tangency. The schema for a verb, on the other hand, is a "process", *i.e.* a set of relations between "things" represented sequentially within the temporal domain. Prototypically it is a non-material interaction associated with transfer of energy. A distinction needs to be made between perfective verbs, for which the construed relation is heterogenous (thus changing through time) and imperfectives, for which this relation remains unaltered (is homogenous). A participle, though a derivative of the verb, differs significantly in its schematic representation. Though a process, it is reified and construed in a summary fashion within a bounded temporal scope. Finally, a preposition is also represented summarily as a heterogenous (*into, upwards*) or homogenous (*in, up*) relation. It is, however, construed independently of the temporal domain.

Frits Staal, language and ritual

One of the scholars who postulated similarity between the structure of language and that of ritual was Frits Staal. In his analysis of the Vedic ritual of *Agnicayana*, Staal applied the categories of Noam Chomsky's generative grammar.[7] He proposed understanding ritual as a hierarchical rather than linear structure, in which in a more complex unit smaller ritual structures are embedded, consisting of even smaller singular rites. He claimed that the alterations of smaller units within larger systems can be described with reference to Chomsky's transformational rules.

Staal's most significant thesis is that ritual is essentially asemantic.[8] Being a form of orthopraxy rather than an expression of orthodoxy, it is devoid of any original external semantic references. Just like music, it is pure structure, pure syntax.[9] Thus, it cannot convey meaning directly, and any doctrinal references to it are made *ex post facto* in an arbitrary manner. If the author of the present paper represents this claim correctly, according to Staal the meaningful doctrine and the meaningless ritual constitute two originally independent domains, connected in a vague manner only through *post hoc* rationalisation.

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[5] R. Langacker, *Cognitive Grammar. A Basic Introduction*, Oxford 2008, p. 4.

[6] *Ibidem*, pp. 112 ff.

[7] F. Staal, *Rituals and Mantras. Rules without Meaning*, Delhi 1996, pp. 52–60, 85–114.

[8] *Ibidem*, pp. 131–140.

[9] *Ibidem*, pp. 165–190.

The foregoing thesis is in line with the assumption that syntax precedes semantics.[10] This assumption, however, is not upheld by the proponents of cognitive grammar, who postulate that (embodied) meaning precedes syntax, rendering it meaningful. Thus, if the categories of cognitive grammar are to be applied to the analysis of ritual, Staal's thesis needs to be rephrased. In fact, it seems that what Staal refers to as "meaningless" may be considered entirely "meaningful" from the standpoint of cognitive grammar. If a discrepancy between the standpoints of Staal and Langacker arises, it is mainly due to the differences in the definitions of the term.

By saying that ritual is meaningless, Staal claims that it is self-contained and does not bear any direct correspondence to doctrinal notions. He does, however, coin the term "structural meaning", referring to the internal syntactic relations between the elements of ritual.[11] It seems that this term is relatively close to the concept of meaning adapted by Langacker. According to the latter, being semantic means being represented conceptually in relation to embodied schemata. Thus a conceptual structure grounded in the embodied experience is a meaningful one. It seems obvious that all ritual actions, in order to be performed, need to be represented conceptually. Thus, from the standpoint of cognitive grammar, they need to be considered meaningful.

It seems that the difference between ritual and doctrine is not so much the difference between meaninglessness and meaningfulness as that between schematicity and specificity of meaning. According to Langacker, in language there exists no clear distinction between grammar and lexicon.[12] Pure grammar and pure lexicon are rather two poles of a continuum, with schematic representations situated at the grammatical and specific representations at the lexical pole. The study of yoga rituals may lead one to suppose that the interpretative activity taking place within religious traditions might also form a continuum, with a "pure ritual" pole at one end and a "pure doctrine" pole at the other. The meaning situated at the ritual pole would be entirely schematic, limited to the raw embodied schemata abstracted from ritual actions. The meaning at the doctrinal pole would be specific, based on rich images, mostly of a metaphorical character. However, just as many composite linguistic expressions are situated between pure lexicon and pure grammar,[13] most religious representations probably arise somewhere between the purely schematic conceptualisations of ritual actions and the rich, metaphorical doctrinal notions. This means, on the one hand, that the schemata abstracted from the embodied experience acquired during ritual may enforce better grasping of doctrinal representations by providing their schematic basis, and, on the other hand, that doctrinal notions may render the embodied ritual experience more salient. Such dialectic presupposes mutual coherence between the schematic meaning of ritual and the specific meaning of doctrine. Whether such coherence exists between the performance of *Agnicayana* and the "*ad hoc"*, "arbitrary" meanings ascribed to it requires a careful study. So far it has been confirmed that coherence can be traced between the schematic structure of Iyengar Yoga *āsana* prac-

[10] *Ibidem*, p. 112.

[11] *Ibidem*, p. 174 ff.

[12] R. Langacker, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

[13] *Ibidem*, p. 18 ff.

tice and the metaphorical interpretation of the categories of *Pātañjala Yoga* cultivated within the Iyengar tradition. This coherence shall be touched upon on the following pages.

The Iyengar Yoga *āsana* practice

The studied phenomenon, Iyengar Yoga (IY), constitutes part of a global, originally Anglophone movement referred to by Elizabeth de Michelis as Modern Postural Yoga.[14] This movement was initiated at the beginning of the 20th century, its main focus the practice of sequences of yogic postures (*āsana*) and breath-control techniques (*prāṇāyāma*). It developed under the influence of the European physical culture movement, imported to colonial India at the beginning of the 20th century.[15] Its loose doctrinal references, though grounded in *Sāṃkhya-Yoga Darśana*, are strongly influenced by Neo-Vedanta and Swami Vivekananda's interpretation of yoga.[16]

The founder of IY was B.K.S. Iyengar (1918–2014), a vishnuite brahmin born in Karnataka, initially a student of the yogi Tirumalai Krishnamacharya in Mysore. He spent most of his life teaching in Pune, Maharashtra, where in 1975 he founded the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute (RIMYI). In the 1950s he started teaching yoga abroad. He published several influential books, including a translation of the *Yoga Sūtra* with his own commentaries.[17]

Nowadays, the global IY community brings together thousands of enthusiasts worldwide. It has a loose structure, and the involvement of most practitioners does not go much further than attending group practice a few times a week. However, a comprehensive training programme for (numerous) teachers has functioned for decades, involving arduous, life-long practice under the supervision of elder teachers, regular visits to the RIMYI and a centrally regulated system of examinations. The more experienced teachers are expected to be familiar not only with the method of *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* practice, but also with elements of Indian religio-philosophical systems.

A few features of the IY *āsana* practice are of particular significance. The first involves treating *āsana* not as an indivisible whole, but as a syntagm. Each posture is understood as a composite system comprising smaller units, *i.e.* precisely described configurations of minute body parts. These may include relations between different body parts (*e.g.* "the skin from the outer sides of the neck [moving] into the cervical vertebra"[18]), between the body part and the body *in a broad sense* (*e.g.* moving the "top outer thigh into the body"[19]) or between the body part and its surroundings

[14] E. de Michelis, *Modern Yoga and the Western Esoteric Tradition*, London 2004, p. 187 ff.

[15] M. Singleton, *Yoga Body. The Origin of Modern Posture Practice*, Oxford 2010, p. 81 ff.

[16] E. de Michelis, *op.cit.*, p. 208 ff.

[17] B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*, New Delhi 2005 (first edition: 1993).

[18] From the transcript of a class taught by Lois Steinberg, an advanced IY teacher, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kvOB18HPr4 [accessed: 14.11.2014].

[19] From the transcript of a class taught by Geeta Iyengar, an advanced IY teacher and B.K.S. Iyengar's daughter, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyK7zmrRcwo [accessed: 14.11.2014].

(e.g. "thighs back and up").[20] For the sake of brevity and clarity, from now on these configurations shall be referred to as *somemes*. The same somemes are repeated in different postures in different configurations, which makes them slightly resemble phonemes. However, unlike phonemes as understood by structuralists, somemes are not asemantic (being direct applications of embodied schemata) and do not form distinctive oppositions.

Secondly, different *āsanāni* can be grouped in paradigmatic sets and can be combined into larger syntagms. The former are groups of postures with similar someme configurations (*e.g.* standing postures, backbends, turns, forward bends, inversions *etc.*). The latter are structured sequences of postures, arranged according to a vast set of rules. It must be noted that no limited set of sequences exists. As the rules of arranging the postures are general and concern relations either between somemes or between entire paradigmatic sets of postures rather than relations between particular *āsanāni*, the number of possible correct *āsana* configurations is practically infinite.

Finally, the *āsana* practice is interpreted in the categories of *Sāṃkhya-Yoga Darśana*. Iyengar's chief claim is that all the eight limbs (*aṣṭāṅgāni*) of *Pātañjala Yoga* (*yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi*) are realised within *āsana.*[21] Also other categories of the *Yoga Sūtra* (*e.g.* the concept of *citta*) are interpreted and explained with reference to the experience of *āsana* practice.

Āsana practice as a ritual

So far the category of "ritual" has been referred to several times. As yet, though, there has been no explanation of how exactly it is understood and why IY *āsana* practice should belong to it. Even though the ritual character of *Agnicayana* might be self-explanatory to most scholars, calling what seems to be a secular and purely physical[22] activity a ritual might raise some eyebrows. For the purpose of the present paper the author has adapted a tentative definition of ritual, taking into consideration the findings of Staal and the definition of religion as proposed by Scott Atran,[23] with some amendments. Ritual is thus considered *a recurrent, structured, temporally and spatially bounded activity of selected members of a community, consisting of formally restricted motor and speech acts, bearing reference to a theory of universal human existential anxieties such as death, suffering, deception etc. shared by this community*. This definition seems both broad and narrow enough, and IY *āsana* practice fits within it. It is a recurrent, structured (as the forthcoming paragraphs will show),

[20] From the transcript of a class taught by Carrie Owerko, an intermediate level IY teacher, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCFOztW7j1s [accessed: 14.11.2014].

[21] B.K.S. Iyengar, *Yoga Vṛkṣa, The Tree of Yoga*, Oxford 1988, p. 51–76.

[22] One might expect Staal, in light of his conviction that ritual activity has no original doctrinal reference, to have no problem with a ritual being "purely physical". The enactive paradigm, with its focus on the category of embodiment, does not underestimate the symbolic significance of "purely physical" actions either.

[23] S. Atran, *In Gods We Trust. The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion*, Oxford 2002, p. 4.

temporally and spatially bounded activity. Its practitioners constitute a community (though a loosely structured one). The group of community members participating in a single practice may range from one to a few hundred. Iyengar's own interpretation of the cosmology and anthropology of the *Yoga Sūtra* provides the "theory of universal human existential anxieties" to which the practice refers.

The prototypical form of an IY *āsana* ritual includes a short seated meditation and a chant, mutual performance of a sequence of *āsanāni* guided by a teacher and passive relaxation. Prototypically, each *āsana* from the sequence is performed by a teacher or an assistant facing the group of practitioners, so that the group may mirror their actions. Each posture consists of the phase of entering into the pose, maintaining the pose and coming out of the pose, all according to a formalised pattern. Each phase requires first sequential and then simultaneous execution of multiple somemes. It is guided by the teacher's detailed instructions pertaining to particular somemes. The original language of the instructions is English (used in Pune and during international workshops and conventions). In schools around the globe local languages are used. The form of the instructions is illustrated well by the following passage: "Place the hands down. Now lift the elbow up slightly. And then, move the outer elbow ligaments in... keep that as you place the elbows down. And then move the outer wrists again to the small finger... now place the top of the head down... Lift the shoulders up... your bottom ear has to go back, lift the knees up. Now, bent knees, slowly come up... Lift the inner edges of the feet up... feet forward, navel back...".[24] It should be noted that "maintaining the pose" is not tantamount to passivity. Constant conceptual and motor effort is undertaken during this stage, to ensure the proper maintaining of all somemes.

The quasi-linguistic structure of Iyengar Yoga ā*sana* practice

According to Langacker, language, as a symbolic structure, is bipolar.[25] The *semantic pole* consists of conceptualisations of expressions. These are dynamic processes of generating mental representations of these expressions, based on image schemata.[26] Such activity involves mental scanning of a representation through a given domain (spatial, temporal, colour space *etc.*) in an either sequential (*i.e.* temporal) or summary (*i.e.* atemporal) manner. The *phonological pole* is understood broadly and consists of phonetic, graphic or motor representations of conceptualisations.

As a symbolic structure, *āsana* has the conceptualisation of the posture at its semantic pole. Its phonological pole, on the other hand, has two modes of representation. One consists of the actually executed posture, while the other encompasses the verbal commands pertaining to it. As the two correspond to each other, it is justifi-

[24] Excerpts from a transcript of Lois Steinberg teaching *sālamba śīrṣāsana*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kvOB18HPr4 [accessed: 14.11.2014].

[25] R. Langacker, *op. cit., p.* 15 ff.

[26] Langacker divides Johnson's general notion of "image schemata" into three separate categories: minimal concepts, configurational concepts and conceptual archetypes (*ibidem*, pp. 33–34). For the purposes of the present discussion such detailed division is superfluous.

able for the forthcoming analysis to sometimes refer to the motor representations and sometimes to the verbal ones. The minimal symbolic elements (*morphemes* in Langacker's sense) are somemes, being units both of articulation (executed motor patterns) and of meaning (their conceptualisation).

The preliminary analysis concerned fragments of IY classes held by senior teachers. Transcripts of the teachers' commands were juxtaposed with the dynamic structure of actual postures. So far, only single *āsanāni* have been studied, without a focus on larger syntagms. The phonological structures salient in the teachers' verbal descriptions and in actual postures were described in order to identify the conceptualisations expected at the semantic pole. The analysis was comprehensive, but the limited volume of this paper means that only a few of the most interesting phenomena may be discussed.

The first observation concerns the modes of conceptual scanning of postures through the spatio-temporal domain. It seems that during this process a gradual conceptual shift occurs from one, through two and three up to four dimensions (the fourth being the temporal one). When a four-dimensional model of the body is represented, the dimensions are wound back, so that finally the posture is reduced to two or even one spatial dimension (the temporal domain being compressed or removed altogether). This process is realised through first locating a point on the body (a delimited minute body part), then conceptualising (and executing) its linear movement (see Fig. 1). Two-dimensional conceptualisations are introduced by superimposing two linear movements in different directions and through the introduction of rotational movement. The superimposition of even more linear and rotational movements of multiple body parts gradually turns the representation of the body into a three-dimensional object.[27] Simultaneously, the increasingly complex models of the body are represented sequentially along the temporal axis. This, however, is not the end of the conceptual activity. Once a four-dimensional representation of an *āsana* is intact, the practitioner is urged to wind the dimensions back by conceptualising distant body parts as moving towards a single plane or axis. Inward movement begins to dominate and the spinal axis becomes the main reference point. In the given example, *adho mukha śvanāsana* (Fig. 2), the outer arms are moved towards the central axis of the body, and the front thighs are rotated towards it. The shoulder blades are moved into the body, thus nearing the spine, and so is the navel, receding towards the spinal column passively. Thus the entire posture becomes almost reduced to the spine. Then the upward and backward movement of the arms, the trunk and the legs encourages the practitioner to conceptualise the entire body as nearing a vertical axis running through the heels. As a result, what seems to be a complex three-dimensional construction is conceptually reduced to a line.

[27] An interesting example of this activity is the introduction of spiral motion. In numerous postures onto the rotational movement upward movement is superimposed. *E.g.* in turns the trunk is construed as a structure built of horizontal layers that are simultaneously rotated around the spinal axis and lifted. The salience of spiral motion is certainly of interest (it plays a major role e.g. in the *haṭha yoga* notions of the *nāḍyah* and of *kuṇḍalinī*) and requires more attention.

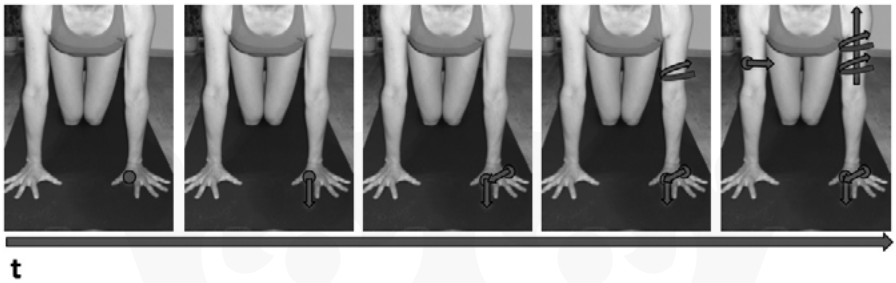

Fig. 1. The gradual development of a four-dimensional model of the posture during āsana conceptualisation and execution.

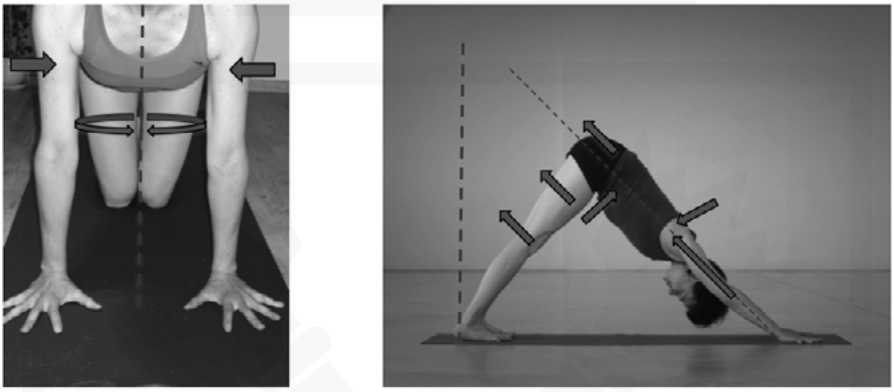

Fig. 2. The subsequent "winding" of spatial dimensions through construing the body parts as nearing a single axis.

The winding of the temporal dimension can be traced through the analysis of the verbal expressions accompanying the execution of postures. First, expressions suggesting simultaneous execution of somemes occur. In sentences like "elongat**ing** the trunk, bring the... right palm to the right ankle", "while... mov**ing** that [indent] into the body, inhale",[28] the present participle delimits a fixed immediate temporal scope of the first relation, and it is only within this compressed scope that the second relation occurs. Secondly, increased use of imperfective verbs (*e.g. be*, *keep*) at the end of the transcripts suggests that the relations determined by particular somemes turn from temporally heterogenous to homogenous. Though the conceived time may still be represented, no change is associated with it. Finally, the omission of verbs in favour of prepositions at the end of the transcripts suggests that the somemes are construed atemporally. Expressions such as "pubic bone **upward**", "shoulder-blade **into**

[28] Excerpts from the transcript of a class taught by Geeta Iyengar, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyK7zmrRcwo [accessed: 14.11.2014].

the body", "head of the femur bone **up**" point to a shift of the scanning mode from sequential to summary, with the temporal dimension excluded altogether.

Another phenomenon concerns replacing possessive pronouns in front of body part names with the definite article. It is natural in the English language to use possessives while referring to someone's body parts ("turn **your** head", "lift **your** arm").[29] During IY practice, however, expressions such as "don't lose **the** outer wrist", "lift **the** knees up", "don't harden **the** eyebrows" are commonplace. Through this operation, body parts become abstracted, generalised and thus separated from their owner. This seems to be related to their subsequent animisation and personalisation, crucial for the interpretation of certain religio-philosophical notions.

The animisation of body parts also seems to be influenced by the constant use of the imperative clause. As Langacker notes, simple imperatives in the English language possess no overt subject.[30] While for fully fledged exercitives (*e.g.* "**I** order you to lift the sternum") the primary focus (the *trajector*, in Langacker's terms) is the speaker-subject, and for plain constatives (*e.g.* "**You** lift the sternum"), the trajector is the subject (though not necessarily the speaker), for imperatives (*e.g.* "**Lift** the sternum"), due to the absence of the subject, it is the action of lifting itself that becomes the trajector. Thus, due to the evolutionarily advantageous human propensity to attribute agency wherever there is motion, the object of the action is construed as self-propelled, *ergo* animate.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion hopefully shows that the IY *āsana* practice is a ritual possessing an internal structure which can be understood in the categories of Langacker's cognitive grammar. The main question, however, is whether and how this observation can be of any value. The answer is that it can, providing means to investigate coherence between the schematic semantic structures of the *āsana* ritual and the specific semantic structures present in the exposition of the doctrine. A preliminary study has shown that such coherence exists. The schematic representations underlying the linguistic phenomena occurring at the ritual pole correspond to the rich metaphorical structures identifiable in Iyengar's interpretation of the categories of *pātañjala yoga*. To give brief examples related to the phenomena discussed above, the atemporalisation through the summary mode of scanning, implicit in the use of imperfectives, participles and omission of verbs, corresponds to Iyengar's understanding of *dhyāna.* "[I]n *dhyāna*", he writes, "**psychological and chronological time come to a standstill** as the mind observes its own behaviour".[31] The expanding and subsequent winding of dimensions during *āsana* conceptualisation may correspond to the construal of the transition from *dhāraṇā* through *dhyāna* to *samādhi.* "*[D]hāraṇā*", it is said, "is **single-pointed** attention. It modifies into *dhyāna* by being **sustained in time** whilst **dissolving its one-pointed character** implicit in the word 'concentration'.

[29] See R. Langacker, *op.cit.*, p. 184.

[30] *Ibidem*, p. 470.

[31] B.K.S. Iyengar, B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali...*, p. 169.

When it becomes **all-pointed**, which is also **no-pointed**... it leads to total absorption (*samādhi*)".[32] Finally, the omnipresence of imperatives and lack of possessives in front of body part names, contributing to the animisation and personification of body parts, is coherent with the metaphorico-synecdochic model of the body as a person made of persons made of persons. This model seems to contribute to understanding *citta* (the phenomenal consciousness of *Pātañjala Yoga*) and *puruṣa* (the absolute consciousness of *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*) as minuscule beings immersed in each and every cell of the body, *i.e.* the personifying principles of the cells.

Two concluding remarks will sum up the foregoing discussion. The first concerns the scope of the performed analysis – as said before, so far only the structure of single *āsanāni* was investigated. An analysis of entire sequences of postures will surely expose many more interesting phenomena. The second has to do with the significance of the proposed thesis. The conclusion, drawn in light of the tenets of cognitive linguistics, that ritual activities based on intense motor activity have a structure similar to that of language, is not trivial. Just because embodied sensorimotor patterns underlie language, this does not mean that all sensorimotor activity needs to be structured in the same manner language is. However, identification of such structuring, if it exists, may open up ways of exploring the embodied, ritual origin of religious meaning.

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Conceptual Blends with Shepherd(s)/Sheep Imagery in Selected Patristic Writings

Aleksander Gomola
UNESCO Chair in Translation Studies and Intercultural Communication
Jagiellonian University in Krakow

Abstract

This article addresses the problem of the Christian discourse, and more specifically conceptual blends with "shepherd," "sheep" and related concepts in an input space in the writings of Ignatius of Antioch, St Augustine, Cyprian of Carthage and others. The analysis of selected blends shows their importance in Christian discourse and their role in the creation of the doctrine and practice of the early Church. The article shows that conceptual blends are a flexible tool for conceptualising different notions in accordance with the aims of their authors. The overall objective of the article is to show the role of language in the formation of the Christian identity and doctrine, and the usefulness of the blending theory in the description of these phenomena.

Słowa kluczowe: amalgamaty pojęciowe, dyskurs chrześcijański, patrystyka, owca, pasterz
Key words: conceptual blends, Christian discourse, patristics, sheep, shepherd

Christianity, unlike Judaism, out of which it grew, or the Greek and Roman cults which it replaced, is to a great extent a religion of beliefs and dogmas, not sacrifices or deeds.[1] This means that its identity manifests itself through various statements, declarations, narratives or descriptions – in other words, through language. In most cases these linguistic forms express abstract notions such as "salvation," "redemption," "grace" or "Trinity" by referring to various human experiences or elements of the physical world. Grace, for example, is very often conceptualised as a fluid (1 Timothy 1: 14); salvation as an ontological change (1 John 3: 14); redemption as an actual act of buying out (1 Peter 1: 18).

[1] "For the ancient Greeks and Romans, religion was an affair of rituals and practices, not doctrine," R.L. Wilken, *The First Thousand Years. A Global History of Christianity*, New Haven–London 2012, p. 92.

There is also a reverse process, namely a specific experience or form of behaviour typical of a given culture may become a source of related conceptualisations, such as in the case of conceptualisations based on the imagery of shepherd(s)/sheep, which has been omnipresent in the Christian discourse since its very beginning. Conceptualisations of this sort make up the basis of the hierarchical structure and dynamics of relationships between the clergy and laity in the Catholic Church; the "one shepherd and one flock" principle represents the idea of Christian unity and ecumenical efforts as well as the theological rationale behind all decisions against dissident activity within the Christian communities or the Church; The image of "a lost sheep" symbolises God's unique love towards every individual as an individual, corresponding at the same time to the presumption that there is one proper way everyone should follow, and that Christianity "is the way" (Acts 9: 2).

Linguistically speaking, conceptualisations involving shepherd(s)/sheep imagery may be seen as a set of conceptual blends of various types with one of the input spaces containing such elements as "shepherd," "sheep," "fold," "pasture," "wolf," etc., along with the roles and functions attributed to each of them and relationships between them.[2] This simple imagery turns out to be a very powerful and versatile linguistic instrument that may easily be adapted to the rhetorical needs and aims of Christian speakers and writers depending on what elements or dependencies of the input space they place in the foreground. In this way, Christian authors have been able to create and modify principles and rules pertaining to Church doctrine, liturgy, discipline and practice, conveying them at the same time in a convincing way. The detailed presentation of even a small part of the conceptual blends with shepherd/sheep, etc., elements in the input space and how they have been employed throughout centuries in the Christian discourse, is of course not possible in a short text, and therefore what follows should be regarded as a preliminary sketch presenting some instances and patterns of how they are used in selected patristic texts to demonstrate their flexibility and consequences.

Shepherd(s)/sheep imagery in the ancient world and the Bible

Shepherd(s)/sheep imagery is very common in antiquity, also outside of the Bible. The shepherd image with its varied symbolical meaning, most often connoting a ruler or God, is known in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Ancient Near East and the Hellenistic world.[3] However, the shepherd/sheep blends belonging to the Christian discourse have their roots in the Scripture, both in the Hebrew Bible and in the New Testa-

[2] Detailed presentation of the exact type of the blends discussed here goes beyond the scope of this paper. The background of my presentation is the notion of the blend with specific input spaces proposed by G. Fauconnier, M. Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending And The Mind's Hidden Complexities*, New York 2002.

[3] N. Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd as a Source for the Spirituality of the Ministerial Priesthood*, Roma 1997, pp. 30–37. The secular version of this conceptualisation may also be found in modern Europe, for example in J.S. Bach's cantata, *Schafe können sicher weiden*, where it also refers to the ruler (shepherd) and the ruled ones (sheep).

ment. Among various instances of their usage in the Hebrew Bible, the most significant ones in the context of this analysis are to be found in Jeremiah 23: 1–4 and Ezekiel 34: 1–8, where leaders of Israel are compared to bad shepherds who do not look after them properly. In Christian teaching these passages will be used with reference to the Christian clergy, thus relegating the non-clergy members of the Church to the status of sheep. In the New Testament the three most important instances of shepherd(s)/sheep imagery are the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18: 12–14; Luke 15: 3–7); John 10, where Jesus presents himself as the Good Shepherd, and John 21: 15–19, where Jesus commands Peter to feed his sheep. Also scattered in the Bible are various references to everyday experience concerning shepherds or sheep that strengthen the conceptualisation and the roles/qualities of shepherds or sheep: sheep are submissive (Isaiah 53: 7; Jeremiah 11: 9) and trust the shepherd (John 10: 3–5); a shepherd had to watch for those sheep who strayed and to count the animals returning to the fold at night (Leviticus 27: 32, Jeremiah 33: 13); dogs are used to help manage sheep (Job 30: 1) etc.[4] The related, central biblical and Christian symbol of the lamb connoting the Christ is not discussed in this paper.

Shepherd(s)/sheep imagery as conceptual blends

As mentioned earlier, numerous instances of shepherd(s)/sheep imagery present in the Bible may be seen as exemplifications of various conceptual blends, such as THE LEADERS OF ISRAEL ARE SHEPHERDS/THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL ARE SHEEP, BISHOPS/PRESBYTERS ARE SHEPHERDS/LAITY ARE SHEEP, CHRIST IS SHEPHERD/CHRISTIANS ARE SHEEP, etc. with shepherd/sheep/wolves and other elements in one of the input spaces. In the case both of the Hebrew Bible and of the texts that would form the canon of the New Testament, we may notice that because they became part of the Christian Holy Scripture or God's Word, these conceptualisations were indeed regarded as actual words of God, being central in the development of the Christian doctrine. Conceptualisations employing shepherd/sheep imagery in texts of various Christian writers are most often elaborations of these biblical conceptual blends.[5]Selected examples of such elaborations, the probable reasons behind them and their practical consequences are discussed below.

Christians are sheep

this simple blend may be found in *The Shepherd of Hermas* – an allegorical work that takes its title from the shepherd who is a guide to the narrator, yet its imagery differs from the biblical text, being both more detailed (various forms of behaviour of sheep such as leaping or feeding symbolise various states of separation from God) and

[4] G.L. Mattingly, *Shepherd* [in:] *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, David Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers et al. (eds), Grand Rapids, MI 2000, p. 1208.

[5] For more on elaboration, see: Z. Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*, Oxford 2002, p. 47.

connoting different things.[6] For example, one of the shepherds in the text is a contradiction of a good shepherd and represents an "angel of punishment" who, holding "a large whip," (unusual for a shepherd) "cast them [sheep] into a precipitous place, full of thistles and thorns."[7] Although *The Shepherd of Hermas* is one of the earliest Christian texts containing shepherd/sheep imagery, the conceptualisations present in it, due to their unique and distinct character, are generally not taken over or elaborated upon by other patristic authors.

Bishops are shepherds/laity are sheep

Although egalitarian with regard to those who could join it, in time Christianity divided its members into two categories: clergy (shepherds) and laity (sheep). When Christianity was recognised as an official religion of the Roman Empire, the gap between these groups was fairly distinct and bishops became members of the social elite.[8] The categories had different functions, and shepherd(s)/sheep imagery was a very useful rhetorical device in attributing different qualities and status to their respective members. The clergy were shepherds: active, knowledgeable, decision-makers. The laity were sheep, and were expected to be obedient in matters of doctrine and discipline.[9]

As early as the beginning of the second century, Ignatius of Antioch (c. 35/50–98/117) admonishes the addressees of his *Epistle to the Philadelphians*: "Wherefore, as children of light and truth, flee from division and wicked doctrines; but where the shepherd is, there follow as sheep. For there are many wolves that appear worthy of credit, who, by means of a pernicious pleasure, carry captive those that are running towards God; but in your unity they shall have no place."[10] *Epistle to the Philadelphians* is one of the earliest Christian texts in which we can see the BISHOPSARE SHEPHERDS/LAITY ARE SHEEP blend. Interestingly, the blend cannot be found in the New Testament texts, although they mention the division between *presbyteroi/episcopoi*[11] and other Christians (cf. 1 Timothy 3, James 5). Whenever "shepherd"

[6] *The Shepherd of Hermas* was written in the early 2nd century, which is why we cannot often find in it references to the texts that would later form the New Testament.

[7] *The Shepherd of Hermas*, Parable 6, 2. If not marked differently, all quotations of patristic texts after *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1–5, A. Roberts, J. Donaldson (eds.), Buffalo, NY and *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series*, vol. 1–7, P. Schaff (ed.), online version: http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/ [accessed: 15.11.2014]. The translations are not the most recent ones, but I decided to use them as they are easily available for those who would like to see the context of the blends discussed here.

[8] Ammianus Marcellinus writes of bishops as "enriched by offerings from matrons, riding in carriages, dressing splendidly, and feasting luxuriously, so that their entertainments surpass even royal banquets"; *Roman History*, 27, 3, 14; http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/ammianus_27_book27.htm [accessed: 19.11.2014].

[9] When Christianity became a religion of birth, not choice, the laity were also allowed to be ignorant in matters of faith. Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254) stated that the "measure of faith to which the laity were bound was to believe explicitly that God exists and rewards the good and implicitly the articles of the faith," N. Tanner, *New Short History of the Catholic Church*, London 2011, p. 85.

[10] *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, 2.

[11] We should not forget that these two terms may have referred at that time to specific functions within the Christian community (and may have been used interchangeably), not connoting a distinct status within it.

appears in the New Testament outside the four gospels, the term denotes Christ, never a clergy member (Hebrews 13: 20; 1 Peter 2: 25; 1 Peter 5: 4). Nevertheless, this blend very quickly becomes a standard conceptualisation describing the division of roles in the Church and is used extensively by patristic writers. An overwhelming majority of them were bishops, and therefore the blend was a very useful linguistic instrument in expressing their authority in matters of doctrine and discipline.

A good illustration of how radical the elaboration of this blend might be is Augustine of Hippo's (354–430) *Sermon on Pastors*, where he justifies bringing sinners back into the Church even against their will, employing imagery from the Hebrew Bible (Jeremiah 23: 1–4 and Ezekiel 34: 1–8):

> The straying sheep you have not recalled; the lost sheep you have not sought. (...). The sheep moreover are insolent [*et contumaces sunt oves*]. The shepherd seeks out the straying sheep, but because they have wandered away and are lost they say that they are not ours. "Why do you want us? Why do you seek us?" they ask. "You have been lost, I wish to find you." "But I wish to stray," – he says; "I wish to be lost." (...) However unwelcome, I dare to say: You wish to stray, you wish to be lost; but I do not want this." For the one whom I fear does not wish this. And should I wish it, consider his words of reproach: 'The straying sheep you have not recalled; the lost sheep you have not sought.' Shall I fear you rather than him? (...) I shall recall the straying; I shall seek the lost. Whether they wish it or not, I shall do it.[12]

This long passage demonstrates how a seemingly innocent BISHOPS ARE SHEPHERDS/LAITY ARE SHEEP blend may change into a potential excuse for or incentive to coercion in matters of religious discipline. In the context of pessimistic Augustinian theology, with its notion of *massa damnata*, such a firm and decisive attitude on the part of a bishop should be regarded as an action aiming to save the lost or ignorant Christians from eternal damnation, an act of solidarity and a manifestation of the bishop's responsibility towards God. The words "I shall recall the straying. (...) Whether they wish it or not, I shall do it" may be seen as an expression of perseverance and loving care of a shepherd worried about his sheep. Yet at the same time this skilful rhetorical extension of a stereotypical image of the sheep presented here as insolent or obstinate (*contumaces*) will have far-reaching consequences in the history of the West. According to Augustine, it is obstinacy that constitutes heresy (*contumacia dicitur heresis*).[13] Because *contumaces sunt oves*, the Church may, with divine authority, persecute heretics.

Augustine uses a similar image of sheep brought back against their will when commenting on the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14: 15–24): "Let them be drawn away from the hedges, let them be plucked up from among the thorns. They have stuck fast in the hedges, they are unwilling to be compelled. 'Let us come in – they say – of our own good will.' This is not the Lord's order, 'Compel them – says he – to come in.' Let compulsion be found outside, the will arise within."[14]

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[12] *Sermo 46*, 14–15. The Latin text: http://www.augustinus.it/latino/discorsi/discorso_057_testo.htm [accessed: 19.11.2014].

[13] T.A. Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia*, London–New York 2010, p. 138.

[14] *Sermo 62*, 8.

There are no references to sheep in the Parable of the Great Banquet, which instead stresses the universality of the Kingdom of God. Augustine, however, focusing on the term "compel," interprets the parable through the prism of the BISHOPS ARE SHEPHERDS/LAITY ARE SHEEP blend. According to this interpretation, "a servant" is a bishop, and people compelled to come in are those who do not wish to follow him. By adopting this blend in his reading of the parable, Augustine distorts altogether its original meaning.[15]

In his *Letter do Donatus*, part of a much broader Donatist controversy, Augustine once again refers to "compel," and employs the same blend: "You also are sheep belonging to Christ (...) but you are wandering and perishing. Let us not, therefore, incur your displeasure because we bring back the wandering and seek the perishing; for it is better for us to obey the will of the Lord, who charges us to compel you to return to His fold, than to yield consent to the will of the wandering sheep, so as to leave you to perish." This passage again demonstrates that a specific conceptual blend supported by a selective choice of specific words and expressions from the Bible ("compel" – Luke 14: 23; "bring back the wandering and seek the perishing" – Ezekiel 34, 4) enables Augustine to present his views with divine authority.

Augustine sometimes modifies the BISHOPS ARE SHEPHERDS/LAITY ARE SHEEP blend, adapting it to the needs of his argument and stressing these elements in input spaces that are important to him in a given moment. In his *Sermon on Pastors*, as we have seen, he claims that sheep are obstinate and that this is the reason why pastors may resort to coercion. In another sermon he reminds his listeners that because they are sheep, they should be obedient and humble: "So then, Brethren, do you with obedience hear that you are Christ's sheep; seeing that we on our part with fear hear, 'Feed My sheep'? If we feed with fear, and fear for the sheep; these sheep how ought they to fear for themselves? Let then carefulness be our portion, obedience yours; pastoral watchfulness our portion, the humility of the flock yours"[16]. Again, referring to the stereotypical image of sheep as obedient animals, Augustine maps this image onto his listeners and enriches it, presenting sheep not only as obedient but as humble as well. It goes without saying that sheep may be obedient but not humble, yet because obedience and humility are related as Christian virtues, Augustine smuggles the latter into his argument, in this way strengthening the illocutionary force of the blend.

On another occasion, while addressing the issue of bishops who are bad shepherds, Augustine ingeniously introduces another element from the input space into the blend, namely a pasture, and argues that it is not important who the shepherd is but what the sheep feed on, which is, indeed, a quite convincing solution to the problem: "The sheep of Christ, even through evil teachers, hear His voice (...) and

[15] It is worth remembering that Augustine had a very limited knowledge of Greek and interpreted the polysemic ἀναγκάζω (to compel, to urge) as "to coerce," a term which plays an instrumental role in his views on how the Church should deal with heretics. Cf. his *Letter to Boniface [On the Treatment of the Donatists]*, St Augustine, *Letters 165–203*, vol. 4, translated by S. Wilfrid Parsons, S.N.D. New York 1981, pp. 163–168.

[16] Augustine, *Sermo 96 on the New Testament*, 1.

therefore the sheep are safely fed, since even under bad shepherds they are nourished in the Lord's pastures."[17]

The BISHOPSARE SHEPHERDS/LAITY ARE SHEEP blend also appears as a rhetorical argument in Church documents. For instance, canon 64 of Council in Trullo reads: "It does not befit a layman to dispute or teach publicly, thus claiming for himself authority to teach, but he should yield to the order appointed by the Lord, and to open his ears to those who have received the grace to teach, and be taught by them divine things. (...) Why do you make yourself a shepherd when you are a sheep?"[18] John Chrysostom uses an almost identical argument, based on the roles attributed to sheep and shepherds, when he writes, "You are an inferior servant, not a master. You are a sheep, be not curious concerning the shepherd."[19]

The church is one flock

the passage from Ignatius' *Letter to the Philadelphians* quoted above also contains the CHURCH IS ONE FLOCK blend that appears too in John 10:16, where Jesus speaks of "one flock and one shepherd" .According to the Christian tradition, Ignatius of Antioch was John the Apostle's disciple, and this may explain why this blend was so important to him. On the other hand, ever since the beginning of the new religion various Christian authors have stressed the necessity of unity within the Christian communities and between them, which was understandable as Christianity was not a monolithic movement and experienced tensions, forced to cope with various dissident factions or heretical sects such as the Montanists, Ebionites, Valentinians etc. that emerged within it. This is why Ignatius insists that sheep "should flee from division and wicked doctrines; but where the shepherd is, there follow as sheep. For there are many wolves that appear worthy of credit, who, by means of a pernicious pleasure, carry captive those that are running towards God; but in your unity they shall have no place."

Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and the author of the statement "extra Ecclesiam nulla salus" ("outside the Church there is no salvation"), also employs the CHURCH IS ONE FLOCK blend to support his theological argument of the need to belong to the Church in order to be saved. Considering the conditions under which the Church may receive the heretics who used to be its members and would now like to come back, and the heretics who were baptised by a heretical community yet were never the members of the Church and would like to join it now, he compares the former to the sheep who went astray, while the latter are not regarded by him as "sheep" and must be turned into "sheep" by being baptised by the orthodox, not heretical Christian community:

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[17] Augustine, *Letter 208* (*To Lady Felicia*), 5. Several centuries later Bernard of Clairvaux uses a similar blend with a pasture in an input space, writing that "needful nourishment of the sheep is ordinarily indeed in the good pastures of the Holy Scriptures (...).To this end, good and careful pastors do not cease to feed their flock to fatness with salutary and encouraging examples";*Sermon 76 on the Song of Songs*, 9: http://www.elfinspell.com/ChurchHistory/Petry-NoUncertainSound/BernardOfClairvaux-27-30.html [accessed: 17.11.2014].

[18] *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series*, Volume 14, P. Schaff, Rev. E. Wallace (eds.), New York 2007 (the original edition 1900), p. 394.

[19] *Homily 2 on 2 Timothy*.

"We observe in the present day, that it is sufficient to lay hands for repentance upon those who are known to have been baptised in the Church, and have gone over from us to the heretics, if, subsequently acknowledging their sin and putting away their error, they return to the truth and to their parent; so that, because it had been a sheep, the Shepherd may receive into His fold the estranged and vagrant sheep. But if he who comes from the heretics has not previously been baptised in the Church, (...) he must be baptised, that he may become a sheep, because in the holy Church is the one water which makes sheep."[20]

Cyprian's stance, although expressed by such an interesting rhetorical exploit, was eventually rejected by the Church, and the custom of rebaptising heretics that lasted for some time in the East was abandoned.

Interestingly, the CHURCH IS ONE FLOCK blend is sometimes used with reference to the whole of humanity, for example by Tertullian, who writes in one of his treatises: "Tell me, is not all mankind one flock of God? Is not the same God both Lord and Shepherd of the universal nations? Who more perishes from God than the heathen, so long as he errs? Who is more re-sought by God than the heathen, when he is recalled by Christ?"[21] Putting an equals sign between the whole humanity and the Church, Tertullian underlines the universal character of the new religion.

Enemies of christian unity or christians are wolves

The passage from the *Letter to the Philadelphians* quoted earlier contains yet another blend derived from the input space referring to shepherd/sheep imagery, namely ENEMIES OF CHRISTIAN UNITY OR CHRISTIANS ARE WOLVES ("For there are many wolves that appear worthy of credit (...) but in your unity they shall have no place"). Teachers of false doctrines are also conceptualised as wolves on other occasions. Such identification appears twice in *Church History* by Eusebius of Caesarea: with reference to Marcion, who is described as "the wolf of Pontus" (V, 1–3, 4) and to Maximilla, a prophetess of Montanus, who was reported to have said of herself: "I am driven away from the sheep like a wolf. I am not a wolf"(V, 16, 17).[22] Ambrose of Milan praises Pope Siricius in his letter as the one who can "discover the wolves, and meet them as a wary shepherd, so as to keep them from scattering the Lord's flock by their unbelieving life and dismal barking."[23] Canon 72 of Council in Trullo excludes the possibility of marriage between an orthodox Christian and a heretic, arguing that "it is not right that the sheep be joined with the wolf."[24]

Augustine, on the other hand, in one of his sermons juxtaposes sheep with wolves, arguing that sometimes wolves may become sheep:

"But what are we to think? Those who did hear, were they sheep? Lo? Judas heard, and was a wolf: he followed, but, clad in sheep-skin, he was laying snares for the Shep-

[20] Cyprian of Carthage, *Epistle 70*, 2.

[21] Tertullian, *On Modesty*, 7.

[22] Eusebius, *Church History*, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2501.htm [accessed:19.11.2014].

[23] St Ambrose of Milan, *Letter 42*, 1; www.tertullian.org/fathers/ambrose_letters_05_letters41_50.htm [accessed: 16.11.2014].

[24] *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series*, Vol. 14, *op.cit.*, p. 397.

herd. Some, again, of those who crucified Christ did not hear, and yet were sheep; (...) Now, how is this question to be solved? They that are not sheep do hear, and they that are sheep do not hear. Some, who are wolves, follow the Shepherd's voice; and some, that are sheep, contradict it. Last of all, the sheep slay the Shepherd. The point is solved; for someone in reply says: "But when they did not hear, as yet they were not sheep, they were then wolves: the voice, when it was heard, changed them, and out of wolves transformed them into sheep; and so, when they became sheep, they heard, and found the Shepherd, and followed Him."[25]

Similarly, John Chrysostom also uses the wolf/sheep contrast in one of his homilies, expounding Matthew 10, 16:

"For so long as we are sheep, we conquer: though ten thousand wolves prowl around, we overcome and prevail. But if we become wolves, we are worsted, for the help of our Shepherd departs from us: for He feeds not wolves, but sheep."[26]

These brilliant and complex conceptualisations from the quill of Augustine and John Chrysostom demonstrate again the potential hidden in the blend discussed here.

Heresy/bad behaviour as contagious for flock

Another interesting type of blend employing sheep imagery as an input space conceptualises the heresy or morally unacceptable behaviour of some believers as a contagious disease that may spread in the flock and affect other sheep.

Cyprian of Carthage uses this blend in order to exclude from the community those whose actions or attitude he regards as unacceptable or scandalous. "Nor is he a useful or prudent shepherd who lets in among his flock sheep that are sickly or diseased so as to infest his entire flock by exposure to the disease they bring with them" – he writes in one of his letters.[27] Interestingly, perceiving bad behaviour as contagious and a threat to the moral purity of the community seems to stand in opposition to the attitude of Jesus presented in the Gospels, for whom the moral misconduct of an individual does not corrupt others. Cyprian's stance as a bishop and leader of the community (or "a prudent shepherd") reveals here how difficult and problematic it was to transfer the idealistic principles of Jesus as an apocalyptic prophet onto the everyday life of a Christian community no longer awaiting His imminent *parousia*.

Theodoret of Cyrrhus (c. 393–c. 457) employs the same blend in his letter to Joannes, Bishop of Antioch, part of a serious theological dispute in which Joannes is depicted as a source of disease (heresy): "I have been distressed at the thought that one appointed to the shepherd's office, entrusted with the charge of so great a flock and appointed to heal the sick among his sheep, is both himself unsound, and that to a terrible degree, and is endeavouring to infect his lambs with his disease and treats the sheep of his folds with greater cruelty than that of wild beasts."[28]

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[25] Augustine, *Treatise on the Gospel of St John* 45, 10.

[26] John Chrysostom, *Homily on Matthew* 33, 1.

[27] Letter 59, 15, 2 [in:] *The Letters of St Cyprian of Carthage*, vol. 3, Mahwah, NJ, p. 83.

[28] *Letter 150*.

Vincent of Lérins (died c. 445), author of the famous "Vincentian canon,"[29] an essential stage in the development of the Christian doctrine, is another who uses this blend to conceptualise and revile unorthodox beliefs: "If any man deliver to you another message than that you have received, let him be blessed, praised, welcomed,– no; but let him be accursed, i.e., separated, segregated, excluded, lest the dire contagion of a single sheep contaminate the guiltless flock of Christ by his poisonous intermixture with them."[30]

Conclusions

Even this necessarily brief presentation of selected examples of the blends with shepherd(s)/sheep imagery leaves no doubt that they have played a significant role in creating and shaping the Christian doctrine. Employed and elaborated upon skilfully by the Christian authors, they enrich and expand it and as they are anchored in the Bible, they provide the doctrine with the divine authority. What is more, they are still alive even today and may be used in a fresh way; the most recent example of such a fresh version of the blend may be found in one of Pope Francis' homilies in which he urges priests to be "shepherds living with the smell of the sheep."[31]

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[29] "We hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, and by everyone," T.G. Guarino, *Vincent of Lérins and the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Grand Rapids, MI 2013, p. xii.

[30] *Commonitory*, 8 (23).

[31] http://www.thecatholictelegraph.com/pope-francis-priests-should-be-shepherds-living-with-the-smell-of-the-sheep/13439 [accessed: 20.11.2014].

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Franz Brentano and His Competing World Views. A Philosopher's Choice between Science and Religion[1]

Sonia Kamińska
Instytut Filozofii
Uniwersytet Szczeciński

Abstract

There are two types of philosophy of mind in Brentano: (A) Aristotelian, and (B) genuinely Brentanian. The former (A) is to be found in the Aristotelica series; and by (B) I understand the content of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint.* The manuscripts for its unwritten parts and Brentano's lectures on God and immortality of the soul surprisingly fall into **A**. These lines of thought are so different that it can be astonishing that they were authored by one person. In my paper I will try to show the roots of this dichotomy as well as to check whether there is a conflict between these theories, and, if so, whether they can be reconciled. These are not only two different philosophical theories, but at least one of them is a manifestation of a world view, and a key to it can be found in Brentano's biography.

Słowa kluczowe: Brentano, filozofia umysłu, religia, światopogląd, Arystoteles, św. Tomasz, substancja, umysł, Bóg
Keywords: Brentano, philosophy of mind, religion, world view, Aristotle, Aquinas, substance, mind, God

Franz Brentano – a profile

Franz Brentano (1838–1917) was a German philosopher who worked in numerous fields: metaphysics, ontology, psychology, logic, theology, ethics and history of philosophy. He is known mainly for reintroducing the scholastic notion of intentionality into contemporary philosophy (*Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (*PES*),

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1874).[2] In fact, as one can see in the lines cited below, also known as "the intentionality quote," Brentano did not use the exact word "intentionality." He spoke of "intentional/mental inexistence" of an object in our mind. Upon this notion he was able to build his very modern philosophy of mind (i.e. division of mental phenomena into three classes of presentations, judgments and phenomena of love and hate, self-consciousness, synchronic unity of consciousness), but on the other hand – so to speak – to create a link between medieval logic and psychology as well as contemporary philosophy.

> Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, relation to a content, direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as a reality), or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgment something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on.[3]

Brentano is also famous as a teacher of many significant philosophers (and not only philosophers); among whom we can count Edmund Husserl, Anton Marty, Christian von Ehrenfels, Alexius Meinong, Carl Stumpf, Hugo Bergmann, Alfred Kastil, Tomáš Masaryk, Sigmund Freud, and Kazimierz Twardowski (to mention just a few).[4] The last of these students of Brentano, Kazimierz Twardowski, was the founder of the Lvov-Warsaw School, which makes Brentano something of a godfather, so to speak, of Polish analytic philosophy. Interestingly, there was no proper school of Brentano in Vienna. On the one hand among his students one can find all the distinguished names mentioned above, and some would even like to see Franz Kafka among them (he was friends with Hugo Bergmann), although he lived and worked in Prague. On the other hand, as we learn from Husserl's memoirs[5] (Husserl was Brentano's student in Vienna in winter 1884/1885 and 1885/1886), Brentano did not believe himself to have created a school. Brentano is remembered as somebody who gave momentum to phenomenology, revolutionised epistemology and psychology, influenced the Lvov-Warsaw School, inspired British analytic philosophy and raised a couple of generations of influential philosophers, but he died in the belief that there was no proper heir or continuator to his work. One can sometimes have

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[2] See also W. Huemer, *Franz Brentano* [in:] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), E.N. Zalta (ed.), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/brentano/ [accessed: 30.10.2014].

[3] F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, trans. A.C. Rancurello, D.B. Terrell, L.L. McAlister, London, New York 1995. p. 68.

[4] Even Martin Heidegger, although they never met in person. In *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, Heidegger said that it was Brentano's book *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles* that awoke his interest for philosophy.

[5] E. Husserl, *Wspomnienia o Franzu Brentano* [in:] F. Brentano, *Arystoteles i jego światopogląd*, trans. S. Kamińska, Kraków 2012, p. 23–34. The memoirs of Edmund Husserl are taken from Oskar Kraus's book *Franz Brentano. Zur Kenntnis seines Lebens und seiner Lehre. Mit Beiträgen von Carl Stumpf und Edmund Husserl* (Munich 1919). I incorporated them into my translation of: Franz Brentano, *Aristoteles und seine Weltanschauung (Aristotle and His World View)*.

the feeling that Brentano's indirect influence on philosophy, i.e. via his students, was greater than the direct one. And his conviction of dying "childless" was rooted in his peculiar view on the master-student relationship, which had a lot to do with his "affinity" with Aristotle (about which more below). However, in his book *Austrian Philosophy, The Legacy of Franz Brentano* (p. 20), Barry Smith gives a much more trivial explanation of the lack of a school of Brentano. According to him, the school was not established because the authorities of the University in Vienna did not return to him his professorship (given in 1874 and lost in 1880 – more on this below), and this is why Brentano was forced to teach as *Privatdozent* for the rest of his life. As a result, the place that could have been taken by Brentano and his pupils (who instead dispersed all over Europe) was taken by Moritz Schlick and his agnostic group of followers, who fought phenomenology as a manifestation of old metaphysics. Thus, Anton Marty and Christian von Ehrenfels settled in Prague, Carl Stumpf in Berlin, Alexius Meinong in Graz, Kazimierz Twardowski in Lvov, etc. Although this was a hardship for Brentano, it had a huge (and positive) impact on European philosophy in the broad sense. Had the school been established in Vienna, the scholars would not have taken all the positions at various universities, and thus the fruitful diffusion would not have taken place.

Surprisingly, it still remains unknown that there was a completely different side to Brentano, another current of his philosophical work, in which he was incessantly engaged from 1862 till 1911.[6] And the thing he was so fiercely devoted to was his Aristotelian studies. In this very long period of almost 50 years, Brentano wrote the following books on Aristotle, which are now known under the common name of *Aristotelica*: *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles* (*On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*, 1862), *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles, insbesondere seine Lehre vom nous poietikos* (*The Psychology of Aristotle*, 1867), *Über den Creatianismus des Aristoteles* (*On Aristotle's Creationism*, 1882), *Aristoteles' Lehre vom Ursprung des menschlichen Geistes* (*Aristotle's Theory of the Origin of Human Soul/Intellect*, 1911), *Aristoteles und seine Weltanschauung* (*Aristotle and His World View*, 1911). There is also the rather considerable Nachlass: *Über Aristoteles* (*On Aristotle*, 1986), plus numerous manuscripts.

To order the facts, it will be useful to introduce a division into two currents of Brentano's philosophy of mind. I call these currents **A** and **B**, because one stands for Aristotle and the other for Brentano. I will start with the latter one, as it is better known. Representative of **B** is the content of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*. In this book, Franz Brentano exchanges the traditional conception of substantial soul for a chain/bundle[7] of mental phenomena/acts with no underlying substra-

[6] S. Kamińska, *Arystoteles według Franza Brentano. Dyskusyjna interpretacja / Komentarz do przekładu fragmentu dzieła F. Brentany Aristoteles und seine Weltanschauung*, "Kwartalnik Filozoficzny" 2010, vol. XXXVIII, no. 1; S. Kamińska, *What Can Grow from the Divine Seed? The Divinity of Human Beings According to Aristotle*, "Studia Religiologica" 2012, vol. 45 (3).

[7] Bundle theory, originated by David Hume, very broadly speaking states that objects consist of bundles of properties and that there is no substance/substratum in which they inhere. Substance theory says that a substance is a property-bearer that is distinct from its properties. Substance theory is to be distinguished from bundle theory, but also from the theory of the bare particular (i.e. substance with no

tum. In doing so he is influenced by David Hume (the famous critic of the notions of substance and causation), Gustav Theodor Fechner (an experimental psychologist who tried to develop an entire world view without resorting to the hypothesis that there exist any mysterious substances besides phenomena perceived by our senses or inner observation), Wilhelm Wundt (who founded the first laboratory of experimental psychology), et al. The theory of mental life described in *PES* has been very influential ever since. Brentano's ideas included in this work are still alive among contemporary philosophers, and the literature on the subject is vast.

The **A** current, on the other hand, has not been so "successful", and for several reasons has not found its way into the philosophical mainstream. In the *Aristotelica* series (as well as in unpublished[8] parts of *PES*), Brentano is – as the name suggests – a thorough-going Aristotelian. What the name does not suggest is that this Aristotelianism has a very strong Thomistic admixture: a theistic account of a personal God, immortal soul as a substratum for mental phenomena, creationism, "creation" of the world and creation of particular souls in time.[9] It is a full-blown Christian Aristotelianism to be honest (which shall mean that **A** not only stands for Aristotle, but also for Aquinas), and this fact finds a plausible explanation in Brentano's biography, which for a philosopher was very eventful.

The story of his life

The book that opens *Aristotelica*, Franz Brentano's doctorate entitled *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles*, is one of the milestones of his biography.[10] This work is dedicated to Friedrich Adolph Trendelenburg, the only per-

properties). Brentano in *PES* rejects the idea of the soul conceived as the bearer of its mental phenomena, as something different from them (he rejects the substance theory). He speaks of a chain of mental phenomena with no underlying substratum, which is why I decided to call it chain/bundle theory. Unfortunately, he does not develop this issue, and we cannot say how the mental phenomena are interconnected. He has an account of the synchronic unity of consciousness, i.e. inner perception informs us of the coexistence of mental phenomena in a particular moment of time, but there is no diachronic unity of consciousness, i.e. we do not know how they coexist over time, which – in the long run – amounts to the problem of identity/personhood, and this may be the cause of Brentano's decision to stick to substance theory in his other writings.

[8] At first, Brentano planned to publish six books of *PES*. However, he only managed to publish two of them, and the rest remained in manuscript.

[9] When I speak of the creation of the world I put the word "creation" in quotation marks, because Brentano was strongly inspired by Aquinas' concept of *creatio continua*, which aims to reconcile the act of creation with the eternity of the world. For Aquinas the world was "created" by God, but on the other hand it is not possible to indicate the concrete point in time. The human notion of time does not apply to God, who is beyond time. And thus we say that God lends its existence to the world. It is a fusion of Aristotelianism (eternal world) and Christianity (creation). *Creatio continua* is to be understood as if God were creating the world all the time and at the same time the world were eternal. Brentano subscribes to this point of view. When it comes to the soul, Brentano also follows Aquinas and says that the soul is created by God and incarnated at a special moment of the foetus's development, called *perfecta dispositio corporis*.

[10] It was also a milestone in Heidegger's biography, as I stated above.

son – according to Brentano, of course – who understood Aristotle. Trendelenburg (1802–1872), Brentano's Berliner teacher, was a philosopher and a philologist. He was one of the godfathers of the 19th-century Aristotelian revival. In 1833 he published a critical edition of Aristotle's *De Anima*, which was seminal for Brentano's development as he grounds his theory of intellectual soul and the deity-humans relationship mostly in this work. What could also have been important for the young Brentano was Trendelenburg's conviction that the right explanation for the world can only be given in terms of the final cause (teleology!). Both Trendelenburg and Brentano also believed that there are more similarities than differences between Plato and Aristotle, and both shared an aversion to German idealism – so much for philosophical taste.

Another important figure in the formation of Brentano's **A** world view was Franz Jakob Clemens (1815–1862). Brentano met him in Münster, where he spent two semesters, and quickly became intellectually and emotionally attached to him. He later called him "the professor of his heart", and it was Clemens, not Trendelenburg, who was the supervisor of Brentano's doctoral thesis. Clemens was a Catholic philosopher and a Jesuit. He acquainted Brentano with scholastics, and it is often said that he was responsible for the Catholic trait in Brentano's writings and could even have influenced Brentano's decision to become a Catholic priest. Unfortunately, Clemens died in 1862, in the year of Brentano's doctoral defence.

To sum up this stage of Brentano's biography, one should say that Trendelenburg inspired him with Aristotle, and Clemens with Thomas Aquinas, and these are by far the two strongest influences in **A**.[11] There is also the Leibnizian thread, which would be worth elaborating on but, unfortunately, to do so would surpass the scope of this paper.

The years 1864–1873 were the period of Brentano's priesthood. This was put to an end (although the formal resignation fell in 1879) because Brentano contradicted the dogma of papal infallibility (Vatican Council I, 1869–1870): "(...) when the declaration of papal infallibility caused Roman Catholic lines in Germany to be sharply drawn, Brentano found he could no longer in good conscience remain a Catholic..."[12] Nevertheless, in his heart, he remained a believer. In March 1873 Brentano had to resign from his professorship in Würzburg as it was formally attached to his priesthood. In 1874 he was awarded a professorship in Vienna, which he happily accepted, but which he also left six years later due to his marriage (in Austria it was forbidden for a former priest to get married, and thus Brentano accepted Saxon citizenship). The above sentence contains two crucial facts in Brentano's biography. Not only does it explain why he remained a *Privatdozent* for the rest of his career (which – as Husserl[13] relates – made him rather unhappy), but it also gets to the bone of the genesis of the **B** current in Brentano's philosophy of mind (this is, of course, one of

[11] See also S. Kamińska, *Nieznane oblicze Franza Brentano* [in:] F. Brentano, *Arystoteles i jego światopogląd*...

[12] A.J. Burgess, *Brentano as a Philosopher of Religion*, "International Journal for Philosophy of Religion" 1974, no. 2, p. 83.

[13] E. Husserl, *op.cit.*

the possible explanations). Namely, after leaving Würzburg Brentano was in need of a position. This, however, required that he shake off the well-deserved scholastic label he had earned in the preceding years. Some specialists on Brentano (including Peter Simons[14]) believe that he wrote *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* in order to appear a much more modern philosopher than he really was. Nowadays, we might use the meaningful expression "fake it to make it" to describe this. In his introduction to *PES* from 1995, Simons calls it Brentano's "passport out of Würzburg". This justification would also explain why only two of six intended books of *PES* were published, and the rest remains in manuscript until today (and contains **A-**theses). Moreover, Simons claims that Brentano was not a genuine producer of books. Nevertheless, he was a distinguished teacher and he was always fiercely engaged in matters close to his heart.[15] This would in turn explain his devotion to Aristotelian writings, in the case of which – it has to be admitted – he was quite an effective producer of books (five books finished and published!). Brentano believed (and said so explicitly in the opening lines of his last book *Aristoteles und seine Weltanschauung*) that he was Aristotle's youngest son.[16] He had two elder brothers, namely Eudemos and Theophrastus, with whom he engaged in a highly interesting discussion in his work *Aristotle's Psychology*, 1867. This "family tree" was supposed to authorise him not only to comment on Aristotle and interpret Aristotle, but also to emend and supplement Aristotle where he saw a need for it. He exercised this right using the Thomistic tools, and this more or less boils down to the outline of the **A** current.

Are A and B at all compatible? Do they have anything in common?

In the very first pages of *PES*, Brentano formulates a question about the possibility of the continuation of the existence of our mental acts after the bodily death, which is basically a question about the immortal soul, only ... without the soul. The question looks rather confusing against the background of the published books of *PES*, as there is nothing more on immortality on its pages. To cut a long story short: Brentano – not only in his *Aristotelica*, but also in the manuscripts for the unpublished books of *PES* – goes back (I use this expression to illustrate the fact that he chooses a theory rooted in the 13th century) to **A** as he sees himself defeated in his pursuit for diachronic unity of consciousness which would be the key to immortality. He formulates an account of the synchronic unity of consciousness, meaning being aware of oneself and one's mental acts at the specific moment in time. Unfortunately, the diachronic one is a problem, as there is no "glue" to hold the phenomena together over time, besides the boundaries of mortal body, and therefore they drift apart and we can no longer think of an immortal self. And thus the thing that guarantees **A**'s superiority

[14] See F. Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, trans. A.C. Rancurello, D.B. Terrell, L.L. McAlister, London, New York 1995. With an Introduction by P. Simons.

[15] See also S. Kamińska, *Nieznane oblicze Franza Brentano*...

[16] See also *ibidem* and S. Kamińska, *The Alleged Activity of Active Intellect – a Wild Goose Chase or a Puzzle to Be Solved?* [in:] "Zagadnienia Filozoficzne w Nauce" 2014, vol. LIV, pp. 79–126.

over **B** is the possibility of a plausible account of immortality, which Brentano, as a former Catholic priest and a consistent believer, simply could not let go. Brentano was a very religious person and he had, so to speak, an official and a private world view. In the end the strong belief of there being an immortal soul defeated the "official philosophical programme".

As I discuss this issue in detail from the psychological and ontological standpoint elsewhere, here I will concentrate on another aspect of the matter, i.e. the relationship between science and religion.

How can a man who in his *Habilitationsthesis* claims that that the true method of philosophy should be no different from the method of natural science engage his personal views into philosophical constructs? Of course, Aquinas was a very logical, rational philosopher, but Brentano did not adopt his views because of these features, but rather because of his theism (see: the opening pages of *Aristoteles Lehre vom Ursprung des menschlichen Geistes*, where he unsuccessfully tries to defend himself from being called a Thomist). Rather than by the method of science, Brentano was driven by a personal motivation, a strong belief and an emotional need while formulating the theses in **A**. Let me quote an interesting passage from A.J. Burgess's paper *Brentano as Philosopher of Religion*: "Brentano owes and acknowledges a heavy debt to Aristotle and to the Thomistic tradition. This debt can hardly be overemphasized, but it can be misunderstood. Only in the widest sense could he be termed a Thomist. No doubt he himself would have rejected the title, and rightly so. Yet in essentials it is the Thomistic interpretation of Aristotle which he follows, for example on the immortality of the individual soul and on the temporal[17] creation of the world."[18] As I said above, Brentano indeed tried to reject the title, but he did it only in the face of accusation of not only being a Thomist, but of using Aristotle as the background against which Thomistic philosophy could be better exposed without a true regard for Aristotle. Nevertheless, in the same disclaimer-passage (p. 1 of *Erster Teil* of *Aristoteles Lehre vom Ursprung des menschlichen Geistes*) he expresses his true belief that Aquinas was a much better-suited and considerably more thorough-going Aristotelian scholar with a deeper insight than those who came after him. This is why I believe this passage to be at least ambiguous.[19]

A Bigger Picture

In his deliberations on the immortality of the soul,[20] where he fiercely defends the substantial account of an intellectual soul, Kazimierz Twardowski lists the philosophers who were against it, i.e. in favour of bundle theory. Surprisingly, Brentano is not

[17] For an explanation of the word "temporal" see the footnote on *creatio continua* above.

[18] A.J. Burgess, *op.cit.*, p. 85.

[19] It is worth noting that Burgess did not refer to the fragment I am dealing with here.

[20] K. Twardowski, *Filozofia współczesna o nieśmiertelności duszy* [in:] "Przełom" 1895, vol. 1, no. 14, pp. 427–438 oraz *Metafizyka duszy* [in:] "Przełom" 1985, vol. 1, no. 15, pp. 467–480 [in Polish]. These are two papers that form a unity, so to speak, and therefore should be read together.

among them, although Twardowski was not only familiar with *PES*, but also engaged in developing its ideas,[21] which can serve as further proof (besides Simons's opinion on *PES* and the motivation behind it) that the Aristotelian part was much more important for Brentano, and Twardowski – as his faithful follower – knew it. My personal belief is the same; however, it would be unfair and devoid of deeper sense and justification simply to dismiss Brentano's best-known achievement as a whim, sudden change of mind, etc. Surely, even if there was a hidden agenda behind it, it must have been difficult for him to maintain two such different world views.

Religion vs. science impartiality

Kazimierz Twardowski, who unlike his teacher was very much into meta-philosophy, proposed a solution to such problems, namely the rule of science vs. world-view impartiality. This can be expressed as follows: advocating this or that metaphysics is a matter of faith, not knowledge. Religion/world view and philosophy must be strictly divided. The premise behind this was the following: philosophy exercised in the metaphysical way is unable to justify its claims and theses. This lack of justification contradicts the spirit of science.[22]

This was supposed to be an axiom in Twardowski's school, and in most cases it worked. It should not be confused with the science/not-science distinction introduced by the Vienna Circle at that time (the Lvov-Warsaw School and the Vienna Circle are often compared, for which there are some good reasons, but not this one). For the members of the Vienna Circle science was a tool for defeating all metaphysics or – in the best-case scenario – identifying it with poetry. For the Lvov-Warsaw School it was about acknowledging what is scientific and thus can be a part of the "official programme" of the School, and what is private (and bound to stay this way) but with no qualitative justification.

One must see the difference between defeating religion and including this religion-fight into one's programme and simply not including religion in the scope of deliberation for metaphilosophical reasons.

However good and useful this impartiality rule may sound, even Twardowski himself did not manage to obey it all the time. Nevertheless he tried. It seems that Brentano, on the other hand, was not preoccupied with this issue. Or rather one should say that he did not care, because according to him there was no conflict. In his paper *Brentano as a Religious Thinker*, to which I referred above, A.J. Burgess quotes Brentano's quite famous words, which I decided to use as a punchline here:

> In a letter to a young agnostic Brentano once cited approvingly the famous saying of Francis Bacon: "It is true, that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in phi-

[21] In 1894 Twardowski developed, clarified and supplemented Brentano's ideas from *PES* in his famous work and his *Habilitationsschrift* at the same time: *On the Content and Object of Presentations – A Psychological Investigation* (1894). He enriched Brentano's *act–object* distinction with an *object–content* distinction.

[22] See also J. Woleński, *Logic and Philosophy in the Lvov-Warsaw School*, Dordrecht/London 1989.

losophy bringeth men's mind about to religion." Brentano himself might have put the point this way: bad philosophy, and particularly bad idealistic philosophy, inclines a man to atheism, but a rigorous and scientific philosophy will bring him back.[23]

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Myth and the Schellingian Notion of Mythological Consciousness as a Basis of Narrative and Narrative Identity

Katarzyna Filutowska
Instytut Filozofii
Uniwersytet Warszawski

Abstract

The paper concerns the problem of the mythological origins of narrative and narrative identity. Referring to works of such narrative researchers as D. Carr, B. Williams and K. Atkins and to F.W.J. Schelling's conception of a mythological consciousness, I prove that 1. in a narration – personal as well as collective (in a tale which constitutes given culture) – the type of necessity is similar to that which occurs in nature as well as in mythology (its higher potential) and which is responsible for a perfect story coherence that is unavailable in normal life and characteristic rather of art than of a usual experience; 2. although our personal narratives are shaped on the basis of a collective myth, they assume a first-person, reflective perspective, and this is the reason why an individual may in spite of such to some extent "untrue" origins keep personal freedom and autonomy.

Słowa kluczowe: mit, mitologia, świadomość mitologiczna, narracja, tożsamość narracyjna
Keywords: myth, mythology, mythological consciousness, narrative, narrative identity

Over the last thirty or forty years, the concept of narrative and the related problem of narrative identity became very popular in many branches of various sciences – typically humanities, including literature or philosophy, as well as, for example, medical and social sciences and so on. There are several reasons for the wide interest in this question, previously treated rather as part of fictional, literary discourse, but one in particular seems to be the most important. The narrative may be a valuable methodological proposal in all those sciences in which humans are not only subjects conducting research but also objects of the conducted research – which may be a consequence of the fact that telling stories is one of the most human of all human activities, taking place all over the world in every historical time, every culture and every society.

In this paper I would like to prove the thesis that both narrative and narrative identity, that is to say a story (narration) concerning somebody's life, have the same origins as myth and mythology. I would like to show that they can be treated as at least partially produced by the mythological consciousness described by F.W.J. Schelling in his *Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation*, which appears especially in the poetical, ideal coherence characteristic of narrative structure and absent in normal life, which unites events in a perfect but at the same time fictional way. I would also like to answer the question of why this coherence may contradict such values as truth, human autonomy and individual freedom of choice, and why in spite of this our personal life-story may overcome such a danger of reducing ourselves to a part of a mythical tale.

Every narrative – fictional as well as "real" – has one important feature which is constitutive for it and without which it would not be possible to tell any story. This special quality is related to its aesthetic, artificial character, which is a consequence of the fact that each narration must be coherent, because without this it makes no sense to the reader or listener. As Katrina McNeely Farren puts it, according to Ricoeur's views every narrative joins discordant, "(...) random events that are constantly occurring (...)" in the so-called real life of an individual or community, giving them a concordance which finally "(...) wins out over discordance (...),"[1] and such a "discordant concordance" is its most important, key attribute. In doing so, it changes accidental, empirical events, giving them a form of something like a work, a piece of art which many philosophers believe does not exist in reality, or even if exists to some extent, it does not look exactly like a ready whole, a complete story-to-be-told. As David Carr puts it, many "philosophers, literary theorists, and historians" are convinced that "Real events simply do not hang together in a narrative way, and if we treat them as if they did we are being *un*true to life. Thus not merely for lack of evidence or of verisimilitude, but in virtue of its very form, any narrative account will present us with a distorted picture of the events it relates (...)."[2] Further, he adds a few remarks to clarify this poetical transformation towards an aesthetical whole, which is quite utopian from the point of view of real life: "(...) a narrative unites many actions to form a plot. The resulting whole is often still designated, however, to be an action of larger scale: coming of age, conducting a love affair, or solving a murder."[3]

In short, every narrative – even the "truest" story of our own life or an eye-witness testimony to some real events – is to some extent "poetical" and "fictional," because this is a complete whole with a beginning, middle and end and must be told according to some precisely determined rules so as an activity which imitates a reality and has its own poetics it belongs to an art in the Aristotelian sense of this term. From this point of view there is no clear difference between a fictional narrative concern-

[1] K. McNeely Farren, *Narrative Identity in Paul Ricoeur and Luce Irigaray: The Circularity Between Self and Other*, Houghton, MI 2010, http://gradworks.umi.com/3403377.pdf [access: 1.11.2014], p. 82. About Ricoeur's idea of so-called discordant concordance see also P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1, trans. by K. McLaughlin, D. Pellauer, Chicago-London 1984, p. 38 and further.

[2] D. Carr, *Narrative and the Real World: an Argument for Continuity* [in:] "History and Theory," 1986, vol. 25, no. 2 (May), p. 117.

[3] *Ibidem*, p. 122.

ing characters invented by a novelist – such as the count of Monte Cristo, Jane Eyre or Julien Sorel – and a true narration concerning for example the life of any famous historical hero, like Joan of Arc, Elizabeth I or Christopher Columbus, and we can say that a given story is fictional or true only because we know which of them refers to real, empirical facts.

Philosophers and theorists conducting research concerning narrative – especially those who are to some extent sceptical to the idea that there is an ideal equivalence between narration on the one side and the real events it relates on the other – claim that in a story – even one which aspires to be true – we always find something like a perfect, poetical coherence which does not exist in normal, everyday life. Stories are always told after, when everything has already happened, and those who tell them are very clever because they know how the given story finishes. In the moment of shaping the narrative, they have knowledge which was completely unavailable to them when the given events were occurring. From such a perspective, everything looks more coherent, more understandable, more clear – in such a way that we can be convinced that everything had to lead to exactly such an end which really took place. This may, though, be only our subjective illusion, because there is no proof that those particular events could not have had any other (or even more than one) course and – perhaps more importantly – a completely different ending. In short, there is an anxiety that in creating our story we are not only giving a faithful account but – just because this is an imitation, a kind of complete whole which has a definite form – are also imposing upon the empirical facts something like a poetical, fictional order using ready narrative schemes and patterns which do not exist in reality and which are "(...) derived from the act of telling the story, not from the events themselves."[4]

As Bernard Williams puts it, "There are some particular worries (...) about the status of the coherence that is given to a life by a narrative structure; we need to ask whether the 'inevitability' that may be conveyed by a narrative, and the capacity of narratives to represent some developmental sequences as coherent while others seem arbitrary or inexplicable, may not express some other, external, kinds of constraint, tacitly appealing to a power which is not simply that (...) of the truth."[5] Elsewhere, he suggests that such a fit "seems like magic."[6]

Such a "magical," poetical coherence is related to the social and cultural origins of narration. In his famous analysis of the Russian folk tale, Propp claims that such a primary, folk narrative is based upon a common, recurrent scheme which always consists of a couple of typical heroes and a few types of activity related to them, united in sequences of a plot which follow each other according to precisely defined rules that are always the same. As a consequence, such stories resemble each other to a very high degree. Propp explains this recurrence by referring to their origin – as he puts it, at the very beginning they were neither a literature nor an art, but rather part of a common myth constitutive to a given community and the text of a tale – a recur-

[4] *Ibidem*, p. 118.

[5] B. Williams, *Life as Narrative* [in:] "European Journal of Philosophy" 2009, vol. 17 (2), p. 308.

[6] *Ibidem*, p. 312.

rent sequence of typical activities – probably imitating a succession of some mythical operations which belonged to an ancient, forgotten ritual.[7]

In short, what we see in such a tale is not a typical, Aristotelian imitation of real beings or events, but rather an imitation of a ritual, possibly with a kind of a ritual or a myth itself – and that is the reason for this ideal, "magical" coherence which unites the successive episodes of a given story and which does not exist in a normal life. In other words, such an ideal, poetical whole is available only because in a narration we still partially have a mythical consciousness which has produced and shaped myth, mythical images and collective rituals, and in such a way also gave the basis for all creative activities like, for example, poetry, art or storytelling.

I would now like to define a term mentioned above. According to Schelling's late philosophy, so-called mythological consciousness is a higher potention of a nature productive process – speaking more precisely, it is a nature productive process which takes place in human consciousness. This is the reason why mythology – the primordial collective tales which are the basis of all cultures or communities – has the greatest reality, and is not "invented" or imagined by people who decide freely which image or which motif should become a part of such a collective myth or ritual and which should be discarded, for example for being too ugly or too cruel. Instead, it is equally essential and necessary as nature itself. As Schelling puts it in his *Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, "(...) mythology has no reality (...) *outside* of consciousness; but if it only takes its course in the determinations of consciousness, that is, in its representations, then (...) this course of events, this succession of representations themselves cannot again be such a one that is merely imagined; it must have actually taken place, must have actually occurred in consciousness (...). This succession is not fashioned by mythology, but rather (...) mythology is fashioned by it."[8]

Greek mythology, which for Schelling is "one and the same" as Homer, provides us with a very good example of this necessary, symbolic character of a mythological process. As he puts it in *The Philosophy of Art*, "The origin of mythology and the origin of Homer (...) coincide"[9] because Homer was "(...) already involved in the first poetic products of mythology and was, as it were, potentially present" and "already spiritually – archetypally – predetermined."[10] In other words, although the name of a person who is supposed to be an author of a Greek mythological tale is very well

[7] Such a conclusion corresponds well with the conviction, very popular among such narrative thinkers as Mary-Louise Pratt, Thomas Leitch, Monika Fludernik, David Herman, Marie-Laure Ryan or Michael Kearns, that such terms as narrative and fictive "might better be seen as describing acts rather than objects, discursive processes whose determinations are constituted by a community's ways of using them, not by a text intrinsic formal features (...)" and that "They are not discovered intrinsic elements but extrinsic learned behaviours, tacit rules and explanatory stances that allow the interpreter to decide what elements or patterns are required to confer story status on a given phenomenon (...)"; M. Kreiswirth, *Narrative Turn in the Humanities* [in:] *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, D. Herman, M. Jahn and M.-L. Ryan (eds.), London–New York 2010, p. 381.

[8] F.W.J. Schelling, *Historical-Critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, trans. M. Richey, M. Zisselsberger, New York 2007, p. 89.

[9] F.W.J. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, trans. D.W. Scott, Minneapolis 1989, p. 52.

[10] *Ibidem*, p. 52.

known, as a matter of fact mythology does not have one individual, precisely determined originator. Like every collective narration, it was created rather by a whole community, by many people speaking in one unanimous voice. As Schelling himself puts it, "(...) Mythology can be neither the work of an individual person nor of a collectivity nor of the race (to the extent that the latter is merely a composite of individuals), but rather exclusively of the collectivity to the extent that it itself constitutes an individual and is the equal of an individual person."[11] This collective author was "seized by one thought," despite not having a reflective, individual consciousness. At the moment when mythology was generated, people were not thinking rationally and were acting under the influence of something like ecstasy, were possessed by something akin to a Dionysian passion, a higher spiritual inspiration.

In other words, a mythology concerns something universal, at least within the limits of a given culture or community. Problems presented by this collective author(s), speaking through the medium of a mythological narration, are never related to one particular, individual person, but are always to some extent common. In such a collective tale, we are dealing with typical, sometimes archetypal relations, feelings, the most popular and most frequent attitudes towards a few universal situations all people sometimes have to face up to – love, death, suffering, grief, life and so on. Using the language of poetical images, figures of gods, heroes and people endowed with extraordinary, divine advantages or skills, a mythology tells a story which is maybe not a truth in an empirical sense of this term, but nevertheless remains important to community members as a kind of pronouncement which has a higher poetical reality and bears key values and ideas constitutive to a given culture.

What is the relationship between a mythology and a narrative? Are these two different types of expression, or perhaps one and the same type? Is mythology a kind of narrative, or rather only a source of every single story, which reveals some similarities to it despite at the same time remaining a completely separate whole existing according to a totally independent rule?

According to Schelling's views, a mythology founds the basis on which various particular mythological stories, tales and plots grow. As he claims in his *Philosophy of Art*, it provides an artist or a poet with material for his work and so-called private mythology. [12] Some other authors – such as Emily Lyle or Alan Dundes – are convinced that a myth itself is also a specific form of "sacred narrative" which "does carry us back into (...) a deeper prehistory than has been reached through the study of Indo-European languages"[13] (Lyle) or which explains "how the world and man came to be in their present form" [14] (Dundes). In other words, this is also a kind of a narra-

[11] *Ibidem*, p. 51.

[12] As he puts it, "(...) every great poet is called to structure from this evolving (mythological) world, a world of which his *own age* can reveal to him only a part. I repeat: from this world he is to structure into a whole that particular part revealed to him, and to create from the content and substance of that world *his* mythology (...)"; F.W.J. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*..., p. 74.

[13] E. Lyle, "Narrative Form and the Structure of Myth" [in:] "Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore," 2006, vol. 33, p. 59 (see: http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol33/lyle.pdf).

[14] A. Dundes, *Introduction* [in:] *Sacred Narrative. Readings in the Theory of Myth*, A. Dundes (ed.), Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1984, p. 1.

tion, but of a very special type – as Theodor H. Gaster puts it, it is not "(...) just any story of the supranatural that happens to be believed. It is a story that gives verbal expression to the Mythic Idea; in practical terms a story that is specifically associated with a cultic situation (...)."[15] And, as he adds further, "By means of this more limited definition the obstinate problem of what distinguishes a myth from a tale is at once resolved. The difference lies (...) in their function and motivation. A myth is, or once was, *used*; a tale is, and always was, merely *told*. The former presupposes an actual or original counterpart in cultic performance; the latter does not."[16]

In all the conceptions mentioned above, mythological narration is treated as older and as a consequence more fundamental (more genuine to some extent), because as a myth it is closer to a primordial ritual which gives a direct approach to an original truth, to the ideal, poetical matter of all discourses (a universal ocean of poetry, as Schelling puts it in the last chapter of his *System of a Transcendental Idealism*). In spite of this, though, it also remains a story, even if this is not an ordinary, but a sacred, holy tale. This is a reason why although mythology is not exactly the same as a usual narrative their sources are to some extent common – just because both of them constitute some kind of a story, a tale which may be told. Moreover, the latter is only a less symbolic, more rational and logical, more simple and univocal[17] version of the former.

They take their truth and their proper matter from a primordial myth, from a mythical past when people were possessed by a mythological consciousness. These circumstances related to their origins are one of the most important causes of – as mentioned above – such a magical, ideal coherence of a story, elements of which are such discourse universals as ready narrative patterns, expectations which always come true and so on. Every story which is going to be complete and coherent needs such knots in the plot which gather together various events and facts, thus presenting them as a part of a greater whole. Simple models of understanding which let us know in advance that something has to happen exactly in a way assumed by a given pattern or cultural model and which force us to consider the given circumstances, random facts or actions such as a love affair, professional negotiations or an attempt to find somebody's own place in life, are necessary in a narration, because just such universals, prior to every possible experience patterns or narrative categories, create a discordant concordance which according to Ricoeur's views is the source of meaning in a story. In other words, in every narrative as well as in every myth and cultural record there are such – sometimes very far from empirical facts and prior to them – convictions which as a matter of fact are what shapes the story and push it further, although maybe they are, as Williams puts it, "(...) the power which is not simply that (...) of the truth (...)"[18] – and as a consequence that of the reflective thought or a typical scientific discourse.

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[15] T.H. Gaster, *Myth and Story* [in:] *Sacred Narrative...*, p. 123.

[16] *Ibidem*, p. 123.

[17] Of course, this does not mean that a usual narration always has only one meaning and cannot carry a symbolical record at all – for example, it is well known that all valuable literary fictitious narratives can also be also read on different levels and give various possibilities of interpretation – just because they are not and cannot be univocal.

[18] B. Williams, *op.cit.*, p. 308.

In my opinion, Schelling's philosophy of mythology and revelation may provide us with the best explanation of this "unreflective" character of a narration. The power which unites successive events is not "that of the truth." This is because what we have here is not only or mainly a usual discourse which consists of statements and sentences referring to facts in a way described by, for example, positivist philosophers, but rather something created like a piece of art, or rather generated like a myth, by a mythological consciousness which does not depict a reality but creates its own world in human consciousness using the same creative forces (potentions) which are also true, real sources of a nature itself. In short, this is simply a power of nature which acts in human consciousness, and this is a reason why the answers and schemes of understanding proposed by a narration and imposed by it on real events are sometimes such irrefutable and necessary, "magical" and giving associations with a constraint received by an individual as violating his or her personal autonomy and freedom of choice.

It is necessary now to say a few words about narrative identity. First of all I would like to define this term, which does not have a long history or tradition in philosophical discourse and appeared towards the end of the last century, in the early 1980s (although some philosophers – for example Wilhelm Schapp or Hannah Arendt – also applied it earlier, but only on a smaller scale and less pointedly).

There are especially three thinkers whose works are important for understanding what exactly narrative identity is – Alasdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor and Paul Ricoeur. For example, according to MacIntyre's views, it is "(...) a concept of a self whose unity resides in the unity of a narrative which links birth to life to death as narrative beginning to middle to end. (...) we understand our own lives in terms of the narratives that we live out."[19] Ricoeur puts it even more explicitly in the Conclusion to the third part of *Time and Narrative*, where he writes the following words: "What justifies our taking the subject of an action, so designated by his, her, or its proper name, as the same throughout a life that stretches from birth to death? The answer has to be narrative. To answer the question 'Who?' as Hannah Arendt has so forcefully put it, is to tell the story of a life. The story told tells about the action of the 'who'. And the identity of this 'who' therefore itself must be a narrative identity."[20]

In other words, a narrative identity is somebody's life-story which constitutes somebody's self and personal identity, and is one and the same thing as the manner in which he or she understands who he or she is. Such an individual, private story may be a trusty copy of a typical pattern of personality most popular in a given community, as for example MacIntyre puts it. He is convinced that an individual can only faithfully follow the traditions and schemes of behaviour he or she inherits and in such a way shares with his/her ancestors, and that as a matter of fact it is impossible to invent here something really new and original, refuting the sometimes hard and inwardly contradictory heritage of our common past which shaped our identity.

[19] A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, Notre Dame, Indiana 1984, pp. 205, 212.

[20] P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, trans. K. Blamey, D. Pellauer, Chicago–London 1988, p. 246.

This is not the only possible answer, because according to such thinkers as Taylor, although a community with all patterns of personality available somewhere is very important in our becoming ourselves, an individual always has a free choice and can autonomously make so-called qualitative distinctions and choose who he or she wants to be, which values are the most important for his/her life and his/her own, private narration.

Irrespective of which of these possibilities is closer to our own intuitions concerning the way in which we become who we are, there is no doubt that an idea which lets us consider culture and individual identity as two sides of one and the same coin is widespread in the humanities and social sciences. Many philosophers as well as anthropologists will surely agree with the thesis expressed above, that our personal story (narration) may be shaped only on the basis of a collective tale which is one and the same thing as our culture. Secondly – and perhaps more importantly – that as a consequence our narrative identity is nothing more than a special, particular, rich or less so, interesting and individual or less so, but only a version of such a common mythology that is very hard to understand really deeply and properly without its particular primordial, social context. As Ruth Benedict puts it, "The large corporate behaviour (...) is nevertheless a behaviour of individuals. (...) In reality, society and the individual are not antagonists. His culture provides the raw material of which the individual makes his life. If it is meagre, the individual suffers; if it is rich, the individual has a chance to rise to his opportunity. Every private interest of every man and woman is served by the enrichment of the traditional stores of his civilization. The richest musical sensitivity can operate only within the equipment of standards of its tradition. It will add, perhaps importantly, to that tradition, but its achievements remains in proportion to the instruments and musical theory which the culture has provided."[21]

The last question I would like to consider concerns the problem of whether, and if so, how, such partially "untrue," mythical origins of our personal life-story may influence such key ethical values important to the individual as freedom of choice, moral autonomy or dignity. If our personal identity as well as our culture and everything belonging to it – every work, every story, and even every type of discourse, including – although it may sound like a paradox – that of science and truth, are only a kind of "well shaped tale to potential narrators of it,"[22] are we still able to speak about any real world or reality as opposed to fiction or treat such moral universals as freedom, dignity or justice as something more than part of somebody's private narration? Or, in other words, do we still have the duty to tell the truth, the opportunity to do it, and are we still free in a world in which practically everything, including our own personality, our idea of who we are, is "constructed" like a piece of art and is only an element of an individual or collective story, a by-product and a distant derivative of a collective, social myth?

[21] R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, Boston 1959, pp. 251–252.

[22] B. Williams, *op.cit.*, p. 313.

First of all, we must underline that there is no agreement among researchers in such questions as the structure of so-called real experience. Some are convinced that this is only a "structureless sequence of isolated events,"[23] while others show that although maybe a structure of our real actions "is not necessarily narrative structure," there is "a kinship between the means-end structure of action and the beginning-middle-end structure of narrative."[24] Alternatively, they refer to Husserl's analysis of the consciousness of internal time to prove that in our real experience there is also a continuity because putatively completely isolated events "(...) are charged with the significance they derive from our retentions and protentions"[25] and so on. In a word, there is no compelling, ultimate proof that real life is chaotic and narration is always organised and ordered.

Ultimately, as Carr puts it , the only "real difference between "art" and "life" is not organisation vs. chaos, but rather the absence in life of that point of view which transforms events into a story by *telling* them."[26] In short, in the real, empirical world there is simply no narrator, no person or subject who gathers together everything that is happening and recounts it as a complete whole, a story with a beginning, middle and end. There is no one to explain the final moral and the sense which lets us answer the question of why all this suffering, grief, war, work etc. were done and experienced. Even if such an Ideal Narrator exists somewhere, we cannot contact him or her and ask for an explanation of the purposes and endeavours. We may only wait and believe (or not) that when everything ends some day in the future we will understand his reasons and that somewhere over there (for example in Plato's world of ideas and so on) there exists some transcendental, absolute basis or justification of a whole story which is not completely irrational and absurd and is not reduced to this tale which is being told.

As for our personal narrative, we are in an incomparably better situation because here there is no doubt that we ourselves are occupying "the story-tellers' position with respect to our own lives."[27] As reflective entities or, as Taylor formulated it, "self-interpreting animals," we are at the same time agents (characters who act) and narrators who are all the time "literally telling, to others and to ourselves, what we are doing."[28] As Carr puts it, "such narrative activity" which accompanies our actions "is a constitutive part of action, and not just an embellishment, commentary, or other incidental accompaniment. (...) I am the subject of a life-story which is constantly being told and retold in the process of being lived. I am also the principal teller of this tale, and belong as well to the audience to which it is told."[29]

This is a reason why our personal life-story, although – like every narrative – it has origins in a collective mythology and – at least to some extent – depends on

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[23] D. Carr, *op.cit.*, p. 122.

[24] *Ibidem*, p. 122.

[25] *Ibidem*, p. 122.

[26] *Ibidem*, p. 124.

[27] *Ibidem*, p. 125.

[28] *Ibidem*.

[29] *Ibidem*, pp. 125–126.

various narrative patterns and ready social images or expectations which "constitute" and "(...) create meaning rather than reflecting or imitating something that exists independently of it,"[30] in spite of that may still have the chance to remain reflective and to be treated as a practical, ethical or moral activity "in the broad sense used by Alasdair MacIntyre and derived ultimately from Aristotle."[31] As Kim Atkins puts it, "(...) the narrative conception of identity provides a more inclusive and exhaustive account of identity than the causal models employed by mainstream theorists of personal identity because only the narrative model preserves the first-person perspective, which is essential to an ethical perspective."[32] In other words, only by speaking from the first-person perspective, so important in a narrative model of personality (important because an autobiographical narration which is one and the same as somebody's narrative identity cannot be told by anybody else than an individual him- or herself), may we fully realise our potential of being ethical, rational entities, and may become really moral subjects, those who are able to make free, autonomous choices. Only by taking such a point of view of a particular but at the same time conscious person may we avoid a danger related to the "magical" tendency described above, characteristic of every narrative which lets us consider various events or actions as ready wholes given from above, as something which must necessarily happen.

This is possible because a conscious, reflective and consequently inwardly free individual can accept a given pattern of thinking or refuse it deciding in an always to some extent free way how and according to which narrative scheme to understand or to interpret given circumstances or facts. This possibility does not exist either in a mythology itself (in a world in which only a mythological consciousness functions, not a reflective one), nor in a fictional world of invented, literary narrations, in which characters and heroes are, as Williams puts it , always "given wholes," they are not living, "they have no future" and "all of them is already there": "When the reader starts, and in that sense when they start, they are already finished."[33] This is the reason why they are nor free and remain fully an element of a myth while a real, alive person, someone who has a reflective consciousness, may in spite of that keep an autonomy and a freedom of choice, never becoming entirely a hostage of somebody's or even his/her own mythology.[34]

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[30] *Ibidem*, p. 126.

[31] *Ibidem*.

[32] K. Atkins, *Narrative Identity, Practical Identity and Ethical Subjectivity* [in:] "Continental Philosophy Review" 2004, vol. 37, No. 3, p. 341. About the ethical aspects of a narrative identity see also P. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, translated by K. Blamey, Chicago and London 1994, p. 163 and further.

[33] B. Williams, *op.cit.*, p. 311, 310.

[34] Such an ethical first-person perspective corresponds well with Schelling's idea of a dialectics of mythology and revelation according to which a revelation is the second part of a creative process and takes place in the face of mythology (its first, creative part, a recurrence of a nature process in human consciousness). An ethical point of view always assumes a reflective consciousness, a freedom of choice and an individual autonomy, and this is a reason why it may appear only when mythology is losing its power of impact on human minds, when people are no longer under the influence of such a "Dionysian" passion which was necessary to generate all mythological images (for a dialectics of mythology and revelation in Schelling's thought, see for example F.W.J. Schelling, *Urfassung der Philosophie der Offenbarung*, Teilband 1, W. E. Ehrhardt (Hrsg.), Hamburg 1992, lecture 1; for the problem of the to some

Summing up, although our narrative identity – like every narrative – has its origins in a collective, mythological tale which is a basis of our culture and all patterns of thinking available in a given culture system, by acting and sometimes also judging we may in spite of that remain free, and are not determined to choose just such an option of being or thinking which is a direct consequence of a mythological consciousness and is fully a part of a collective myth. It is true that our personal life stories, and as a consequence also we as individuals, are shaped by it, but this does not mean that we entirely belong to such a mythological reality and cannot retain the ability to live a life which is reflective, responsible and non-fictive.

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extent "natural" (non-human) character of mythical images and the consciousness which has generated them, see *ibidem*, lecture 33).

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American Shakers – Dying Religion, Emerging Cultural Phenomenon

Maciej Potz
Department of Political Systems, Faculty of International and Political Studies
University of Łódź

Abstract

Through analysis of doctrine, cult, social and political organisation and the relations with the outside world, the article traces a dual development in the history of Shakerism, an American communitarian religious group: its rise and decline as a religion that has led to its almost complete extinction, and the accompanying process of its absorption into the mainstream of American culture. This became possible when, in the 20th century, Shakers – celibate communitarian pacifists – ceased to be perceived as a serious challenge to the American values of individualism, private property and the traditional model of family. Instead, their image was romanticised and material aspects of their culture emphasised, thus making Shakerism a sort of antiquarian curiosity, despite the survival of a small community of believers.

Słowa kluczowe: shakeryzm; komuny religijne; religie amerykańskie; kultura amerykańska
Keywords: Shakerism, religious communes, American religions, American culture

Shakerism[1] has been a constant presence in the American religious and cultural landscape since the late 18th century, a unique example of "realised utopia" – a communitarian religious group which, in contrast to its secular counterparts, has survived for well over two centuries. Nonetheless, this presence has not been static. The group has gone through periods of rise and decline, in terms of demography (from nine English immigrants in 1774 to the peak of around five thousand members in the mid-19th century, to just three believers remaining at the time of writing), religion (original

[1] Throughout the article, the terms "Shakers," "Shakerism" etc. refer to the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, i.e. English Shakers, not to Indian Shakerism – a syncretic religion with a mixture of native and Christian elements that developed among Native Americans in the second half of the 19th century.

developments in theology and ritual in the 19th century, compared with relative inactiveness of the last hundred years) and social organisation.

Much as they sought isolation from the "world" in their secluded villages, Shakers could not avoid entering into relations with the surrounding society and the culture it represented. These relations were initially hostile: nobody shed a tear when they fled England in the late 18th century, nor were they greeted with open arms on the American soil. The hostility continued well into the 19th century, gradually giving way to indifference, finally to be replaced by active interest in the Shakers themselves and all things Shaker. Just about the time Shakerism was dying as a religion, it was absorbed into the mainstream of American popular culture.

The article seeks to analyse and explain these dual developments of the decline of Shakerism as religion and its emergence as a recognisable cultural phenomenon. The convergence of the two processes can be accounted for by the same factors – their communitarian, celibate lifestyle and pacifist views – which, when present, made Shakerism attractive for converts but repulsive to their non-Shaker neighbours and, when absent or at least weakened, cleared the way for a softened, romanticised image of Shakerism to recognition as a welcome addition to American culture at the cost of their survival as a religious group.

1. Shakerism as a religion

The approach adopted here for the analysis of Shakerism will be sociological rather than historical. Instead of presenting a point-by-point history of the sect, certain stages of the group's development will be distinguished, with their characteristic features as far as theology, cult, way of life, patterns of leadership and relations with the outside world are concerned.

1.1. The prophetic period

From the point of view of sociology of religion, Shaker history reproduces a fairly typical pattern of charismatic beginnings followed by institutionalisation (routinisation), a virtually necessary condition of the group's survival beyond its first generation. The Shakers originated in Manchester in England around 1758, when Ann Lee, a young working-class girl, joined a group of religious enthusiasts founded by John and Jane Wardleys[2] and, about ten years later, took over the leadership of the sect.[3] Lee established herself as a prophetess and an inspired instrument of God and, having

[2] The group originated from the Quakers, but was influenced by the so-called French Prophets, Protestants fleeing to England from persecution in Catholic France during and in the aftermath of the Camisard revolt. Spiritual possession, trance prophesying and similar phenomena became widespread among these Huguenot communities during Catholic repression in the late 17th and early 18th century (see C. Garret, *Origins of the Shakers*, Baltimore and London 1987, chap. 1, 2).

[3] R. Francis, *Ann the Word. The Story of Ann Lee, Female Messiah, Mother of the Shakers, The Woman Clothed with the Sun*, New York 2000, pp. 49–50.

failed to make significant missionary progress in England, led her eight most devoted followers to America on board the *Mariah* in 1774. There the group, after a period of dispersion, founded the first Shaker village – Niskeyuna in New York. Soon, a successful missionary journey by Ann Lee and other Shaker leaders in the 1780s won the group new converts in New York, New England and, in the early 19th century, as far away as Ohio and Kentucky.[4]

The doctrine of the group was basically Christian, but it contained a number of original features. It stressed the dual male-female nature of the Godhead[5] and proclaimed the return of the Christ Spirit, once embodied in Jesus, in the person of Ann Lee.[6] This quiet Parousia marked the beginning of a final dispensation in which all who repent and adopt the Shaker way of life can live without sin awaiting salvation. Another extremely important element of both the doctrine and the lifestyle of the sect was the requirement of strict celibacy, reflecting Mother Ann's – as she was called by the believers – abhorrence of all carnal desire.

One of the most interesting aspects of this opening stage of the Shakers' history was their cult. Ecstatic practices like shaking (hence the name of the sect, initially a derogative word attached to it by its critics), whirling, rolling on the floor, glossolalia, barking, laughing, dancing, running after one's outstretched hand, long trances and similar behaviour – interpreted as the operation of the Holy Spirit – bear obvious resemblance not only to the Camisards, who were among the Shakers' spiritual forefathers, but to ecstatic modes of worship of other religious traditions and even shamanic practices.[7] They reflected the believer's faith in the constant presence of God in their life, providing continuous revelation through the mouths of their prophetic leaders and intervening in their daily affairs.

Predictably, the political organisation of the group was initially based almost exclusively on the personal charisma of the leaders – Ann Lee, her brother William, and James Whittaker – who did not hold any official position or rank within the sect. As far as the social structure is concerned, the new converts were not forced, in these early years, to move to Shaker settlements, pool their resources and adopt a fully communal way of life, beyond the spiritual community of faith.

Shakers' relations with the rest of the society in that period were complex. In Bryan Wilson's terminology, they displayed characteristics of a utopian sect, combining reformist (trying to remedy the evils of the world) and introversionist (seeking isolation from the outside world) tendencies.[8] On the one hand, in the reformist vein, they felt an urge to share the truth they had just found with others and to spread the Word. The tactics they adopted, however – zealous, offensive preaching, disrupting

[4] J. Neal, *The Kentucky Shakers*, Lexington 1977, chap. 1.

[5] F. Evans, *Shakers. Compendium of the Origin, History, Principles, Rules and Regulations, Government, and Doctrines of the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing*, New York 1859, p. 103.

[6] T. Johnson, *Life in Christ Spirit*, Sabbathday Lake ME 1969, p. 6.

[7] J. Sieradzan, *Szaleństwo w religiach świata*, Kraków 2007, pp. 345–347.

[8] B. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, New York 1973, p. 26; for the application of this theoretical framework to the Shakers see: J. Whitworth, *God's Blueprints. A Sociological Study of Three Utopian Sects*, London and Boston 1976, pp. 4–6.

other denominations' worship etc. – did not serve them well. It aroused almost universal hostility towards the Shakers and resulted in their persecution. After the move to America, the hostility continued, albeit for different reasons. Shakers arrived in the middle of the Revolutionary War and, true to their pacifist ideals, refused to bear arms or even support the American cause. They simply did not take sides at all. Small wonder, in these circumstances, that they were treated as English spies, persecuted, and even, for a time, threatened with expulsion.[9]

On the other hand, within a few years of their arrival in America, they withdrew into the "wilderness," for a time avoiding all contact with the world (the introversionist element). Even later, when the group grew in numbers, the Shakers limited communication between the rank-and-file members and their non-Shaker neighbours to a necessary minimum: all commercial transactions, financial dealings etc. were entrusted to a few carefully designated trustees.

1.2. Charisma institutionalised

The process of charisma institutionalisation, i.e. "basing doctrine, cult and social organisation, including leadership of the sect, on a set of durable institutions, repeatable procedures and stable structures that slowly replace the initial divinely inspired pronouncements of a prophetic leader-founder of the group,"[10] is characteristic for the second period of a typical charismatic religious sect's development, when a new generation of members (or leaders) takes over.[11]

The process was initiated, after Ann Lee's death in 1784, by her immediate successor James Whittaker, who stressed discipline and organisation within the hitherto loose group of believers. However, it took the energy and extraordinary administrative skills of the next Shaker leader, the American-born Joseph Meacham, to complete the task. In the area of social organisation, Meacham insisted on gathering all sect members into villages, which consisted of "families" – units of believers, naturally unrelated, living and working together. Shaker life was based on the triple community of goods, production and consumption and on the principle of the separation of sexes, which included both absolute celibacy and separate habitation, eating and working.

As regards the sect's political system, the original charismatic authority had gradually been replaced with the charisma of office (to borrow another Weber's category), even though the leaders had not completely renounced their claim to divine inspiration at least until well into the 19th century. Meacham instituted a four-member Central Ministry, composed of two male and two female members. Technically with authority over the New Lebanon bishopric only, it actually performed the role of the entire sect's governing body. Similar power structures, also based on sex parity, grounded, as indicated above, in Shaker theology, were replicated at the level of each

[9] S. Stein, *The Shaker Experience in America*, New Haven–London 1992, pp. 13–14.

[10] M. Potz, *Legitimation Mechanisms as Third-dimension Power Practices: the Case of the Shakers*, "Journal of Political Power" 2012, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 383.

[11] M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Berkeley 1978, Book I, III:5.

bishopric (a unit of several villages) and each "family."[12] The succession procedure within the ministry was co-optation by the surviving members, which contrasted with the acclamation, typical of the succession of the first three leaders in the charismatic period. Both procedures were theocratic in that they sought to transmit and confer on the new leaders a divine sanction.[13]

As far as the religious doctrine of the group is concerned, the institutionalisation process meant gathering orally propagated beliefs and testimonies and fitting them into a comprehensive theological system. This was based on accounts of the first Shakers, who had the privilege of knowing the prophet herself, written down into functional equivalents of sacred texts, such as *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations and Doctrines of our Ever Blessed Mother Ann Lee etc.*[14] or *Testimonies Concerning the Character and Ministry of Mother Ann Lee and the First Witnesses of the Gospel of Christ's Second Appearing* etc. The editors of these accounts, the first Shaker theologians, were naturally inclined to present Ann Lee as a larger-than-life figure, more or less consciously crossing the line dividing biography from hagiography. In the process, a sort of foundational myth was established, in which some supernatural powers and qualities were attributed to Ann Lee. Among other things, she was miraculously delivered from being starved to death in an English prison by James Whittaker, who fed her through a pipe;[15] she calmed the churning waters of Atlantic during the Shaker party's passage to America on the *Mariah*;[16] she spoke twelve, or even, according to another version, seventy-two different languages;[17] and she was capable of spiritual healing. Mother Ann's words and deeds, often repeated and discussed, were regarded by all Shakers as indispensable guidance in their spiritual and everyday life. Consequently, the form in which they reached the future generations of Shakers, especially after Lee's contemporaries had died out, was all-important. Other Shaker religious literature of the period comprised theological treatises, laws and regulations as well as apologetic and polemical texts.

No less interesting were developments in cult practices. The ecstatic dancing, chaotic trance sessions and inspired utterances of the previous era were discouraged and eventually abolished. Instead, certain dances with set steps, figures and group movements, sometimes very elaborate, were introduced. In terms of social control, this made the believers' behaviour more predictable and easier to supervise, thus con-

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[12] P. Brewer, *Shaker Communities, Shaker Lives*, Hanover and London 1986, pp. 25–27.

[13] See testimonies of eye-witnesses of the early successions in *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations and Doctrines of our Ever Blessed Mother Ann Lee and the Elders with Her; Through Whom the Word of Eternal Life Was Opened in This Day of Christ's Second Appearing: Collected from Living Witnesses*, R. Bishop, S.Y. Wells, J. Tallcott et al. (eds.), Albany, NY [1816] 1888, p. 278; R. Bishop, *A Journal or Register of Passing Events Kept by Rufus Bishop (1839–1849)*, manuscript no. 2 in Shaker Manuscript Collection, New York Public Library; for a more in-depth analysis of the Shaker succession procedures see M. Potz, *Legitimation Mechanisms...*, pp. 391–395.

[14] *Testimonies of the Life...*

[15] *Ibidem*, p. 40.

[16] R. Francis, *op.cit.*, s. 82.

[17] N.R. Campion, *Mother Ann Lee. Morning Star of the Shakers*, Hanover and London 1990, p. 37.

tributing to the discipline and cohesion of the community[18]. By the first decades of the 19th century, with the exception of periods of revived religious enthusiasm (notably the Era of Manifestations in the late 1830s and early 1840s), the Shakers were not shaking any more.

Relations with the "world" in this phase were still dominated by concerns similar to those that caused the initial hostility and suspicion towards the Shakers. However, a new issue was also added to the traditional charges of pacifism and lack of patriotism. Shakers were accused of breaking families by drawing into their ranks wives or husbands who left their spouses (and often children) behind. Even though Shakers were careful to settle all financial matters before admitting any new believer, a number of cases reached the courts. Nonetheless, in general, the situation began to normalise towards the middle of the 19th century. The perception of the Shakers became more favourable; they came to be generally regarded as hard-working farmers, friendly and helpful neighbours and fair business partners.

1.3. Decline

Shakers were at the peak of their fortunes around the middle of the 19th century. Their numbers reached four to six thousand, according to various estimates.[19] They were economically prosperous (specialising in agriculture, especially seed production, but also manufacturing of high-quality goods such as furniture, various home appliances etc.) and socially well-organised. But soon, in the second half of the century and especially towards its close, the situation had gradually worsened. The ranks of the Society dwindled for a number of reasons. First, there was a shortage of new converts – the main source of the sect's membership – due to their celibate life (the other source was gaining custody of orphans). Mass religious movements – such as the great awakenings or revivals of the past, whose participants often joined groups like the Shakers when the event was over but the enthusiasm still high – were now rare, especially after the great prophecy of William Miller failed in the 1840s.[20] Second, the ordered, disciplined, monotonous, semi-monastic way of life of Shaker communities, offering little amusement and no chance for intimate interpersonal relations, was less and less attractive, especially for young people. They rarely entered the sect voluntarily, and those who were brought up by it often left when they reached adulthood. Third, the torments of the Civil War, unfair financial dealings of some trustees and the growing feminisation of the Society[21] all undermined its economic well-being. As a result of all these processes, the United Society entered the 20th century with just over 800 members.[22] Out of the maximum of over twenty villages, spread over a ter-

[18] M. Potz, *Legitimation Mechanisms...*, pp. 383–384.

[19] E.D. Andrews, *The People Called Shakers. A Search for the Perfect Society*, New York 1953, pp. 290–292; S. Stein, *op.cit.*, p. 87; P. Brewer, *op.cit.*, p. 217, providing data for the Shaker Eastern communities.

[20] See L. Festinger, H. Riecken, S. Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails*, London 2008, pp. 13–25.

[21] P. Brewer, *op.cit.*, table B.3, p. 218.

[22] S. Stein, *op.cit.*, p. 242.

ritory from Kentucky to Maine, only three survived into the second half of the 20th century. These were populated by several dozen elderly believers.

But the decline of the Shakers was not just a matter of demography and economy. Religiously, they found themselves at a crossroads. A strong modernist current emerged within the Society, calling upon the Shakers to display greater openness, entering into dialogue with the outside world and fascinated with the development of secular thought. The spirituality of its representatives, most prominently Elder Frederick Evans of New Lebanon, was inward-oriented, of an Eastern, individualistic, rather than communitarian type. Shakerism was for them a path leading to God through individual experience rather than a set of communal religious practices.

At the other end of the spectrum were traditionalists, led by Elder Harvey Eads of South Union village, Kentucky. They condemned abandoning the traditional Shaker way of life as precisely the source of the crisis that had begun to loom on the horizon from the middle of the 19th century and eventually led the group to the verge of extinction. From their perspective, the disciplined, ordered way of life and worship of Shakers of the past generations was crucial to the fortunes of the Society and, most importantly, to the salvation of believers.[23] To paraphrase the long-standing Catholic dogma, for Shaker traditionalists there was no salvation outside the community.

This silent controversy – never an open conflict with schisms, mass apostasies or anything of that sort – continued into the 20th century, finally culminating in a bitter dispute over the future of Shakerism. In 1965, the Central Ministry of the United Society, in the persons of Eldresses Emma King and Gertrude Soule, both residing in Canterbury village, New Hampshire, decided to close the ranks of the Society, i.e. refuse to admit any new members, thereby condemning the group to slow extinction. This curious step, an "institutional suicide" of sorts,[24] even more puzzling considering the growing popularity of Shakerism at that time (see 2 below), was never accepted by the other of the two remaining villages, Sabbathday Lake, Maine.

The divide between the two villages went along the lines of the modernist-traditionalist controversy referred to above. For the sisters of Canterbury (no male Shaker survived into the 1960s), Shakerism would continue even after the last believer was gone, in the form of Shaker values, moral rules, work ethic and original spirituality. The conservatively oriented Sabbathday Lake sisters, on the other hand, could not imagine Shakerism without actual Shakers living in the villages. To them, a living community of believers was the essence of their religion. And even though, following the 1965 dictum of the Ministry, they could not formally admit new members into the ranks of the Society – which included signing a formal covenant, a sort of a contract, to certain extent resembling monastic vows – a number of new believers joined the community and effectively became Shakers, some of them reaching the leadership position in the village (namely, Brother Theodore Johnson in 1960 and, later, Wayne Smith and Arnold Hadd in 1978). Present-day Sabbathday Lake Shakers do not regard the Ministry pronouncement as anything but a suggestion for the two

[23] *Ibidem*, pp. 333–335.

[24] M. Potz, *Shakerzy – studium instytucjonalnego samobójstwa*, [in:] *O wielowymiarowości badań religioznawczych*, Z. Drozdowicz (ed.), Poznań 2009, p. 205.

then-surviving communities, rather than a legally binding declaration. According to their understanding, the covenant is a contract between a new member and the community he or she joins, and not the United Society as a whole. Therefore, the Central Ministry could not prevent any Shaker community from admitting new members.[25] Eventually, by the early 1990s, all Canterbury Shakers had passed away. The only surviving community, Sabbathday Lake in New Gloucester, Maine, currently consisting of just one brother and two sisters, faces an uncertain future.

2. Shakerism as a cultural phenomenon

2.1. In the eyes of strangers

As already indicated, the Shakers' first encounters with the outside world were not auspicious. They faced persecution both in England – not entirely unprovoked by themselves – and in America, were they arrived right at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, not the best time for a group of English pacifists to enjoy the blessings of religious liberty in their new promised land. There were other reasons for hostility, too, like the charges of breaking families, which led to pogroms and heavy beatings of several Shakers, including Ann Lee herself. Even when persecution ceased, the Shakers were treated as weird curiosities at best. Especially their cult practices – initially trance movements, later ordered, but still unique dancing – engendered unhealthy fascination, as numerous spectators flocked to Shaker meetinghouses to watch their worship.

But the sort of people who looked at Shakers with true appreciation and even admiration were various social reformers, progressive thinkers and writers, the likes of Robert Owen, Charles Fourier or Leo Tolstoy. They perceived Shaker villages as successful experiments in communal living, something that some of them had been striving for themselves, most often with unsatisfactory results. The details of Shaker social organisation had been studied and the role of religion considered in this utopia-come-true they seemed to have achieved.

The idea of communism was not, of course, new to Americans, in theory or in practice. Various communities have been formed, both of religious and secular provenience. Some of them were founded by immigrant prophets and reformers (the German Rappites, the Swedish colony of Bishop Hill or Owen's New Harmony),[26] while others had American origins (e.g. Brook Farm of the Transcendentalists),[27] but none could rival the Shakers in endurance and prosperity. Friedrich Engels, the major theorist of communism and leading thinker of early Marxism, found the example of Shakers an

[25] S. Paterwic, *Historical Dictionary of the Shakers*, Lanham, Toronto, Oxford 2008, entry: "Closing of the Covenant."

[26] D. Cohen, *Not of the World. A History of the Commune in America*, Chicago 1973, chap. 4–5; G.B. Lockwood, *The New Harmony Movement*, New York 1971.

[27] D. Cohen, *op.cit.*, pp. 117–122; T. Żyro, *Boża plantacja. Historia utopii amerykańskiej*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 204–216.

ideal argument to demonstrate the realism and practicality of the idea of a communitarian society. Contrary to critics, who dismiss communism as attractive in principle but utopian in practice, Shakers managed to create and maintain thriving societies based on common ownership of goods. Engels, drawing on a traveller's report, marvelled at their prosperity. "Their barns are full of wheat... They have cattle of the finest quality... In every case there is more than they need."[28] At the same time, as the German philosopher was quick to stress, Shakers are free, happy people. "Among them no one is forced to work against his will.... They know no poverty and have nothing to fear. In their ten villages there is not a single policeman; there are no judges, no lawyers, no soldiers, no prisons, and yet everything functions normally. As far as they are concerned, the laws of the country do not exist."[29] This great, somewhat anarchistic vision, nicely vindicating the author's theoretical assumptions, is, to be sure, largely idealised, but it nevertheless betrays a fascination with Shakers' successful social experiment. As for the role of religion and the principles derived from it (such as celibacy), Engels, rather predictably, disposes of them as of "no importance." He remains, to a large extent, blind to the fact that other, non-religious communities (some of which he himself mentions) were extremely short-lived in comparison to the Shakers.

Leo Tolstoy, another early admirer of the Shakers, certainly cannot be accused of underestimating the role of religious inspiration in social life. His own social ideas, especially since the 1880s, were based on his reading of Christ's gospel, especially the Sermon on the Mount. In many respects they were quite similar to Shaker principles, such as simplicity, pacifism or non-resistance. Tolstoy corresponded with elders Alonzo Hollister and Frederick Evans in the 1890s. In his letters he expressed his appreciation for the progressive views and social organisation of the Shakers (although he disapproved of spiritualist tendencies in their doctrine), but also posed an important question, central to his own thinking. If Shakers are, as he himself was – and as all genuine Christians should be according to the Russian writer – believers in non-resistance, how could they keep property at all? Their property was communal, to be sure, but still it belonged to somebody – the whole commune in this case. What if someone else tried to take it away from them? "Do you acknowledge the possibility for a Christian to defend property from usurpators?,"[30] asked Tolstoy. He regarded holding property as inevitably leading to violence, since defending it, even by legal, non-violent means, involves relying on the institutions of the state (courts, police etc.), whose *modus operandi* is, precisely, the legalised use of violence.[31] Ev-

[28] Quoted in: H. Desroche, *The American Shakers. From Neo-Christianity to Presocialism*, Amherst 1971, p. 295.

[29] *Ibidem*.

[30] *Leo Tolstoy to Frederick Evans*, 15.02.1891. The manuscripts of the correspondence between Leo Tolstoy and Shaker leaders (Frederick Evans and Alonzo Hollister) are mostly in the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio and Tolstoy Museum, Moscow; photocopies can be found in Sabbathday Lake Shaker Library, New Gloucester, Maine. The transcription is available at: M. Potz (transcription and ed.), *Leo Tolstoy-Shakers correspondence (Korespondencja Lwa Tołstoja z shakerami*), Repozytorium UŁ, http://repozytorium.uni.lodz.pl:8080/xmlui/handle/11089/1128 (accessed: 30.11.2014).

[31] M. Potz, *Tołstoj i shakerzy. Z dziejów idei radykalnego chrześcijaństwa*, "Przegląd Religioznawczy" 2010, vol. 235, no. 1, pp. 5–20.

ans did not share these reservations, since the Shakers were already reconciled with the American state at that time and had ceased to perceive it as a threat to their non-violent ethics (as Evans writes, "We, the Shakers, under the American secular government, can carry out the abstract principles, taught by the revelation of the Christ spirit, more perfectly that has hitherto been done by mortal men and women"[32]). Nonetheless, Tolstoy remained interested in the Shaker experience and kept in touch with Evans until the latter's death in 1893.

2.2. The rediscovery of the Shakers

Despite this interest, the few remaining Shakers, secluded in their villages, fell into oblivion in the early 20th century. Already in the 1930s and '40s, however, the interest in Shakerism began to resurface, initially in the circles of art collectors and history enthusiasts, and later among the wider public, too. If one was to name a single person who contributed most to the rediscovery of the sect, it would no doubt be Edward Deming Andrews. Himself an art collector and merchant, Andrews came across the Shakers by accident and almost immediately became fascinated with virtually every aspect of their culture. He wrote extensively (often with his wife Faith) on topics ranging from Shaker furniture and other crafts to their songs and religious art to the history of the group.[33]

Fascination with the Shakers, which the works of Andrews and his followers aroused, centred initially on Shaker architecture, furniture and other material objects. Their material culture was admired for its distinctive style, combining harmony and simplicity with usefulness. Collecting Shaker items has become fashionable and remains in vogue to date. A chair that could be obtained for a few dollars in the times when one Shaker village after another was being closed down is now worth a few thousand dollars. The most valuable pieces of furniture, fine examples of Shaker woodworking, may sell for up to $220,000 – the price paid by Oprah Winfrey at a 1990 auction.[34] Other celebrities, such as Bill Cosby, are serious collectors, too. Shaker style is now recognisable, at least among people of some knowledge of art and design. Those who cannot afford originals can choose from a flourishing market of Shaker replicas or, indeed, learn the crafts themselves at a variety of workshops.

The revival of interest in Shakerism was by no means limited to their material culture. In the 1950s and especially 1960s, Shaker villages became popular destinations for various spiritual seekers of the hippie generation, drawn by what was perceived as the isolation, serenity and simplicity of the Shaker life. The majority of them left after periods extending from a few weeks to several months, but even those who seri-

[32] *Frederick Evans to Leo Tolstoy*, 6.03.1891.

[33] E.D. Andrews, *op.cit.*; E.D. Andrews, F. Andrews, *Visions of the Heavenly Sphere. A Study in Shaker Religious Art*, Charlottesville 1969; *idem*, *Work and Worship: The Economic Order of the Shakers*, Greenwich 1974.

[34] R. Reif, *What Recession? Auction Records of 1990*, "New York Times," 17.01.1991.

ously contemplated joining one of the two surviving communities were denied the possibility of signing the covenant at that time.[35]

In parallel, the Shakers became a tourist attraction. Some of the closing villages were re-opened as museums (e.g. Hancock, Massachusetts and Canterbury in New Hampshire, Pleasant Hill in Kentucky) with large collections of Shaker buildings, furniture, decorative objects, tools, utensils and other items on display. Each year they host thousands of visitors drawn by the rich heritage of the group, most of them not even realising that there still are Shakers alive in America. The last functioning village, Sabbathday Lake, apart from providing guided tours of some of the buildings, has many supporters from around the country. Organised in an association called Friends of the Shakers, they participate in the life of the village and support it financially.

Further evidence for the absorption of Shakerism into the mainstream of American culture is the enhanced media presence of the group. Several articles on Shakers have been published in wide-circulation magazines such as *National Geographic*[36] and *Yankee*[37] as well as dailies including *The New York Times* and *The Boston Globe*. A number of documentaries have been produced, including Tom Davenport's *The Shakers* (1971), Ken Burns's *The Shakers: Hands to Work, Hearts to God* (1984) and Jane Treays's BBC film *I Don't Want to Be Remembered as a Chair* (1990; the title comes from a bitter comment by a Canterbury eldress on the widespread fascination with Shaker material culture to the point of forgetting the still living Shakers themselves).

Shakers attracted the attention of many scholars, some of them rather prolific (Edward Andrews himself, or June Sprigg), which resulted in scores of books and articles published on various aspects of Shaker religion, culture and everyday life. There are some outstandingly researched studies among them, dealing with the Shaker history,[38] social organisation,[39] religious art,[40] music,[41] and the groups' attitude to the natural world,[42] as well as valuable works on Shaker theology and social structure, including from a feminist perspective.[43] But the vast majority of publications have been of a lighter sort, including Shaker cookbooks, do-it-yourself books on Shaker crafts, photographic albums of the villages, memoirs, children's books etc.

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[35] S. Stein, *op.cit.*, pp. 386–390.

[36] C. Newman, S. Abell, *The Shaker's Brief Eternity*, "National Geographic" 1989, no. 9.

[37] T. Clark, *Shattering the Shaker Image*, "Yankee" 44 (1980), no 1.

[38] S. Stein, *op.cit.*

[39] H. Desroche, *op.cit.*; J. Whitworth, *op.cit.*

[40] E.D. Andrews, F. Andrews, *op.cit.*

[41] D. Patterson, *Shaker Spiritual*, Princeton 1979.

[42] C.B. Straub, *Honorable Harvest. Shakers and the Natural World*, New Gloucester 2009.

[43] M. Procter-Smith, *Women in Shaker Community and Worship. A Feminist Analysis of the Uses of Religious Symbolism*, Lewiston 1985.

3. The mainstreamisation of the Shakers – a conclusion

The curious path the Shakers walked through two centuries of American history has led them from persecution to oblivion to their recent rediscovery by American popular culture. The reasons for the initial hostility are quite clear. As pacifists, they refused to bear arms or support the American cause in the Revolutionary War, which brought about the accusation of loyalism and lack of patriotism. Shakers had other "un-American" characteristics, too. They condemned all carnal relations as impure and sinful, denounced marriage and replaced the natural, biological family with a notion of spiritual family – an unrelated and, to a certain degree, isolated group of men and women. Still worse, they were accused of breaking families by drawing wives and husbands into their ranks. Finally, the Shakers held all property in common, a disgrace for individualistically minded Americans. The pacifist, celibate communists that were Shakers must have been a thorn in the side of their individualistic, patriotic, traditional, family-loving compatriots.

It is more intriguing, perhaps, just why American popular culture, despite this triple anathema of pacifism, sexual asceticism and communism, embraced the Shakers with the enthusiasm it did in the 20th century. For one thing, just as the sect's fortunes began to decline, their economic prosperity came to an end and their attractiveness to potential converts was greatly diminished, they ceased to present any danger whatsoever to the mainstream Protestant establishment of the country, just as they could not compete economically with their non-Shaker neighbours any more. A potential rival turned into a harmless curiosity.

Secondly, the Shakers themselves, without giving up their communal way of life, have been opening to the world as the years have passed. Their asceticism was limited to the sexual sphere, but was not anti-modernist. Unlike the Amish, they welcomed new developments, both in technology and ideas. Some Shaker "modernists," like Elder Frederick Evans, actively participated in the social and political debates of their times.

But the single most important factor in the process that led Shakers from the fringe to the mainstream of American culture was their representation in literature, film, newspapers and other media of mass communication. The image of Shakerism that emerged from the writings of Edward Deming Andrews and his followers is highly romanticised and, as some critics charge,[44] ahistorical. Their peculiarities are played down; instead, they are presented as hard-working, industrious, honest, reliable farmers, the personifications of American virtues.[45] This sentimental picture is perpetuated by filmmakers and newspaper reporters, heralding the fast-approaching end of the last surviving Shakers, but eager to immortalise their values and their lifestyle into a nostalgic rural utopia.

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[44] S. Stein, *op.cit.*, p. 423 ff.

[45] This statement, admittedly, is not true for all scholarly literature – many works, such as those mentioned above in notes 38–43, consider these original, untypical aspects of Shakerism. It is, nonetheless, certainly true for the bulk of the popular Shaker-related literature.

This is not to imply that the last surviving Shakers have passively accepted this role of "wax figures" in the gallery of American social and religious history. Even though the Sabbathday Lake village is open to all sorts of visitors, friends, tourists and seekers, and can get quite busy in the summer season, the life of the small group is still genuinely communal and celibate, and their religious observances sincere and meaningful. Especially Brother Arnold Hadd has retained a vivid interest in and a deep knowledge of Shaker theology and has made successful efforts to revive certain aspects of Shaker religiosity, such as regular prayer meetings, singing etc. How demanding this quasi-monastic way of life still remains is testified to by a number of prospective converts who abandoned the group after periods of novitiate extending from a few days to a few months.[46] All this contrasts sharply with the sites of the former Shaker villages, now turned into visitors' centres with exhibitions, workshop, libraries etc., to a large extent contributing to the pop-cultural, idealised image of the group. How this culturally constructed utopia relates to reality matters little, for the Shaker image has long slipped out of control of the Shakers themselves.

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[46] Personal communication with Br. Arnold Hadd, Sabbathday Lake, Maine, September 2012.

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A Critique of the Moral Optimism of Sam Harris. Polemical Comments

Konrad Szocik
Wyższa Szkoła Informatyki i Zarządzania w Rzeszowie

Abstract

Sam Harris, one of the new atheists, believes that science is an authority in moral issues. Science can help us understand what our moral duties are, and what is right and wrong in a moral sense. However, the cultural and historical diversity of human behaviours, especially the history of wars and conflicts, suggests that it is difficult to show one, common and universal kind of morality. Here we show that Harris's moral theory is a particular project which could not be "scientifically" justifiable.

Słowa kluczowe: nowy ateizm, moralność, etyka, wartości, konwencjonalizm
Keywords: New Atheism, Morality, Ethics, Values, Conventionalism

Science, especially biology, on the one hand offers important materials for philosophical reflections about morality, ethics and religion. On the other hand, it provides new tools for their study (neurobiology, evolution). Sam Harris, one of the new atheists, believes that science explains all moral topics. However, scientific research referring to morality may be interpreted ambiguously. Look at two cases. In the 17 October 2014 issue of *Science*, Sarah F. Brosnan and Frans B.M. de Waal showed that "the sense of fairness did not evolve for the sake of fairness per se but in order to reap the benefits of continued cooperation."[1] In the next issue of the journal (24 October 2014), we can read that "in the course of evolution, some animals have overcome the fear and stress they feel when encountering humans or unfamiliar members of their own species and become less aggressive."[2] In this article I show that the moral optimism characteristic

[1] S.F. Brosnan, F.B.M. de Waal, *Evolution of Responses to (Un)fairness*, "*Science*" 2014, vol. 346, *no. 6207,* doi:10.1126/science.1251776 [accessed: 20.10.2014].

[2] A. Gibbons, *How We Tamed Ourselves – and Became Modern*, "*Science*" 2014, vol. 346, no. 6208, p. 405.

of Harris is not justifiable, and science cannot offer an unequivocal answer to moral questions. However, while this question of the *is/ought* distinction is well-known in the history of philosophy, it is important to underline that it continues to apply today, independently of scientific progress (in the case of Harris, especially of neurological research). This paper is a kind of polemical response to Harris's moral theory. I do not refer to Harris's critique of religion, which does not include the recent research in the cognitive science of religion, especially Scott Atran's research on the complex impact of religious beliefs on both prosocial cooperation ("ingroup trust") and conflict situations.[3] Harris's approach assumes an ideal situation of simple consequentialism between religious beliefs and practical effects.[4] I think that, following the response of Atran, we can deem Harris's critique of religion to be debunked.[5]

According to Sam Harris, science can explain and show our moral duties. It can guarantee achievement of the best possible life. Harris thinks that there are right and wrong answers to moral questions, like in physics or biology. He argues that universal morality can be defined with "reference to the negative end of the spectrum of conscious experience," which he calls "the worst possible misery for everyone."[6] Harris writes:

> As it is possible for individuals and groups to be wrong about how best to maintain their physical health, it is possible for them to be wrong about how to maximize their personal and social well-being.[7]

This is a good example not of the impact of science, but of logical erroneous inference. Nature and knowledge about one element does not provide knowledge about another one.

Harris calls his moral theory "moral realism" ("moral claims can really be true or false") and "consequentialism" ("the rightness of an act depends on how it impacts the well-being of conscious creatures").[8] Religious morality and the religious kind of reasoning are rather connected with deontologism than consequentialism.[9] Despite his realism, he sees an incompatibility between particular notions of happiness. He quotes Patricia Churchland:

> No one has the slightest idea how to compare the mild headache of five million against the broken legs of two, or the needs of one's own two children against the needs of a hundred unrelated brain-damaged children in Serbia.[10]

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[3] S. Atran, J. Ginges, *Religious and Sacred Imperatives in Human Conflict*, "Science" 2012, vol. 336, no. 6083, pp. 855–857.

[4] S. Harris, *The End of Faith. Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason*, New York–London 2004, p. 12.

[5] S. Atran, *Here He Goes Again: Sam Harris's Falsehoods*, http://www.thisviewoflife.com/index.php/magazine/articles/here-he-goes-again-sam-harriss-falsehoods [access: 01.11.2014].

[6] S. Harris, *The Moral Landscape. How Science Can Determine Human Values*, New York 2010, p. 39.

[7] *Ibidem*, p. 62.

[8] *Ibidem*.

[9] J. Piazza, P. Sousa, Religiosity, Political Orientation, and Consequentialist Moral Thinking, "Social Psychological and Personality Science" 2014, no. 5(3), p. 15.

[10] S. Harris, *The Moral Landscape...*, p. 68.

It seems better, in this context, to define moral values in terms of other moral obligations, not in terms of facts about the world. Harris's criterion of morality, especially "the problem of demarcation between the moral and non-moral spheres,"[11] is the concept of welfare.[12] For him, nature is not morally neutral, and science can discover moral good and evil.

Harris dogmatically defends moral realism (moral truth)[13] independently of the philosophical deconstruction made by Immanuel Kant.[14] Kant showed that basic philosophical questions (the existence of God or of free will) may be the same – true and false – and we cannot justify any of them.[15] We can assume their truth, but that is a regulative, not constitutive idea. In Europe, before Kant's critique of metaphysics, came the collapse of the Church monopoly. This collapse abolished the homogeneity of the scientific kind of interpretation of the world and initiated many kinds of philosophical and scientific explanations.[16] The main question is, referring to rejection of dogmatism, the conviction of the self-supporting morality. I think that, philosophically speaking, it is impossible to justify this kind of morality.[17] We are able to accept the sceptical Kantian paradigm in regard to metaphysical and epistemological issues, but much less to apply the same scepticism to questions of morality and values. Similarly, we can say about moral scepticism or neutralism:

> Morality ceases to have any definite content, and there can be no meaningful distinction between correct and mistaken use of moral predicates, as long as they are sincerely used. Any type of action or a state of affairs with any set of objective features can become morally relevant through the performative process of endorsement.[18]

Harris's moral theory is based on the assumption that desire of happiness and welfare is common and universal and should be the basis for morality. I think that this noble project is the result of good intentions and is one of the various moral theories, especially incompatible with history of wars and conflicts.

Harris represents the conviction, typical of both Christianity and the Enlightenment, of the universal nature of morality. Possible universal features connected with our psycho-physical groundwork, especially concepts of suffering and happiness, cannot justify objective morality. We cannot accept these human states as an ethical basis, as Harris would,[19] because we can refer to other values (life, freedom) for which it is sometimes necessary to suffer. Happiness and suffering are too individual

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[11] A.G. Zavaliy, *Saving Morality: A Case against Moral Neutralism*, "Studia Humana" 2012, vol.1/2, p. 40.

[12] Harris presents some kind of utilitarian perspective which is against hedonic tradition.

[13] S. Harris, *The Moral Landscape...*, p. 62.

[14] *Ibidem*.

[15] However, Kant may be interpreted as a moral realist, I mean by this his scepticism referring to true knowledge about external reality.

[16] K. Mannheim, *Ideologia i utopia* [Ideology and Utopia], transl. J. Miziński, Lublin 1992, p. 10.

[17] T. van den Beld, *The Morality System with and without God*, "Ethical Theory and Moral Practice" 2001, vol. 4, no. 4, p. 386.

[18] A.G. Zavaliy, *op.cit.*, p. 41.

[19] S. Harris, *The End of Faith...*, p. 185.

and not objectively measurable enough to be able to serve as the basis for objective morality. The religious alternative is offered by William Lane Craig[20] or Kerry Walters, who claim that without God any basis for morality vanishes.[21] We need some arbitrary idea or phenomenon, secular or religious, to create so-called objective morality (rather belief about morality than morality itself). A good example is Atran's study of the morally inspiring role played by "sacred values."[22]

Why should we identify morality with welfare, virtues and pleasure?[23] We can say that morality should be referred to other aims, and a unique criterion could be only our conscience. In this approach, to do something morally means to be consistent with own conscience. Harris believes that every man should be good to others. Consider the behaviours of chimpanzees, which often use lethal aggression to achieve particular aims, and such behaviour has an adaptive nature.[24] Look too at the research of Atran, who showed that "people making judgments about whether to oppose or to support war use the logic of deontology rather than the logic of instrumental rationality."[25] Atran points to the compatibility between "ingroup altruism" and "intergroup violence."[26] In this context, Harris's belief that moral norms are connected with facts seems incompatible with the complexity of human perspective, which includes not only happiness and suffering but also ideas, ambitions and other nonmaterial, "sacred" values.

Morality refers to individual conscience and depends on the emotional state shaped by personality, nature, tendencies, circumstances, and conditions. We can violate others' moral norms (moral convictions), but if our action is compatible with our morality and incompatible with ethics, we violate only ethics, not our morality. In the public sphere, a "common" base is conventional ethics, which usually cannot be congruent with all individual moralities. Ethics in some sense is based on some kind of interpretation of morality, but is subordinated to some group interests, not to individual conscience. We could prefer, in the same way, to destroy the life and welfare of another or take satisfaction from cruelty, which was an important part of the European culture in the context of public executions and of the mistreatment of children, servants, patients or prisoners, and the cruel nature of punishments.[27]

We can evaluate human behaviours by referring to particular ethical systems, such as the Bible, the state constitution, the penal code, the Universal Declaration of Hu-

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[20] W.L. Craig, *Five Reasons God Exists* [in:] W.L. Craig, W. Sinnott-Armstrong, *God? A Debate between a Christian and an Atheist*, Oxford 2004, pp. 17–18.

[21] K. Walters, *Guides for the Perplexed: Atheism*, London 2010, p. 136.

[22] S. Atran, J. Ginges, *Religious and Sacred Imperatives...*

[23] S. Harris, *The Moral Landscape...*, p. 68.

[24] J.B. Silk, *Animal Behaviour: The Evolutionary Roots of Lethal Conflict*, "Nature" 2014, no. 513, pp. 321–322; M.L. Wilson et al., *Lethal Aggression in Pan is Better Explained by Adaptive Strategies than Human Impacts*, "Nature" 2014, vol. 513, pp. 414–417.

[25] J. Ginges, S. Atran, *War as a Moral Imperative (Not Just Practical Politics by Other Means)*, "Proceedings of the Royal Society. Biological Sciences," http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/early/2011/02/08/rspb.2010.2384, doi:10.1098/rspb.2010.2384 [accessed: 18.10.2014].

[26] *Ibidem*.

[27] F. Nietzsche, *Z genealogii moralności* [The Genealogy of Morals], transl. G. Sowinski, Kraków 1997, pp. 72–73.

man Rights or the code of Hammurabi. We cannot say which human behaviour is good or bad itself in a moral sense. We may compare some behaviours and actions and refer them to particular ethical standards. We can claim that it would be better if people were good and compassionate to others. Harris mistakenly compares the scientific search for morality with medicine, biology or physics.[28] These disciplines seek to describe some parts of the world and to show facts. Morality says what ought to be on the basis of various, often mutually contradictory human actions. That is difficult to derive moral norms from observed facts. If we derive some norms we create a particular ethical system useful for some aims, but we do not create and do not uncover universal moral norms that are obligatory for all people.

Morality is a phenomenon compatible with the private conscience, which theoretically refers to the whole human species, at least as a philosophical postulate. Morality may exist without any ethical systems, as believed, for instance, by Pierre Abelard: ethics has social and political functions, and should concern one universal morality which is the basis for all ethical norms.[29] Harris does not distinguish between morality and ethics.[30] Something moral theoretically should be always good or bad, and something ethical has a specific nature. This distinction is significant in the discussion on religion, which to today is considered one of the basic sources of morality. Harris is not right that people share a similar "ethical insight."[31] We have many various ethical systems, also contradictory. In the American public ethics, the death penalty is accepted, but not in the European public ethics. Ethics is a kind of aesthetics of public life, which specifies what does and what does not correspond with a particular imagination of the public order. Ethics is relative, and depends on particular interests and aims. We can call this social and political utility of ethics an "aesthetic" activity which serves to eliminate all actually phenomena or states of affairs that are "ugly" for some society. Morality may be understood as universal and common to all mankind, independently of the dominant "aesthetic" kind of ethics which serves to organise society.

I think that we cannot justify the common nature of values, despite their social utility. We can postulate the leading importance of values of life or freedom, but this approach may be equally justifiable as the primacy of power, as underlined by Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Genealogy of Morals*. Since 1948, we have based Western civilisation on the concept of human rights, but three years earlier the US army used nuclear bombs against other people. This example shows the nature of ethics which is subordinated to some aims and interests. It is not important, according to Harris, whether an attitude has a religious or irreligious motivation. The background is a person's point of view, psychophysical condition and political, social, psychological or economical aims, for which one may sometimes use the nuclear bomb, but sometimes may be merciful and compassionate. We can say that the Holocaust was

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[28] S. Harris, *The Moral Landscape...*, pp. 36–37.

[29] P. Abelard, *Rozmowa pomiędzy filozofem,* Żydem *i chrześcijaninem* [A Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Jew and a Christian] [in:] P. Abelard, *Rozprawy*, transl. L. Joachimowicz, Warszawa 2001, p. 51.

[30] S. Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation...*, p. 14, 16; S. Harris, *The Moral Landscape...*, p. 56.

[31] S. Harris, *The End of Faith...*, p. 45.

ethical within Nazi ethics, just as the use of nuclear bombs was ethical in American war ethics and the burning of heretics was ethical in the ethics of the Church, which wanted to defend Church order, that is some kind of public aesthetics. We usually evaluate these three acts as morally wrong, and probably we refer to some kind of intuitive, natural morality which is not universal for all people – or at least was not universal for the Nazis, for Americans when they used nuclear bombs and for Church figures who persecuted others for their beliefs. So-called right moral beliefs are not common for all people who decide to make so-called morally wrong acts.

Harris believes that the basic human obligation is to avoid the worst misery for others.[32] I prefer the approach of Craig, who underlines that the idea of authority is a unique and necessary base for the concepts of obligation and prohibition.[33] For Harris, human happiness is the main criterion of morality. We can evaluate the moral nature of actions regarding the happiness of their agents. We could therefore justify actions forbidden by public law because they have caused the happiness of their agents. In judicial practice, accepted as morally good are the same behaviours which are criticised as morally wrong if they are made by persons outside the law.

Perhaps we should admit that morality understood as universal human tendencies evaluated as good or bad does not exist? Maybe we are morally neutral, just as nature is neutral? Are various concepts of religious ethics, similarly to state, professional or other types of ethics, forms of aesthetic of our public life? We want to define what is beautiful and what is ugly in ethical terms. For various societies in various times, different behaviours were and continue to be beautiful and ugly. Our contemporary moral imagination may be only a temporal and historical form characteristic of the Western civilisation developed after the Second World War. Perhaps in future we will return to other moral and ethical concepts in which not the idea of freedom or equality, but other ideas, opposed to them, will be the new basis for "objective" morality. How can we conclude what kind of human behaviour should be exemplary if we can observe in the history of humanity various forms of behaviours, from charity to mass murders and even the Holocaust, made several dozen years ago in Western civilisation which, formally, draws "inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law."[34] Only society or political authority decides, referring to its interests and aims, what kinds of behaviours may provide to achieve these aims (these actions are then morally good) and what behaviours preclude them (they are considered as morally bad).

For Harris, morality is part of scientific disciplines.[35] Science is unable to say anything about human morality, as Harris would like.[36] If science is about facts and

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[32] Sam Harris vs William Lane Craig – The God Debate II, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nebLvSnS-nc 38:00 [accessed: 08.06.2014].

[33] *Ibidem*, 56:00 [accessed: 19.06.2014].

[34] *Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union*, Preamble, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2012.326.01.0001.01.ENG [accessed: 02.06.2014].

[35] S. Harris, *The Moral Landscape...*, p. 2.

[36] *Ibidem*, p. 25.

not about norms (in accordance with Hume's is/ought distinction), how could we extract any moral and ethical norms from these observed facts? Science may show what kinds of behaviours in chemical, medical, psychological or cultural contexts may be used for human life, but these explanations will not say anything about moral norms. If the same behaviour were harmful for others, we would say that it is not ethical, but we do not have any basis to say that it is not moral, especially if this behaviour is a source of happiness for its agent and is compatible with its conscience. Knowledge about human welfare does not create moral norms. We know today as well as several thousand years ago that man wants happiness and wants to avoid suffering. Independently of this knowledge, mankind will realise its aims: social, economic, political or psychological and, depending on actual interests, may protect or destroy the life of others. The history of mankind is a good example of this conventional and historical nature of moral norms. The state of welfare and happiness understood psychologically and physically does not imply moral obligations. What should we do if happiness of one requires suffering of other? Today in the European Union the value of life is the highest and the most important value, but this is absolutely not the case in the USA, where in some states the death penalty is accepted. In this case, a more important value than life is the idea of public order, justice or revenge. Similarly, in cases of self-defence we can kill the attacker, deciding that our life and happiness, "welfare," is more important than his welfare. The attacker probably thinks the same. Society decides that we have rights to freedom and property and the right to life. This is not obvious intrinsically, and in the "state of nature," like in the world of animals, the right to life is contractual and the property of the one who is stronger, faster craftier.

Harris claims that the correlation between brain states and real facts enables an indication of false theories.[37] Brain states correlated with feelings of goodness, welfare or benefits may be caused by different factors. One person is happy as an atheist, and another as a theist. The state of happiness and subjective welfare has various causes for different people. Moral norms and models were developed by particular groups in certain conditions, not by mankind. We cannot compare, as Harris would suggest, morality with logics or medicine, because morality refers to a particular idea and feeling of welfare and happiness and does not have an objective background to give universal criteria and justifications.

We can say, following Nietzsche, that the law itself does not exist. The law must be arbitrarily enacted, and we cannot acknowledge some kinds of behaviours and actions as morally wrong themselves, because life is also expressed by aggressiveness and brutality. In the context of Nietzsche's moral philosophy, the law is artificial and the unnatural limit of the will of power and life.[38] In Nietzsche's and Foucault's point of view, the notion of truth expresses and realises the power.[39]

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[37] *Ibidem*, pp. 187–188.

[38] F. Nietzsche, *op.cit.*, p. 82.

[39] R. Wolin, *The Seduction of Unreason. The Intellectual Romance with Fascism. From Nietzsche to Postmodernism*, Princeton–Oxford 2004, p. 41.

Harris repeats the view of the philosophers of the French enlightenment, for whom human happiness and suffering were the basis of morality.[40] One's happiness may involve suffering of others, and these categories depend on the particular approach. In Nietzsche's deconstruction of morality, the instinct for compassion is needed for weak and helpless people, who subjugated morality and made it useful for their awkwardness. Perhaps the so-called morally good man is really a bad man, and vice versa? Why can we not accept as morally good some values and behaviours which we interpret as bad? Maybe these bad human beings express the real or correct form of humanity?[41] According to Nietzsche, true morality was shaped by the aristocracy, whose actions were identified with good. This aristocratic group was not limited by moral norms, but they created norms.[42] However, the morality of the weak thus destroys the morality of the strong. Morality expresses the human mind and nature, and may not be understood as a finished set of norms which must be accepted a priori. If we create norms and choose kinds of actions that are the best for us, we do not have a basis to think about the universal morality of mankind.

I think that we cannot give a basis to so-called universal, common and objective morality. These attempts, secular as well as religious, express particular points of view, actual aims and interests of individuals or groups. Science, which is a new hope for Harris's idea of universal morality, also belongs to this kind of particular explanation. Knowledge about brains does not give advice for moral theory because various people feel the same good or bad feelings under different stimuli. This difficulty of scientific explanation of morality is, in some sense, similar to the question of qualia in cognitive science. We can know everything about brain function and the neuronal correlates of, for instance, our sensations of colours, but still we do not know how and why the same subjective conscious experiences appear when we see the same kind of objects. It is worth recalling Thomas Nagel's maxim about qualia: "an organism has conscious mental states if and only if there is something that it is like to be that organism – something it is like for the organism."[43] Regarding morality, perhaps we can do neuroimaging and register the functioning of the nervous system, but we could probably not derive from this knowledge about neuronal facts any normative claims and knowledge about welfare in a moral sense.

We should also differentiate explanation from justification. Harris speaks about explanation. His descriptive explanation does not give a basis for justification of his moral postulates. We can create some kinds of ethics, but regarding morality we have an irremovable difficulty in defining what kinds of behaviours and actions are standard and obligatory for man. Maybe every kind of behaviour is natural and "moral" if we are part of nature, and every one of our behaviours expresses and realises our natural possibilities and potential. I think that this topic is some kind of Kantian antinomy. Maybe we cannot justify philosophically, similarly as in metaphysical and epistemological questions, good and evil, and perhaps Haidt and Bjorklund are right

[40] S. Harris, *The End of Faith...*, pp. 170–171.

[41] F. Nietzsche, *op.cit.*, pp. 27–29.

[42] *Ibidem*, p. 35.

[43] T. Nagel, *What is it like to be a Bat?*, "Philosophical Review" 1974, no. 83, p. 436.

to say, "If you are able to honestly examine the moral arguments in favor of slavery and genocide, then you are likely to be either a psychopath or a philosopher."[44]

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[44] A. G. Zavaliy, *Saving Morality...*, p. 49.

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Duchowość New Age

[Recenzja książki: Steven J. Sutcliffe, Ingvild Sælid Gilhus, *New Age Spirituality: Rethinking Religion*, Acumen Publishing Limited, Durham 2013, 298+VI stron]

Adam Anczyk
Instytut Religioznawstwa
Uniwersytet Jagielloński

Wśród licznych fenomenów składających się na obszar nowych ruchów religijnych New Age stanowi prąd o najbogatszej bodaj bibliografii. Literatura przedmiotu jest bardzo obszerna, a temat New Age do dziś stanowi obiekt zainteresowania badaczy. Sam termin jest również często używany w publikacjach z zakresu teorii religii, chociażby z tego powodu, że żadna propozycja teoretyczna próbująca w makroskali poddać analizie kondycję współczesnej religijności nie może pominąć tego zjawiska. Książka będąca przedmiotem recenzji włącza się w szeroki nurt badań nad New Age i jest istotnym głosem w dyskusji nad sposobami definiowania esencjalnych dla religioznawstwa pojęć, takich jak „religia" czy „duchowość".

Tytuł książki – *New Age Spriritуality* – jest odważny, biorąc pod uwagę, że zarówno termin „New Age", jak i „duchowość" należą do zjawisk, które konsekwentnie wymykają się ścisłemu definiowaniu. Mimo wielu starań badaczy reprezentujących różne dziedziny humanistyki – religioznawstwa, antropologii, socjologii, historii, filozofii i innych – do tej pory nie udało się ustalić, czym właściwie jest New Age. „Miękkie" definicje zjawiska włączają do tego pojęcia praktycznie wszystkie przejawy niezinstytucjonalizowanej aktywności człowieka, które w różnym stopniu odbiegają od tradycyjnej definicji religii i religijności, lecz są z nią w jakiś sposób powiązane (choćby przez postulat istnienia zjawisk przekraczających empiryczne poznanie), podczas gdy „twarda" definicja New Age odwołuje nas do prądu związanego przede wszystkim z pojęciem Nowej Ery (Wodnika). Ma to swoje konsekwencje praktyczne zarówno dla badań empirycznych, jak i analiz teoretycznych. Z emicznej perspektywy, uwzględniającej głos wyznawców i autoidentyfikację religijną, New Age byłby zjawiskiem znacznie węższym niż w sytuacji, kiedy stosuje się to pojęcie w kategoriach *etic*. Wtedy nabiera ono cech etykiety sporządzonej nie przez

sympatyków ruchu, ale przez badaczy, którzy pod jednym szyldem gromadzą wiele zróżnicowanych zjawisk. Podobnie sytuacja ma się z pojęciem duchowości, równie (a może nawet bardziej) mglistym i trudnym do zdefiniowania. Sam fakt, że zjawisko duchowości można ujmować zarówno w kategoriach naturalistycznych i nienaturalistycznych (lub antynaturalistycznych), świadczy o tym, jak problematyczne jest jej definiowanie[1]. Autorzy poszczególnych rozdziałów książki są jak najbardziej świadomi tych problemów i ograniczeń, o czym świadczy fakt, że w zasadzie każdy artykuł zawiera odniesienia (i nowe propozycje) do tej metodologiczno-terminologicznej dyskusji. Podtytuł książki – *Religia przemyślana na nowo* (*Rethinking religion*) – zwraca nas w stronę metodologii właśnie. W poszczególnych rozdziałach odnajdziemy zatem liczne odniesienia do współczesnych i klasycznych teorii religii.

Książka składa się z wprowadzenia, podsumowania i piętnastu rozdziałów, podzielonych na trzy części. Pierwsza dotyczy „Duchowości New Age na nowo przemyślanych" (warto zwrócić uwagę na formę pluralis w podtytule, *spiritualities*, a nie *spirituality*), druga – analizy porównawczej różnych aspektów New Age, trzecia zaś koncentruje się na aspekcie pragmatycznym funkcjonowania fenomenów spod szyldu New Age w różnych kontekstach społecznych. Autorami poszczególnych opracowań są badacze współczesnej religijności i duchowości z Europy (krajów skandynawskich, Norwegii, Holandii, Polski), USA oraz Japonii. Lektura przenosi czytelnika do różnych krajów, gdzie występują zjawiska, które można włączyć do nurtu New Age, skłania też, w całokształcie, do analiz porównawczych, dyskusji o tym, co w New Age jest partykularne, specyficzne dla danego środowiska kulturowego, a co być może przynależy do warstwy uniwersalnej. Artykuł Stevena Sutcliffe'a (s. 17–34) stanowi bardzo dobre wprowadzenie do tego rodzaju rozważań, gdyż poddaje krytycznej analizie pojęcie *world religion*, pokazując jego wieloznaczność i podatność na interpretacje, a także zadając pytanie, czy New Age może się mieścić w tego rodzaju taksonomii.

Artykuł autorstwa drugiej redaktorki tomu, Ingvild Sælid Gilhus (s. 35–49), stanowi ciekawy przykład aplikacji metody badań nad religiami starożytnymi (Europy późnego antyku)[2] do współczesności. Opierając się na modelu Jonathana Z. Smitha, dzielącego rzeczywistość religijną na religię „tam" (warstwę społeczną, to, co się robi w przestrzeni publicznej), „tu" (kult domowy i prywatny) i „gdziekolwiek" (wszystko to, co dzieje się pomiędzy „tam" i „tu", na przykład korzystanie z usług wędrownych wróżbitów), który autorka kreatywnie uzupełnia przez pojęcie religii „wszędzie" (czyli treści kulturowych na temat religii, współcześnie na przykład przekazów medialnych), kreśli ona panoramę współczesnego krajobrazu religii w Norwegii. Zwraca uwagę na to, że religii „tam" w Norwegii jest niewiele (jedynie 2–3% mieszkańców tego kraju uczęszcza co tydzień na nabożeństwa kościelne), religia „tu" jest niedostatecznie zbadana, natomiast obraz religii „wszędzie" w mediach jest sprzężony z popkulturą, gdyż koncentruje się na aberracjach, odstępstwach od normy i nowinkach (w tym i zjawiskach pokroju

[1] P. Socha, *Przemiana. W stronę teorii duchowości*, Kraków 2004, s. 33–62.

[2] J.Z. Smith, *Here, There and Anywhere* [w:] *Prayer, Magic, and the Stars in the Ancient and Late Antique World*, S. Noegel, J. Walker, B. Wheeler (eds.), Pennsylvania 2003, s. 21–36.

New Age), nie zaś na życiu największej organizacji religijnej w Norwegii („Kościół Norwegii i luterański protestantyzm rzadko pojawia się w wiadomościach, jeśli tylko zajmuje się swoimi zwykłymi sprawami" [*business as usual*], s. 43). Artykuł Liselotte Firsk (s. 50–65), będący podsumowaniem badań przeprowadzonych w duchu teorii religii Rodneya Starka i Williama Simsa Bainbridge'a w rejonie Dalarna w Szwecji, jest w zasadzie egzemplifikacją tego, że – jakkolwiek definiowany – New Age w Skandynawii żyje i ma się dobrze. Konstatacja ta prowadzi nas do rozdziału Paula Heelasa (s. 66–83), który prowokuje do ponownego zastanowienia się nad procesem sekularyzacji. Pierwszą część książki konkluduje artykuł Ann Taves i Micheala Kinsella (s. 84–98), który dotyczy procesu organizowania się „niezorganizowanych" form religii. Zwracają uwagę na różne ścieżki prowadzące do formalizacji uprzednio niesformalizowanych grup. Uwagi i obserwacje poczynione w tym rozdziale z pewnością okażą się cenne dla socjologa religii zainteresowanego procesem instytucjonalizacji grup religijnych.

Drugą część książki otwiera bardzo ciekawy artykuł Norichiki Horiego na temat nowych form duchowości w Japonii (s. 99–116). Autor stwierdza, że Japonię można uznać za najbardziej zsekularyzowany kraj, gdyż „87,9% osób deklaruje, że nie są członkami Kościoła lub organizacji religijnej" (s. 102–103). Mimo to wiele osób twierdzi, że są w pewien sposób istotami „duchowymi". Być może kwestia terminologii ma tutaj znaczenie. Słowo „religia" (jap. *shūkyō*), jak podaje autor, było „wynalezione jako tłumaczenie zachodniego terminu »religia«" (s. 104). Sam artykuł jest dobrym przykładem tego, jak wiele jest do zrobienia w zakresie prowadzenia badań religioznawczych w kulturowo zróżnicowanych środowiskach. Niektóre passusy przypominają o tym, że ów proces powinien być obustronny, na przykład wzmianki o ruchu neopogańskim w artykule, które ujawniają różnice w rozumieniu pojęcia pogańskości w Europie i Japonii, oraz w bardziej ogólnym sensie – pojęcia „religijności" na przykład graf na s. 113, na którym duchowość ludowa (*folk spirituality*) orientuje w stronę niereligijności (*non-religious*), co jest, powiedzielibyśmy, „niecodziennym" ujęciem tego fenomenu.

Kolejny artykuł przenosi nas w obszar komparatystyki religioznawczej. Mikael Rothstein poddaje analizie wybrane przykłady identyfikacji człowieka ze zwierzęciem (s. 117–131). Do podjęcia rozważań nad tym tematem skłoniło go spotkanie na festiwalu rozwoju duchowego w Kopenhadze (2004) z kobietą, która w trakcie rozmowy oświadczyła, że „jest delfinem", co, jak zauważa autor, „w porównaniu z przeciętnym obrazem siebie, jaki mają trzydziestoletnie kobiety pochodzące z kultury euroamerykańskiej, jest stwierdzeniem wartym uwagi" (s. 117). Sięgając do podobnych przykładów autoidentyfikacji ze zwierzętami, zarówno historycznych, jak i współczesnych, na przykład człowieka-kota *Stalking Cat* (1958–2012), który przez operacje plastyczne starał się upodobnić do tygrysa[3], Rothstein uwypukla ciekawe dla religioznawcy wątki mityczne, które raz po raz powracają w różnych kontekstach kulturowych. Zagadnienie relacji pomiędzy historią i współczesnością jest również

[3] Warto wspomnieć, że mężczyzna ten stał się swojego rodzaju celebrity, dorabiając się obszernego wpisu w Wikipedii, jak też licznych występów medialnych (w Polsce w popularnym programie *Rozmowy w Toku*).

obiektem zainteresowania w artykule dotyczącym szamanizmu *sami* autorstwa Trude Fonneland i Siv Ellen Kraft (s. 132–145). Bardzo ciekawy jest wątek relacji pomiędzy duchowością Lapończyków a różnymi formami duchowości współczesnej, gdyż obecnie „szamanizm *Sami* stał się rdzeniem północnonorweskiego New Age" (s. 135). W artykule można również odnaleźć dyskusję nad terminem „duchowości indygenicznej" (*indigenous spirituality*) i kontekstami jego użycia. Jak trafnie zauważa redaktor tomu Steven J. Sutcliffe (s. 26), jego coraz częstsze stosowanie może być próbą afirmacji marginalizowanych uprzednio form duchowości, określanych mianem „ludowej", „pierwotnej" czy „prymitywnej" (Sutcliffe, zgadzając się z Hanegraaffem, podaje, że podobnie stało się w przypadku nurtów ezoterycznych: wprowadzenie do obiegu terminu „zachodnia tradycja ezoteryczna" [*Western esotericism*] w miejsce okultyzmu i wiedzy tajemnej [*occult*, *hidden*]). O tym, jak mądre jest przysłowie „co kraj to obyczaj", przypomina również artykuł Doroty Hall (s. 146–159), którego tematem jest funkcjonowanie New Age, holizmu i współczesnej duchowości w polskim środowisku kulturowym. Autorka zwraca w nim uwagę na dwie istotne kwestie – podobieństwa praktyk osób związanych z ruchem holistycznym/New Age do „religijności ludowej" (rozumianej szerzej niż religijność niewykształconych osób pochodzących z terenów wiejskich, która miała stanowić kontrapunkt dla religijności wykształconych elit; Hall zwraca uwagę na fakt, że sami praktykujący rzadko odnoszą się do tego pojęcia, a porównania między „nową duchowością" a „religijnością ludową" są raczej częścią dyskursu akademickiego, niemniej jednak są widoczne, s. 154) oraz na (kulturowe) przywiązanie Polaków (w tym osób zainteresowanych holizmem) do katolicyzmu, przede wszystkim w obszarze przywiązania do tradycji. Ostatni rozdział w tej części książki, autorstwa Lisbeth Mikaelsson (s. 160–173), dotyczy relacji pomiędzy duchowością New Age a „duchem kapitalizmu" (*the spirit of capitalism*), który faktycznie unosi się, podobnie jak kiedyś inne duchy i widma, nad Europą i nie tylko. Problematyka podjęta w artykule przenosi czytelnika w obszar rozważań nad rynkową teorią religii.

Trzecią część tomu rozpoczyna podbudowana empirią (badaniami nad ruchem New Age w Holandii) polemika z socjologami religii, którzy analizując przemiany religijności współczesnej, akcentowali zjawisko prywatyzacji, indywidualizacji i ekonomizacji religii. Artykuł Stefa Auspersa i Dicka Houtmana *Poza duchowy supermarket* (s. 174–196), potwierdza na pewno jedną prawidłowość – koncentracja na wybranych aspektach zjawiska może doprowadzić nas do sformułowania dobrej teorii, szerszy ogląd sytuacji dostarcza zaś argumentów do jej krytyki. Być może wyjściem z sytuacji jest zwrócenie uwagi na dane pochodzące z różnych środowisk kulturowych i na tej podstawie, od szczegółu do ogółu, wyciąganie wniosków. Przykładem tego typu rozumowania jest artykuł Fransa Jespersa (s. 197–211), w którym odnajdujemy nie tylko interesujące rozważania teoretyczne na temat definicji granic pomiędzy tym, co sakralne, i tym, co świeckie, ale też ciekawe egzemplifikacje duchowości w stylu New Age w Holandii. Autor wspomina organizację Mannenwork, która pierwotnie (lata osiemdziesiąte ubiegłego wieku) była grupą wsparcia dla mężczyzn orientacji homo- i biseksualnej, a w konsekwencji zaczęła się przechylać w stronę duchowości (s. 200). Innym przywołanym przykładem jest holenderski pro-

gram telewizyjny *Astro TV*, który łączy duchowość i komercję[4]. Następny rozdział książki (Olav Hammer, s. 212–226) przenosi rozważania na metapoziom, zadając pytanie, czy New Age może być lub czy ma potencjał, aby stać się, pod względem kognitywistycznym, „religijnością optymalną". Okraszona przykładami z badań na Tajwanie analiza Shu-Chuan Chen (s. 227–241) wskazuje na istotną rolę emocji w tym procesie. Ostatni artykuł w książce, autorstwa Terhi Utriainen (s. 242–255), dotyczący aniołów, jest przykładem na to, że współczesny świat nie do końca został odczarowany.

New Age Spirituality: Rethinking Religion jest na pewno lekturą obowiązkową dla zainteresowanych przemianami współczesnej duchowości i ruchem New Age. Zarówno podtytuł tomu, jak i refleksje poszczególnych autorów sugerują przedsięwzięcie ponownego namysłu nad definiowaniem *religio*, z uwzględnieniem różnorodnych praktyk i wierzeń określanych mianem „nowej duchowości'. Niemal każdy artykuł porusza istotne kwestie terminologiczne i teoretyczne, pokazując, że analizy empiryczne, nawet tak szczegółowe jak studia przypadków, mogą być okazją do znacznie szerszych rozważań, prowadzonych na wyższym poziomie ogólności. Książka, co istotne, pokazuje także lokalny wymiar New Age i Nowej Duchowości – w tym aspekcie do szczególnie ciekawych i rzetelnie przygotowanych rozdziałów należy zaliczyć te, które dotyczą przykładów z Holandii i krajów skandynawskich.

[4] Zob. F. Jespers, *Astro TV in Holland: Spirituality, Power and Gender*, „Studia Religiologica" 2012, 45 (2), s. 93–108.

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Relacja nauka–wiara. Nowe ujęcie dawnego problemu

[Recenzja książki: *Relacja nauka–wiara. Nowe ujęcie dawnego problemu*, J. Golbiak, M. Hereć (red.), Lublin 2014, ss. 254]

Magdalena Debita
Katedra Doktryn Politycznych i Prawnych
Uniwersytet Wrocławski

Książka *Relacja nauka–wiara. Nowe ujęcie dawnego problemu* to zbiór, który jest pokłosiem 55. Tygodnia Filozoficznego, który odbywał się w Lublinie w dniach 11–14 marca 2013 roku. Książka została wydana w 2014 roku przez Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego w Lublinie. Osią prezentowanej publikacji jest postać i wybrane aspekty dorobku naukowego metropolity lubelskiego arcybiskupa Józefa Życińskiego.

Prezentowane w książce artykuły skupiają się wokół powiązań wiary, nauki oraz racjonalności w dwóch wątkach: procesualnym i emergentyzmu teistycznego. Podjęto dyskusję na temat stosunków między nauką i wiarą oraz omówiono wybrane prace Życińskiego odnoszące się do światowych publikacji dotyczących teorii ewolucji i antyewolucji, które w szczegółowy sposób usystematyzowały chrześcijański teizm w perspektywie ewolucyjnej. W publikacji przeprowadzono także systematyzację dzieł Życińskiego pod kątem gwałtownych zmian w świecie nauki i racjonalności ewolucji. Pracę oparto na „hipotezie pola racjonalności" jako na podstawowej ontologicznej strukturze rzeczywistości. Rys racjonalności stanowi najbardziej charakterystyczną cechę łączącą prezentowane w książce teksty.

Artykuł *Procesualne źródła i emergentne perspektywy relacji nauka–wiara w filozofii Józefa Życińskiego* autorstwa Jakuba Dziadkowca podejmuje te wątki filozofii Życińskiego, które są związane z relacją między nauką i wiarą. Autor stawia tezę, że „nie ma racjonalności w świecie bez wiary" (s. 24). Analizę otwiera omówienie koncepcji hipotetyzmu metafizycznego, czyli poglądu traktującego zdania filozoficzne w kategoriach modyfikowalnych hipotez. Inspiracją dla tych rozważań jest myśl Alfreda Northa Whiteheada i Józefa Życińskiego. Pojawiają się także problemy uniwersum przedmiotów wiecznych, pojęcia potencjalności oraz pola racjonalności. Ważna

wydaje się konstatacja, iż relacja nauka–wiara „objawia się przy przejściu od ontologicznej hipotezy pola do teologicznej koncepcji Boga" (s. 28). Autor zaproponował także nową interpretację hipotezy pola racjonalności, wskazującą, że dla pełnego jej zrozumienia istotne jest uwzględnienie zarówno transcendencji, jak i immanencji.

Dziadkowiec odwołuje się także do koncepcji emergencji, którą Józef Życiński analizował w późnym okresie swojej twórczości. Dotyczy ona wypracowania odpowiedniego stanowiska w dyskusji na temat znaczenia teorii ewolucji biologicznej w odniesieniu do teizmu. Życiński analizował stanowiska badaczy odnośnie do wyżej opisanej problematyki i stworzył własną koncepcję wszechświata emergentnego, a więc emergencji wyrażającej się w stworzeniu nowej jakości w wyniku ewolucji. Ten rodzaj koncepcji, zwanej emergentyzmem teistycznym Życińskiego, zdaniem autora wymaga dodatkowych uściśleń. Tezę ontologiczną o sakramentalności przyrody oraz koncepcję boskiego działania stwórczego Dziadkowiec uważa za kluczowe i pozwalające na spójne uporządkowanie refleksji Życińskiego oraz Whiteheada na temat działalności Boga w emergentnym świecie.

Artykuł Stanisława Jaromiego *Józef Życiński i herezja inteligentnego projektu* nawiązuje do programu filozoficznego Józefa Życińskiego. Autor dokonuje próby zbadania wydźwięku inteligentnego projektu oraz jego interpretacji dokonanych przez Życińskiego. W tekście tym pojawia się również wypracowane przez Życińskiego interesujące pojęcie „platonizującej filozofii matematyki" rozróżniającą matematykę zawierającą obiektywne struktury niezależne od czasu oraz matematykę, zawartą w publikacjach matematycznych (s. 53).

Autor wyraźnie starał się ukazać myśl Życińskiego jako rodzaj przeciwdziałania kryptomanichejskiemu rozumieniu „inteligentnego projektu" oraz propozycję szczególnego łączenia odkryć nauki z tezami filozoficzno-teologicznymi. Treść artykułu znacząco wzbogaca katalog podstawowych napięć między teorią darwinistyczną a naukami Kościoła w przestrzeni refleksji katolickiej w Polsce. Jaromi podkreślił za Życińskim, że w doktrynie katolickiej w zasadzie nie istnieje radykalny antynaukowy fundamentalizm. Myśl chrześcijańska zawsze wychodziła naprzeciw nowym teoriom i naukowym ujęciom dotyczącym natury rzeczy i człowieka. Wreszcie Jaromi wskazuje także na najważniejsze rozbieżności ewolucjonizmu i kreacjonizmu, pozwalając czytelnikom lepiej zrozumieć istotę sporu pomiędzy zwolennikami obu koncepcji, a także szczegółowo przedstawia dysputy ich propagatorów.

Autor kolejnego tekstu – *Czy w racjonalnym świecie jest jeszcze miejsce dla wiary? Program filozoficzny Józefa Życińskiego* – Wojciech Kotowicz odwołuje się między innymi do podkreślanej przez Życińskiego racjonalności ewolucji nauki i hipotezy pola racjonalności. Temat ten podjął wcześniej Jakub Dziadkowiec, jednak Kotowicz przedstawia nowe znaczenia refleksji Józefa Życińskiego. Między innymi wskazuje na rolę ewolucjonizmu chrześcijańskiego w podkreślaniu nierozerwalnych relacji między rozumem (nauką) a wiarą. Stwierdza, że „ideałem w metanauce Życińskiego jest racjonalność" (s. 102), a więc kategoria istotna nie tylko dla uprawiania nauki, lecz także w praktyce uprawiania teologii. Racjonalność łączy się tutaj z możliwością poznania przyrody dzięki stałym jej czynnikom, takim jak stabilność i matematyczność. Autor, za Życińskim, podkreśla, że matematyczny opis świata jest możliwy, gdyż podstawowym poziomem w ontycznej strukturze przyrody jest pole racjonalności. Kotowicz

wskazuje na inspiracje Życińskiego metafizyką Whiteheada, a przy tym podkreśla antyfundamentalizm samego arcybiskupa, który dążył do pogodzenia dwóch różnych wizji świata i wyrażenia tego w języku teologii. Zgoda na istnienie wielorakich interpretacji rzeczywistości nie jest sprzeczna z teoriami logicznymi i sprawdza się także na gruncie religii. Ta myśl Życińskiego stanowi główną oś rozważań.

Marek Słomka, autor tekstu zatytułowanego *„Fides et ratio" – Jan Paweł II i abp Józef Życiński*, porównał refleksje dwóch wielkich polskich teologów na temat relacji nauki i wiary, wyciągając z tej analizy bardzo interesujące wnioski. W opinii Słomki Jan Paweł II podkreślał, iż możliwe jest wyjście poza proste zestawienie nauki z prawdami Objawienia, ponieważ prawda wykracza poza empiryczne poznanie otaczającej nas rzeczywistości. Istotne jest więc interdyscyplinarne podejście w relacji religia–nauka, jako że pozwoli uniknąć wzajemnego izolowania się czy zwiększania dystansu. Z kolei Życiński, zdaniem Słomki, wskazuje, że nauka i jej rozwój determinują odnowę metafizyki, która powinna otworzyć się na metodologiczny pluralizm. Niebezpieczeństwo, o jakim pisze arcybiskup, polega na zamknięciu metafizyki w wąskim gronie specjalistów bądź w jednym ośrodku, co oczywiście może doprowadzić do jej ograniczenia.

Prezentowana publikacja odwołuje się do problemu dobrze znanego i wielokrotnie podejmowanego. W literaturze polskojęzycznej odnoszą się do niego między innymi: Krzysztof Mech (w książce *Logos wiary. Między boskością a racjonalnością*, Kraków 2008), Adam Smereczyński (*Rozum a wiara*, Toruń 2003), Jerzy Braun (*Wiara szukająca rozumu. Teologia mistyczna i droga zbawienia*, Toronto 1974), czy choćby Henryk Klimek (*Zrozumieć i wierzyć bez dogmatu*, Toruń 2001).

Wśród tych publikacji prezentowany zbiór wyróżnia się przede wszystkim tym, że jego autorzy sięgają po prace opierające się na refleksji osadzonej wokół nauk ścisłych lub silnie się do niej odwołujące. Dzieje się tak dlatego, że praca powstała przy współudziale członków Katedry Fizyki Teoretycznej Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, co znacząco wzbogaca refleksję humanistyczną. Autorzy poszczególnych artykułów, prezentując wiele sposobów postrzegania, analizowania oraz interpretowania relacji pomiędzy nauką a wiarą, odwołują się nie tylko do wybranych koncepcji filozoficznych, lecz także do historii cywilizacji czy podstaw nauk ścisłych i eksperymentalnych. Pokazują w ten sposób, jak szerokie może być spektrum problemu. Dzięki zaprezentowanym rozważaniom możliwe jest pełniejsze zrozumienie usytuowania zarówno nauki, jak i teologii we współczesnej klasyfikacji dyscyplin wiedzy i sposobów poznania.

Mimo wskazanych mocnych stron recenzowana publikacja może się jednak spotkać z równie silnymi zarzutami. Najważniejszym z pewnością będzie odczuwalny brak odniesień do niektórych zapalnych problemów obecnych w dzisiejszej refleksji bioetycznej. Mowa tu o gwałtownych sporach o aborcję, eutanazję, kriogenikę, przedłużanie życia człowieka czy problem inżynierii genetycznej. Ważnym zarzutem może być także brak logicznego uporządkowania poszczególnych artykułów.

Warto jednak zwrócić uwagę na ten zbiór, którego podtytuł (*Nowe ujęcie dawnego problemu*) wskazuje na istnienie pewnego rodzaju światopoglądowej rewolucji, której zdecydowanie warto się przyjrzeć.

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Buddyzm jako lekarstwo na kryzys

(Recenzja: John Crook, *Kryzys światowy a humanizm buddyjski. Ostateczna rozgrywka: upadek albo odnowa cywilizacji*, tłum. P. Listwan, Warszawa 2014)

Stanisław Obirek
Ośrodek Studiów Amerykańskich
Uniwersytet Warszawski

Nie dla wszystkich buddyzm jest ważną propozycją duchową. Sądzę, że w krajach tradycyjnie chrześcijańskich przeważa niechęć i lęk przed nim. Charakterystyczna jest opinia Jana Pawła II, który w opublikowanym w 1994 roku wywiadzie *Przekroczyć próg nadziei*, tak się o tej religii wyraził: „soteriologia buddyzmu stanowi poniekąd odwrotność tego, co jest istotne dla chrześcijaństwa". I by nie było wątpliwości, co myśli o przesłaniu Buddy, dodał: „Buddyzm jest w znacznej mierze s y s t e m e m »a t e i s t y c z n y m«"[1]. Sądzę, że podziela tę opinię większość polskich katolików, którzy zetknęli się z buddyzmem, czytając o nim właśnie w książce papieża.

Tymczasem z tekstów buddyjskich, a zwłaszcza z komentarzy samych buddystów, możemy się dowiedzieć, że po pierwsze, jest to religia znacznie starsza od chrześcijaństwa i raczej polemiką z tą religią niezainteresowana z oczywistych powodów. Dzisiaj jest natomiast coraz częściej postrzegana jako atrakcyjna alternatywa dla chrześcijaństwa, zwłaszcza w jego instytucjonalnych przejawach. Również coraz częściej można się spotkać z przekonaniem, że buddyzm może być prawdziwym lekarstwem na bolączki współczesności, a więc nie tylko jest postrzegany jako bardziej przekonujący system wierzeń religijnych, ale wręcz jako odpowiedź na wyzwania, jakie przynosi nowoczesna i ponowoczesna kultura zachodnia. Nawet jeśli się tego przekonania nie podziela, to sądzę, że warto je poznać. Pierwszą próbą zapoznania szerszego kręgu odbiorców ze światem buddyzmu było wydanie w 1987 roku antologii *Buddyzm* w opracowaniu Jacka Sieradzana, pomyślanej jako podręcznik religioznawstwa dla szkół średnich[2]. Zmiana systemowa, która nastąpiła w Polsce

[1] Jan Paweł II, *Przekroczyć próg nadziei*, Lublin 1994, s. 77 i 78.

[2] *Buddyzm*, oprac. Jacek Sieradzan i in., Kraków 1987.

dwa lata później i zamiast planowanego religioznawstwa wprowadziła do szkół katechezę katolicką, sprawiła jednak, że pozostał on praktycznie bez echa. Nieocenione zasługi dla popularyzacji buddyjskich tekstów źródłowych ma Ireneusz Kania, który przetłumaczył sporządzone przez siebie wypisy tekstów starobuddyjskich *Muttavali*, ważny tekst hagiografii buddyjskiej *Opowieść o życiu Milarepy* i *Tybetańską Księgę umarłych*. Każda z tych książek została poprzedzona przez tłumacza istotnym wstępem wprowadzającym w ciągle przecież egzotyczny świat buddyjskich wyobrażeń[3]. Dopełnieniem tych translatorskich dokonań Kani jest wybór jego eseistyki *Ścieżka nocy*, z której buddyzm wyłania się jako ważny komponent kultury europejskiej[4]. Ostatnio zostało też wznowione piękne tłumaczenie Stanisława F. Michalskiego fragmentu podstawowego tekstu buddyjskiego *Dammapadam, czyli ścieżka prawdy*, zawierającego kluczowe tezy[5]. Dokonania Kani są tym ważniejsze, że ciągle brak tłumaczeń klasycznych opracowań Richarda Gombricha[6] czy Jaya Garfielda[7]. Cieszy tłumaczenie monografii Hermanna Oldenberga[8], która chociaż została opublikowana w 1881 roku, nadal zachowuje swoją wartość. Z polskich opracowań trzeba odnotować historię buddyzmu w Indiach pióra Marka Mejora i ostatnie udane próby przybliżenia buddyzmu i jego związków ze stoicyzmem podjęte przez Marcina Fabjańskiego[9]. Warto też odnotować małą książeczkę Juliena Riesa *Buddyzm*, wydaną przez krakowskich jezuitów, którzy zresztą szczególnie zasłużyli się w popularyzacji religii niechrześcijańskich[10].

Właśnie w tym kontekście pojawiło się polskie tłumaczenie książki Johna Crooka, *Kryzys światowy a humanizm buddyjski. Ostateczna rozgrywka: upadek albo odnowa cywilizacji*, która ma szczególny charakter na tle dotychczasowej literatury przedmiotu[11].

Opasły tom Crooka składa się z czterech części, z których każda jest właściwie osobną całością. Swoistą klamrą spajającą jest teza znanego etologa holenderskiego Niko Tinbergena, którego słowa z opublikowanego w roku 1976 eseju *Ethology in the changing Word* można traktować jako motto całej publikacji: „Jestem przekonany, że nasz gatunek, mimo wszystkich swoich osiągnięć kulturalnych, wszedł obecnie w etap, na którym rozmaite niebezpieczne presje mogą przeważyć nad wszelkimi korzyściami, jakie do tej pory wynikły z jego ewolucji kulturowej. Wkraczamy

[3] *Muttavali. Księga wypisów starobuddyjskich*, tłum. I. Kania, Kraków 1999; *Opowieść o życiu Milarepy. Czcigodnego, wielkiego i potężnego jogina albo drogowskaz wyzwolenia i wszechwiedzy*, tłum. I. Kania, Kraków 1996; *Tybetańska Księga Umarłych*, tłum. I. Kania, Kraków 2001.

[4] I. Kania, *Ścieżka nocy*, Kraków 2001.

[5] *Dammapadam, czyli ścieżka prawdy*, tłum. S.F. Michalski, Wrocław 1996.

[6] R. Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism. A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*, London 1988; *idem*, *How Buddhism Began. The conditioned genesis of the early teaching*, London 2006.

[7] J.L. Garfield, *Empty Words. Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation*, Oxford 2002.

[8] Hermann Oldenberg, *Życie, nauczanie i wspólnota Buddy*, tłum. I. Kania, Kraków 1994.

[9] M. Fabjański, *Stoicyzm uliczny. Jak oswajać trudne sytuacje*, Warszawa 2010; *idem*, *Zaufaj życiu. Nie zakochuj się w przelatującym wróblu*, Warszawa 2014.

[10] J. Ries, *Buddyzm*, tłum. K. Stopa, Kraków, Poznań 2001.

[11] J. Crook, *Kryzys światowy a humanizm buddyjski. Ostateczna rozgrywka: upadek albo odnowa cywilizacji*, tłum. P. Listwan, Warszawa 2014.

w okres wielkiego, o ile nie największego w dziejach zaburzenia ciągłości naszego rozwoju"[12]. Zacytowane na początku książki, wrócą w jej końcowych rozdziałach. W pierwszych rozważaniach autor zastanawia się nad aktualnością myśli Buddy, w części drugiej kreśli jej podstawowe przesłanie. W trzeciej, w formie swoistej *science fiction* (Budda przybywa do dzisiejszego Londynu i poznaje ludzi oraz idee, jakimi żyją) mamy do czynienia ze swoistą konfrontacją nauki Buddy z dzisiejszą wiedzą. Z tej konfrontacji, jak się łatwo przekonać, Budda wychodzi obronną ręką. W czwartej i ostatniej części John Crook daje nie tylko własną wykładnię nauki buddyjskiej, ale pokazuje jej aktualność i wręcz nieodzowność jako remedium na bolączki dzisiejszego świata. Książka jest również ważna z tego powodu, że stanowi zaproszenie do lektury innych autorów, którzy stanowią swoiste tło dla prezentowanych poglądów. Na pewno jest to wykład spójny, czy w szczegółach przekonujący – to inna sprawa. Niewątpliwie dobór autorów wyznaczył również bieg myśli; do ważniejszych należy zaliczyć Josepha Stiglitza i jego krytyczne analizy globalizacji ekonomicznej[13], Davida Harleya i jego wskazania na dwuznaczność związków ekonomii z etyką w okresie ponowoczesności[14]. W analizie bardziej szczegółowych zagadnień, takich jak dojmujące poczucie braku otwierające na transcendencję, pomocne były książki Davida Loya[15]. Przeświadczenie o etycznym upadku cywilizacji zachodniej Crook czerpie głównie z ustaleń Lesliego Lipsona[16], ewolucyjny charakter moralności i religii zawdzięcza zaś Donaldowi M. Broomowi[17]. Filozoficznym przewodnikiem są książki Anthony'ego Clifforda Graylinga, któremu szczególnie bliska jest filozofia Ludwiga Wittgensteina[18]. Z filozofów francuskich wspomniani zostają incydentalnie Jacques Derrida i Michel Foucault. Brak odniesień do współczesnej myśli niemieckiej, o polskiej nie wspominając. Zaskakuje zwłaszcza brak Zygmunta Baumana, którego pojęcie płynności szczególnie współgra z myślą buddyjskiego wglądu w przygodność bytu, czy Leszka Kołakowskiego, któremu wydaje się bliskie pojęcie braku, o którym pisze David Loy. Zupełnie pominięty jest tak intensywnie rozwijany przez katolickich teologów dialog międzyreligijny, by wspomnieć znanego również w Polsce Jacques'a Dupuis[19], wykładowcę z Harvard University Francisa X. Clooneya, który wypracował oryginalną koncepcję teologii porównawczej, odwołującej się do głębi doświadczenia religijnego[20], czy szczególnie ciekawego, pochodzącego z Wietnamu Petera Phana[21]. Ten ostatni w wygłoszonym w 2014 roku w Fordham University referacie *Duchowy i religijny: wieloreligijna tożsamość dla poszukują-*

[12] *Ibidem*, s. 5.

[13] J.E. Stiglitz, *Globalizacja*, tłum. H. Simbierowicz, Warszawa 2005.

[14] D. Havey, *The Conditio of Postmodernisty. En Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, London 1990.

[15] D.L. Loy, *A Buddhist History of the West, Studies in Lack*, New York 2002.

[16] L. Lipson, *The Ethical Crisis of Civilization. Moral Meltdown or Advance*, London 1993.

[17] D. M.Broom, *The Evolution of Morality and Religion*, Cambridge 2003.

[18] A.C. Grayling, *Wittgenstein. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford 2001.

[19] J. Dupuis, *Chrześcijaństwo i religie. Od konfrontacji do dialogu*, tłum. S. Obirek, Kraków 2003.

[20] F.X. Clooney, *Comparative Theology. Deep Learning Across Religious Borders*, Oxford 2010.

[21] P.C. Phan, *Being Religious Intereligiously. Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue*, New York 2004.

cych przypomniał teologa tegoż uniwersytetu, który już w latach dziewięćdziesiątych XX wieku pisał o „drugim okresie osiowym" w nawiązaniu do znanej koncepcji czasu osiowego Karla Jaspersa, do której zresztą Crook również wielokrotnie się odnosi[22]. Jest to o tyle istotne, że teologowie katoliccy na pewno znaleźliby wspólny język w wielu kwestiach poruszanych w tomie *Kryzys światowy a humanizm buddyjski*. Tym bardziej mile zaskakuje nazwisko Michaiła Bachtina i jego koncepcja dialogu[23], pojawiające się ze względu na podejmowany w różnych miejscach książki problem dialogu. Jest to jednak wyjątek. John Crook wyraźnie nie jest zainteresowany ogromną literaturą dialogu międzyreligijnego, w tym dialogu chrześcijaństwa z buddyzmem. Jego książka razi więc jednostronnym ujęciem i nazbyt schematycznym przedstawieniem innych religii, zwłaszcza chrześcijaństwa i islamu.

W każdym razie jest to nie tylko całościowe wprowadzenie w myśl buddyjską, ale i przenikliwa diagnoza ponowoczesności. Na pewno, przynajmniej dla mnie, jedną z najważniejszych tez Crooka jest stwierdzenie, że buddyzm należy raczej traktować jako system przeświadczeń naukowych, a nie jako system religijny. Ta teza jest nie tylko wielokrotnie przywoływana, ale i przekonująco zilustrowana i o tyle ciekawa, że pozwala autorowi dość bezceremonialnie ustosunkować się do innych religii, które są – właściwie bez żadnych wyjątków – odrzucane i bezlitośnie krytykowane. Dotyczy to szczególnie trzech religii odwołujących się do Księgi, a więc judaizmu, chrześcijaństwa i islamu. John Crook odwołuje się przede wszystkim do historycznych nadużyć, do jakich dochodziło w imię tych wyznań. Nie zamyka jednak oczu na obecny w nich potencjał pozytywny i dialogiczny i tak naprawdę jego krytyka jest wołaniem o odkrycie tego właśnie dialogicznego wymiaru religii. W moim przekonaniu ten wątek warto rozwinąć i wskazać, że autor omawianej książki nie jest odosobniony. Wprost przeciwnie, to właśnie rozpoczęty w XX wieku dialog międzyreligijny stanowi szansę dla ludzkości w XXI wieku.

A oto niektóre z wyrażonych w książce opinii. Dzisiaj znaleźliśmy się w nowej epoce: „Wydaje się, że wychodzimy już poza »postmodernizm«, który nastał po załamaniu się materialistycznego założenia postępu, wynikającego z kartezjańskiego założenia odrębności umysłu od natury, które pozwalało przyjąć, że wszystko należy jakoś spożytkować czy wyeksploatować" (s. 12). I właśnie dlatego nadszedł czas na odkrycie aktualności przesłania Buddy: „W książce tej stawiamy tezę, że ustalenie żywotnych odniesień między myślą buddyjską a zachodnimi dyscyplinami naukowymi, a zwłaszcza biologią, psychologią i socjologią, stworzy zalążek propozycji rewolucyjnych zmian w postawach społecznych" (s. 26). Dzieje się tak dlatego, że: „Siła myśli buddyjskiej tkwi w jej związku z praktyką, w badaniu natury doświadczenia, głębin świadomości, natury tożsamości »ja« i w konstruowaniu na tej podstawie wartości i sposobu życia, wolnych od pozornie nieuniknionych dualizmów" (s. 34). Jest to o tyle ciekawe, że: „Wdarcie się buddyzmu na europejską scenę intelektualną zbiegło się w czasie ze szczytowym okresem ataku humanistów na konwencjonalnie pojmowaną wiarę religijną oraz z wywołanymi przez industrializację przemianami społecznymi, które miały doprowadzić do rewolucji roku 1848. Głęboki niepokój wzbudzało

[22] E.H. Cousins, *Christ of the 21st Century*, New York 1998.

[23] M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogical Imagination*, Austin 1981.

zainteresowanie filozofów etycznym nihilizmem, zrodzonym z idei śmierci Boga" (s. 160). Sądzę, że Crook ma rację, gdy wskazuje, że buddyzm, w odróżnieniu od innych systemów religijnych, posługuje się znaną z historii nauki (dzięki Ludwikowi Fleckowi[24] i Thomasowi Kuhnowi[25]) zasadzie falsyfikacji założeń: „Niezbędne wydaje się podkreślenie raz jeszcze, że kluczowych idei buddyzmu nie należy szufladkować po prostu jako jeszcze jednej religii. Trafniej byłoby stwierdzić, że buddyzm przynależy do sfery nauki, a wiedza naukowa może wpływać na kształt buddyzmu" (s. 393). I jeszcze raz: „Tezy buddyzmu pretendują do miana prawdy w tym sensie, że każdy zainteresowany może – i jest to wręcz mile widziane – zweryfikować je samemu, dokonać osobistej oceny. Wiara bez osobistego przekonania ma w myśli buddyjskiej niskie notowania. Jeśli próba się nie powiedzie, jednostka ma pełne prawo poszukać odpowiedzi gdzie indziej. Podstawą relacji mistrz–uczeń jest także wzajemne uznanie, a nie narzucanie czegoś mocą autorytetu" (s. 166).

Sądzę, że można się podpisać pod swoistym apelem, wyrażonym na zakończenie części trzeciej: „Musimy zrozumieć, że ludzie, którzy dorastali, będąc świadkami terroru odwołującego się do dogmatów religijnych, są bardzo cenni. Trzeba, aby dzielili się oni tym świadectwem z tymi, którzy w tym czasie spędzali życie wygodnie przed telewizorem. Tylko dzielenie się może sprawić, aby rodziła się miłość. Trzeba, aby dobrego serca muzułmanie, chrześcijanie, postchrześcijanie, agnostycy o światopoglądzie naukowym, a także buddyści spotkali się w debacie, której przyświecać będzie cel ocalenia świata. Musimy wszyscy się przebudzić, aby z czasem stać się odpowiedzialnymi wyborcami. Inaczej demokracja okaże się fiaskiem i wszystko przepadnie" (s. 388).

I na koniec wracamy do tezy Tinbergena, która zostaje wręcz wyostrzona: „Tinbergen nie był świadkiem poważnych zaburzeń, które nękają świat obecnie, ani też optymistycznej hipokryzji, która wątpliwe wartości demokracji zdominowanej przez konsumpcjonizm przedstawia jako rzekomo nieuniknione, a nawet pożądane. Od jego czasów rzeczy przybrały gorszy obrót i dla każdego myślącego człowieka coraz bardziej oczywiste się staje, że dalej tak być nie może" (s. 405).

John Crook dostrzega jednak promyk nadziei: „Jakkolwiek Tinbergen miał wątpliwości, czy ludzka zdolność przystosowywania się jest wystarczająca, aby sprostać wymaganiom współczesności, pewne oznaki wskazują, że człowiek kryje w sobie jeszcze ogromny potencjał, wciąż nietknięty, niczym rozległe pola naftowe na księżycu" (s. 413). Muszę przyznać, że ten optymizm, choć trudny, jest zaraźliwy.

[24] L. Fleck, *Powstanie i rozwój faktu naukowego. Wprowadzenie do nauki o stylu myślowym i kolektywie myślowym* [w:] *Psychologia poznania naukowego*, tłum. M. Tuszkiewicz, Lublin 2006, s. 29–163.

[25] Th. Kuhn, *Struktura rewolucji naukowych*, tłum. H. Ostromęcka, Warszawa 2001.

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Między folklorystyką, filologią i antropologią prawosławia

(recenzja książki Ewy Kocój, *Pamięć starych wieków. Symbolika czasu w rumuńskim kalendarzu prawosławnym*, Kraków 2013)

Magdalena Lubańska
Centrum Badań Antropologicznych nad Prawosławiem[1]
Instytut Etnologii i Antropologii Kulturowej
Uniwersytet Warszawski

Na początku lat osiemdziesiątych znany polski antropolog Ludwik Stomma zwrócił uwagę na nawyk pomijania przez antropologów prowadzących badania nad religijnością polskiej prowincji tego, co dzieje się w przestrzeni kościoła. Wynikało to jego zdaniem z „mniej czy bardziej (przeważnie mniej) nieuświadamianych ciągot etnografów do rozdzielania rdzennego i naleciałości, wypreparowywania z chrześcijańskiej kultury wsi tego, co rzekomo ludowe właśnie, z gruntu siermiężne i prasłowiańskie”[2]. Zarazem, choć już w latach dziewięćdziesiątych polscy etnografowie mieli możliwość poszerzenia zakresu swoich badań o aspekty obrzędowości kościelnej, tak się nie stało. Wiązało się to w dużym stopniu z przekonaniem, że ich tradycyjny przedmiot badań, „religijność ludowa”, z definicji dotyczy pozakościelnych praktyk, i zakładano z góry, że chrześcijaństwo jako takie w niewielkim stopniu miało na nią wpływ. Uważano, że stanowi ono jedynie powierzchowną warstwę, pod którą kryją się przedchrześcijańskie, słowiańskie wierzenia, kluczowe dla zrozumienia chłopskiej mentalności.

Tendencja ta, choć została ukształtowana przede wszystkim przez romantyzm, i związane z nim inspiracje herderowskie, została w II połowie XX wieku umocniona przez ateistyczną propagandę PRL-u. W czasach panowania w Polsce reżimu

[1] Projekt, sfinansowany ze środków Narodowego Centrum Nauki przyznanych na podstawie decyzji numer DEC-2011/03/D/HS3/01620, pt.: „Teorie antropologiczne wobec życia religijnego i społecznego wyznawców prawosławia w społecznościach lokalnych Europy Południowo-Wschodniej”. Kierowniczka: Magdalena Lubańska, główne wykonawczynie: Ewa Klekot, Agata Ładykowska.

[2] L. Stomma, *Antropologia kultury wsi polskiej XIX wieku*, Warszawa 1986, s. 204.

socjalistycznego wprawdzie wolno było badać religijność „ludu", jednak z powodów ideologicznych bagatelizowano jej wymiar chrześcijański. Podobnie wyglądało to w innych państwach bloku wschodniego, gdzie właściwym przedmiotem badań etnograficznych miał być tak zwany folklor. Termin ten jest równie mglisty i deformujący rzeczywistość społeczną co do niedawna popularna w Polsce i nadal sporadycznie używana kategoria ludowości czy religijności ludowej.

W tym miejscu warto dodać, że również antropolodzy anglosascy, prowadzący badania w katolickich społecznościach afrykańskich, raczej nie traktowali chrześcijaństwa jako kulturotwórczego, co niewątpliwie było związane z towarzyszącym im poczuciem winy wynikającym ze współudziału antropologów w procesie kolonizacji tego kontynentu[3]. Dlatego też chrześcijaństwo było przez nich traktowane „jako napływowa, obca i agresywna siła zaburzająca lokalne kosmologie, zniekształcające lub zaledwie przykrywające to, co autentyczne i »oryginalne« w danej kulturze i co powinno stanowić właściwy przedmiot antropologicznej refleksji"[4]. Jako że antropolodzy często sami wywodzili się z habitusów chrześcijańskich, religia ta wydawała się im zarazem się za mało „egzotyczna", by stanowić interesujący przedmiot antropologicznych studiów[5].

Od kilku lat zauważalna jest jednak zmiana w podejściu antropologów do badań nad religijnością społeczności chrześcijańskich. Badacze z jednej strony zainteresowali się wpływem szeroko rozumianej teologii chrześcijańskiej na teorię antropologiczną[6], z drugiej zaś na kulturę religijną badanych społeczności. Z inicjatywy takich antropologów jak Fenella Cannell[7] czy Joel Robbins[8] doszło też do wyodrębnienia się nowej subdyscypliny antropologii religii, określanej jako antropologia chrześcijaństwa. A od kilku lat można też mówić o pojawieniu się jej kolejnej gałęzi, jaką jest antropologia chrześcijaństwa wschodniego, której przedstawicielami są między innymi Chris Hann, Gabriela Hanganu, Vlad Naumescu czy Stella Rock. Cezurą wydaje się tu publikacja książki *Eastern Christians in Anthropological Perspective* pod

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[3] J. Robbins, *Continuity Thinking and the Problem of Christian Culture: Belief, Time, and the Anthropology of Christianity*, „Current Anthropology" 2007, Vol. 48, No. 1, s. 5–38.

[4] Zob. M. Lubańska, A. Ładykowska, *Prawosławie – „chrześcijaństwo peryferyjne"? O teologicznych uwikłaniach teorii antropologicznej i stronniczości perspektyw poznawczych antropologii chrześcijaństwa*, „Lud" 2013, t. 97, s. 196; T. Jenkins, *The Anthropology of Christianity. Situation and Critique*, „Ethnos. Journal of Anthropology" 2012, Vol. 77, No. 4, s. 460; J. Bialecki, N. Haynes, J. Robbins, *The Anthropology of Christianity*, „Religion Compass" 2008, Vol. 2, No. 6, s. 1144.

[5] S.F. Harding, *Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other*, „Social Research" 1991, Vol. 58, No. 2, s. 373–393.

[6] Zob. np. T. Asad, *Anthropological Conceptions of Religion: Reflections on Geertz*, „Man" 1983, New Series, Vol. 18, No. 2, s. 237–259; *idem, Genealogies of Religion. Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, Baltimore, London 1993; W. Keane, Christian Moderns, *Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter*, Berkeley 2007.

[7] F. Cannell, *The Christianity of Anthropology*, „Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute" 2005, No. 11 (2), s. 335–356; *eadem*, *Introduction. The Anthropology of Christianity* [w:] *eadem* (ed.), *The Anthropology of Christianity*, Durham–London2006, s. 1–49.

[8] J. Robbins, *What is a Christian? Notes toward an Anthropology of Christianity*, „Religion" 2003, No. 33 (3), s. 191–199; *idem*, *Continuity Thinking and the Problem of Christian Culture: Belief, Time, and the Anthropology of Christianity*, „Current Anthropology" 2007, No. 48 (1), s. 5–38.

redakcją Chrisa Hanna i Hermana Goltza[9]. Kwestię tę omawiam bardziej szczegółowo z Agatą Ładykowską w odrębnym artykule[10].

Nawiązuję do tych zagadnień, ponieważ książka Ewy Kocój wpisuje się według mnie w obrzeża antropologii prawosławia, chociaż sama Autorka o tej subdyscyplinie nic nie pisze. Jej monografia wyrosła bowiem między innymi z poczucia braku narzędzi adekwatnych do zrozumienia kultury religijnej prawosławnych społeczności w Rumunii. Autorka słusznie zwróciła uwagę na niekompletność etnograficznych analiz na jej temat, co wynika z faktu, że etnografowie słabo znają jej teologiczną specyfikę. Celem badawczym jej pracy było częściowe zapełnienie owej luki przez analizę związków między kalendarzem „ludowym"[11] a prawosławnym, dlatego uwzględnia ona w swojej analizie zarówno prawosławne piśmiennictwo kościelne, jak i wierzenia „ludowe" zanotowane przez etnografów rumuńskich oraz przez nią samą. Podejmuje próbę prześledzenia procesu przenikania kalendarza prawosławnego na ziemie rumuńskie w perspektywie synchronicznej i diachronicznej, pragnie „odtworzyć zarys historii danego święta i jego wymiaru liturgicznego oraz ukazanie rozmaitych tradycji czy warstw kulturowych, które współtworzą jego specyfikę"[12].

O nowatorskości pracy Ewy Kocój świadczy traktowanie prawosławnych źródeł pisanych jako punktu wyjścia do zrozumienia obrzędów „ludowych"[13]. Przyjęcie tej perspektywy wymagało od niej interdyscyplinarnych badań, które w znacznej mierze pozwoliły jej odkryć dotychczas przez antropologów bagatelizowane zależności i wpływy – Autorka pokazała bowiem liturgiczne źródła pewnych wierzeń i praktyk, uważanych wcześniej za ludowe, i traktowanych jako mające niewiele wspólnego z prawosławiem. Jak sama pisze, w przypadku Rumunii nie bez znaczenia były „mitologizujące kulturę ludową ideologie"[14], a dokładniej – prołaciński nacjonalizm (w którego ramach etnografowie wywodzili zaobserwowane w terenie praktyki i rytuały bezpośrednio z kultury łacińskiej[15]) oraz nacjonalistyczny, antyreligijny komunizm[16]. Ideologie te bagatelizowały wpływy bizantyńskie na lokalną kulturę religijną. Tymczasem, jak pokazało przeprowadzone przez Ewę Kocój studium specyfiki kalendarza „ludowego" w Rumunii, jego święta i związane z nim wierzenia są

[9] *Eastern Christians in Anthropological Perspective*, Ch. Hann, H. Goltz (eds.), Berkeley 2010.

[10] M. Lubańska, A. Ładykowska, *op.cit.*, s. 195–219.

[11] Ze względu na mój osobisty dystans do kategorii „ludowości" jako według mnie epistemologicznie nieadekwatnej, zużytej i nacechowanej ideologicznie, umieszczam ją w cudzysłowie. Sama Badaczka, Ewa Kocój, stosuje ją w swojej pracy bezkrytycznie, do czego nawiążę w dalszej części recenzji.

[12] E. Kocój, *Pamięć starych wieków. Symbolika czasu w rumuńskim kalendarzu prawosławnym*, Kraków 2013, s. 19.

[13] *Ibidem*, s. 27.

[14] *Ibidem*, s. 16.

[15] Dziewiętnastowieczni etnografowie i folkloryści, m.in. Atanazy Marian Marienescu, Bogdan Patriceicu Hasdeu czy Simon Forea Marian, poszukiwali tych elementów folkloru, które mogłyby mieć z nią związek i udowadniać pochodzenie Rumunów od Rzymian (za: *ibidem*, s. 93–95). Realizowany przez nich program badań nad ludowością był ideologicznie uwikłany, wskazując na silne związki kultury rumuńskiej z łacińską, a trend ten miał być wzmocniony „pół wieku później w okresie panowania komunizmu" (*ibidem*, s. 95).

[16] *Ibidem*, s. 18.

z tradycją bizantyńską głęboko powiązane[17]. By tezę tę udowodnić, Autorka szukała zależności między „ludowymi" wierzeniami i obrzędami a tekstami liturgicznymi, ikonografią[18] i rytuałami cerkiewnymi[19].

To zjawisko nie było dotychczas przez antropologów w ten sposób analizowane. Jednocześnie potrzeba podjęcia tego typu badań wydaje się coraz bardziej nagląca i podejście badawcze Ewy Kocój świadczy o jej dużym wyczuciu i etnograficznej wrażliwości. Jako jedna z pierwszych antropolożek podjęła bowiem tak gruntowne interdyscyplinarne studia nad pozornie prostym pytaniem, które zadają sobie obecnie antropolodzy prowadzący badania w prawosławnych społecznościach: „Jaki związek z prawosławiem mają zaobserwowane w terenie badań praktyki religijne?". Wiąże się to zapewne z badawczą intuicją, że pewne obserwowane w terenie praktyki i wierzenia są nie tyle pochodną przedchrześcijańskich lokalnych tradycji (na co stawiano nacisk w dotychczasowych interpretacjach), ile twórczym, oddolnym przekształceniem rytów chrześcijańskich (zapisanych w księgach liturgicznych czy pseudokanonicznych). Mało który antropolog czy antropolożka ma jednak odwagę za ową intuicją podążyć. Wymaga to bowiem podjęcia żmudnych interdyscyplinarnych studiów slawistycznych i religioznawczych i absorbcji dorobku tych dyscyplin w zakresie badań nad historią prawosławnej kultury religijnej. Ewa Kocój zdecydowała się na ten trud. Część historyczna jej studium naukowego jest imponująca i powinna stać się obowiązkową lekturą dla antropologów prawosławia.

Badaczka korzystała w swojej monografii z metody historyczno-porównawczej oraz antropologii interpretatywnej Clifforda Geertza. Ta pierwsza pozwoliła jej dostrzec fascynujące interakcje między imaginariami religijnymi prawosławnego i „ludowego" kalendarza. Jak sama pisze: „w wyobrażeniach ludowych kalendarz stał się jednością świąt liturgicznych różnych kultur oraz magiczno-rytualnej myśli związanej z celebracją cyklu przyrody, zmieniającymi się porami roku i przypisanym do nich rodzajem prac"[20]. Twierdzi, że logika pisma i obrzędu religijnego odegrała istotną rolę w rumuńskim kalendarzu prawosławnym – miała ona narzucić sposób interpretacji rzeczywistości i duchownym, i wiernym. Choć podkreśla, iż

> nie oznacza to jednak, że ów sposób został całkowicie przyswojony w kulturze ludowej i że jej przedstawiciele poddawali mu się biernie i bez reszty [...]. Ludowa opowieść o kalendarzu jest opowieścią odwołującą się do wizji świata danej społeczności, do tekstów w niej funkcjonujących i autorytetów przyjętych przez nią za swoje[21].

Aby ją zrekonstruować, Autorka czerpie inspiracje przede wszystkim od slawistów – profesorów Aleksandra Naumowa i Georgiego Minczewa[22], którzy zwrócili

[17] *Ibidem*, s. 16.

[18] Książka zawiera bardzo interesującą dokumentację fotograficzną lokalnej prawosławnej ikonografii oraz praktyk rytualnych zaobserwowanych przez Autorkę w terenie badań.

[19] *Ibidem*, s. 11, 22, 19.

[20] *Ibidem*, s. 105.

[21] *Ibidem*, s. 15.

[22] Opisują oni z jednej strony zjawisko modyfikowania cerkiewnych treści i praktyk zgodnie z lokalną kulturą religijną, z drugiej zaś wtórnej liturgizacji, czyli włączenia do rytów cerkiewnych praktyk o pozacerkiewnej proweniencji. Zob. A. Naumow, *Apokryfy w systemie literatury cerkiewnosłowiańskiej*,

uwagę na zależności między oficjalnym piśmiennictwem prawosławnym a rytuałami pielęgnowanymi przez lokalne społeczności.

Czerpanie przez Autorkę inspiracji z literatury slawistycznej i piśmiennictwa cerkiewnego okazało się zabiegiem udanym. Pozwoliło jej bowiem głębiej zrozumieć badaną kulturę religijną i wydaje się, że warto pójść w jej ślady. Szkoda tylko, że jednocześnie w niewielkim stopniu korzysta ona z narzędzi wypracowanych przez antropologów. Szczególnie niepokoi brak dialogu czy polemiki z antropologami prawosławia. Odniesienia Ewy Kocój do antropologicznej teorii czerpią inspirację – niestety – niemal[23] wyłącznie z Clifforda Geertza. Zgodnie z proponowanym przez niego stanowiskiem epistemologicznym stosuje ona w swojej pracy semiotyczne podejście do kultury, postrzegając ją jako tekst (podobnie jak czynią to folkloryści), a swoje zadanie jako poszukiwanie znaczeń obecnych w świecie życia codziennego i wyobrażeń wyznawców prawosławia[24]. Autorka szuka jednak ich przede wszystkim w tekstach liturgicznych, pseudokanonicznych i w prawosławnej ikonografii oraz materiałach zanotowanych przez rumuńskich etnografów.

To nie jej rozmówcy i badania własne stanowią drogowskazy do wydobycia owych znaczeń. Chociaż Ewa Kocój przeprowadziła w terenie aż 300 wywiadów, w samej książce liczącej 495 stron powołuje się na nie z rzadka, zaledwie na bodaj 33 stronach, cytując w sumie 32[25] rozmówców. Znacznie częściej korzysta z materiałów zebranych przez etnografów rumuńskich (w I połowie XX wieku, między innymi przez Tudora Pamfile, Dymitra Cantemira, Elenę Niculiţă-Voronca, Simiona F. Mariana, Petriceicu Hasdeu oraz tych bardziej współczesnych, publikowanych przez Marię i Tudora Bilitiu, Iona Ghninoiu oraz Antonaetę Olteanu[26]). Nie sposób nie zapytać, dlaczego woli materiały zastane od tych osobiście wywołanych.

Autorka po części odpowiada na to pytanie, pisząc o rozczarowaniu poznawczym związanym z jej obserwacją uczestniczącą:

> choć stałam w tłumie wyrywającym gałęzie roślin z rąk duchownych lub zabierającym je z sakralnej przestrzeni świątyni podczas święta Zstąpienia Ducha Świętego, choć podążałam i uciekałam wraz z innymi przed bożonarodzeniowymi Dziadami [...], wciąż nie rozumiałam symboli tego rodzaju gestów i nie potrafiłam zinterpretować ich znaczeń w systemie badanej kultury. Dopiero rozszerzenie perspektywy badawczej, możliwe dzięki dotarciu do starych tekstów

Wrocław 1976; G. Minczew, *Święta księga – ikona – obrzęd. Teksty kanoniczne i pseudokanoniczne a ich funkcjonowanie w sztuce sakralnej i folklorze prawosławnych Słowian na Bałkanach*, Łódź 2003.

[23] Należy dodać, że nawiązuje też do Gadamerowskiej koncepcji „nieodróżnialności" stosowanej wcześniej przez Joannę Tokarską-Bakir i Annę Niedźwiedź (E. Kocój, *op.cit.*, s. 111–112). Określa nią specyficzny, według niej charakterystyczny dla „kultury ludowej" rodzaj sensualistycznej wrażliwości, w której „głęboka teologia ikony nie była rozumiana" (*ibidem*, s. 111). Poza tym w pracy pojawia się niewiele odniesień do antropologicznych publikacji wydanych od momentu przełomu postmodernistycznego, symbolicznie wyznaczonego w antropologii przez konferencję pt. „The Making of Ethnographic Texts" w Santa Fe w Nowym Meksyku w 1984 roku.

[24] E. Kocój, *op.cit.*, s. 25.

[25] Mogłam się nieznacznie pomylić w obliczeniach, ponieważ w książce nie ma aneksu ze spisem rozmówców.

[26] Szkoda, że książka nie zawiera indeksu osób, gdyż pozwoliłoby to czytelnikom w większym stopniu wychwycić światopogląd i dokonania naukowe poszczególnych badaczy oraz ich wpływ na tezy wysuwane przez Autorkę.

> i wzięciu pod uwagę innych tradycji religijnych, pozwoliło mi zrozumieć, że to, co występuje we współczesnych wierzeniach rumuńskich, ma swoje źródło w „odległej" przeszłości, wciąż rzucającej na nie swój cień[27].

Możemy się tylko domyślać, że analogicznych kompetencji nie mieli też jej rozmówcy i że w terenie niewiele dowiedziała się od nich o znaczeniach religijnych podejmowanych przez nich w przestrzeni cerkiewnej czynności rytualnych.

Czy jednak rytuał zawsze musi odsyłać do jakiegoś „znaczącego" i w przeciwnym razie nie ma sensu? Czyż nie jest tak, jak twierdzi Pierre Bourdieu[28], że logika praktyki (a zatem logika rytuału) nie zadaje mu tych samych pytań co logika badacza, który szuka znaczeń i sensów z punktu widzenia praktyków (aktorów społecznych) niepotrzebnych? Czyż jedynie te praktyki, które mogą być dyskursywnie wyrażone, zasługują na zainteresowania badacza[29]? Czy praktyki religijne rozgrywane współcześnie na terenie świątyni to jedynie rezydua prawosławnej kultury religijnej, artefakty, których „zapomniany" sens Ewa Kocój próbuje rozwikłać, sięgając do starszych źródeł? Wydaje się, że sama Autorka wciąż dostrzega między nimi ciągłość, rekonstruując przeszłość etnograficzną, pragnie pokazać „ciągłość doświadczenia we współczesności"[30]. „Myślenie ciągłością" (*continuity thinking*) jest bowiem, jak zauważył Joel Robbins, trwale zapisaną w etnograficznym repozytorium figurą[31]. Za bardziej przekonujące uznajemy wyjaśnianie specyfiki kulturowej badanych grup przez odniesienie ich do struktur „długiego trwania" niż bieżących motywacji aktorów społecznych, które mogą być przecież oparte na odcięciu się od przeszłości lub po prostu wyobcowaniu z niej. W przypadku zaistnienia tej ostatniej sytuacji badacz „myślący ciągłością" może mieć pokusę przypomnienia aktorom społecznym „zapomnianej" genealogii zaobserwowanych w terenie praktyk religijnych[32]. Potrzeba ta niesie jednak z sobą ryzyko wynajdowania przez badacza owej kultury na podstawie paradygmatu, który jemu samemu najbardziej odpowiada czy też najbardziej do niego przemawia. Możemy się bowiem zastanawiać, czy Ewa Kocój nie nadreprezentowała „pierwiastka prawosławnego" w dokonanej przez siebie rekonstrukcji. Sama pisze przecież o 600 latach współistnienia w terenie jej badań tradycji

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[27] *Ibidem*, s. 19–20.

[28] P. Bourdieu, *Zmysł praktyczny*, tłum. M. Falski, Kraków 2008.

[29] Są to kwestie trudne, na które antropolodzy nadal nie udzielili ostatecznej odpowiedzi. Akcenty rozkładają się różnie, w zależności od panującej aktualnie mody. Autorka nie odnosi się jednak do trwającej antropologicznej debaty na ten temat.

[30] E. Kocój, *op.cit.*, s. 20.

[31] Analogiczne spostrzeżenia, tyle że w odniesieniu do polskich etnografów, poczynił wspominany już Ludwik Stomma (*Antropologia kultury*…, s. 204). Zob. także J. Robbins, *Continuity Thinking and the Problem*…, s. 9.

[32] Ewa Kocój w pewnym sensie uprawia antropologię zaangażowaną i podejmuje trud odzyskiwania pamięci o praktykowanych w Cerkwi rytuałach, „wydobywania jej na nowo przez podjęcie etnograficznej interpretacji" (*op.cit.*, s. 20). Korzystając z kategorii pamięci kulturowej, Jan Assmana próbuje dokonać rekonstrukcji przeszłości etnograficznej (2013, s. 20). Aby sięgnąć do czasów bardziej odległych niż XX wiek, korzysta z relacji podróżników przemierzających Rumunię, zdając sobie sprawę, że są to źródła dosyć stronnicze i należy podchodzić do nich ostrożnie. Dopiero jednak źródła z XIX wieku pozwalają wnioskować o jego specyfice. Niemniej wszelka rekonstrukcja badawcza jest na ogół także konstruowaniem znaczeń na nowo, niejako wynajdywaniem tradycji.

chrześcijaństwa wschodniego i zachodniego, tradycji muzułmańskiej i żydowskiej[33]. Dostrzega też, że

> kalendarz rumuński nie ma jednej obowiązującej historii, nie wiadomo, czy na ziemiach rumuńskich istniał wcześniej jakiś kompleks charakterystycznych rodzimych wierzeń ludowych, czy też raczej, ze względu na to, że zamieszkiwało tu wiele etnosów związanych z różnymi kulturami i religiami, doszło do połączenia w kalendarzu wielu tradycji[34].

Etnograficzne badania Ewy Kocój prowadzone były w latach 2009–2012 w ponad 30 miejscowościach w regionie Maramureszu[35], ale też Mołdawii, Bukowiny, delty Dunaju i Oltenii. Jak sama pisze, tereny te są zamieszkiwane nie tylko przez Rumunów, ale też Ukraińców, Rosjan, Polaków i Romów, choć w strukturze religijnej dominuje prawosławie (wraz ze starowiercami), następnie grekokatolicym i katolicyzm. Wywiady przeprowadzała zaś w języku rumuńskim, rosyjskim i ukraińskim[36].

Trudno nie zadać w tym kontekście pytania o wzajemne oddziaływania między tymi tradycjami? Czy prowadziły one do wierzeń i praktyk synkretycznych? Dlaczego tak lub nie? A może w różnych okresach historycznych różnie to wyglądało? Autorka przemilcza tę kwestię, stawiając tezę, że „tym, co najsilniej oddziaływało na kulturę ludową, było jednak dziedzictwo cywilizacji bizantyńsko-słowiańskiej, które stopniowo zdominowało wyobrażenia religijne Rumunów"[37], ale na ową tezę powinni odpowiedzieć inni specjaliści zajmujący się tym obszarem kulturowym. Mam jednak świadomość, że jako antropolożka prowadząca badania w sąsiedniej Bułgarii być może postrzegam te kwestie przez pryzmat własnych obserwacji terenowych i studiów naukowych.

Pozostaje mi zatem jedynie zwrócić uwagę, że bezpieczniej moim zdaniem byłoby skoncentrować się na tym, jak swoją religijność praktykują i wyrażają obserwowani przez nich aktorzy społeczni, a dopiero w następnej kolejności korzystać ze źródeł zastanych. Tymczasem, co mnie niepokoi, Autorka czyni odwrotnie. Postrzega źródła przez siebie wywołane jako wnoszące o wiele mniej dla próby zrozumienia specyfiki prawosławnego i ludowego kalendarza w Rumunii niż źródła zastane – w pierwszym przypadku księgi liturgiczne (typikony, trebniki, euchologiony, czasosłowy) oraz kanonicznej i niekanonicznej hagiografii.

Aby zrekonstruować kalendarz „ludowy"[38], korzysta zaś z prac współczesnych badaczy rumuńskich, przede wszystkim Iona Ghinoium, Otylii Hedeşan i Antonaety Olteanu, podobnie jak ona dążących do rekonstrukcji kalendarza ludowego na podstawie etnografii historycznej. Jak sama jednak zauważa, badacze ci opisywali owe kalendarze w kontekście „mentalności archaicznej", bagatelizując ich związki z prawosławiem**[39]**. Jej interpretacja jest zatem ich alternatywnym odczytaniem.

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[33] E. Kocój, *op.cit.*, s. 105.

[34] *Ibidem*, s. 104.

[35] *Ibidem*, s. 29.

[36] *Ibidem*.

[37] *Ibidem*, s. 105.

[38] A dokładniej jego cykl dobowy, tygodniowy i liturgiczny.

[39] *Ibidem*, s. 103.

Ewa Kocój dochodzi między innymi do wniosku, że panteon bogów, wyspecjalizowanych w rozmaitych dziedzinach świętych, ukształtował się w kalendarzu „ludowym" na podstawie cerkiewnej Tradycji[40]. Opisuje też proces transformacji postaci wziętych z oficjalnej tradycji prawosławnej na grunt wierzeń „ludowych" – na przykład występującą w nich Babę Dochię wywodzi od św. Eudokii, Ilie-Palie od św. Eliasza[41]. Dostrzega też wpływ prawosławnej liturgii godzin kanonicznych na „ludową" symbolikę czasu, gdyż „nie dysponując długo zegarami, lud orientował się w upływie czasu i poszczególnych porach dnia dzięki liturgii godzin w monasterach"[42].

Te rytuały, które dawały się wpisać w sezonowość wykonywanych przez lud rolniczo-pasterskich prac, przejmował on w poczuciu Autorki z prawosławnego kalendarza, twórczo je adaptując[43]. To, że kultura religijna społeczności wiejskich była modelowana na podstawie pielęgnowanego przez nią etosu rolniczego czy pasterskiego, jest oczywiście spostrzeżeniem nienowym, wręcz znamiennym dla dwudziestowiecznej etnografii. *Novum* jest wskazanie źródła wielu z owych praktyk w obrzędowości liturgicznej:

> Pewne gesty, pewne formuły słowne i atrybuty stosowane przez duchownych przy udzielaniu sakramentów i sakramentaliów były np. naśladowane w życiu codziennym, w praktykach leczniczych w odniesieniu do ludzi i zwierząt, stając się elementem doświadczenia magicznego. Inspiracja praktykami cerkiewnymi w określonym czasie świąt kalendarza ludowego była tu bardzo wyraźna[44].

Warto w tym miejscu przytoczyć za Autorką przykład z obserwacji terenowych:

> tak jak podczas modlitw o uzdrowienie chorego duchowni czynili świętym olejem znak krzyża na poszczególnych częściach ciała, tak w kulturze ludowej powtarzano dokładnie te same gesty z wykorzystaniem mikstury z czosnku, mającego apotropeiczne i uzdrowicielskie działanie. Okrążanie domu przez duchownych wraz z procesją podczas świąt prawosławnych i domu podczas błogosławieństwa miało swoje odpowiedniki w ludowym okrążaniu domostw z rekwizytami (zapalona świeca, pszenica) w święta przypadające na przełomie pór roku (40 Męczenników z Sebasty, Zwiastowanie Bogurodzicy, św. Andrzeja)[45].

Formułując ciekawe spostrzeżenia i wnioski, w swojej pracy Ewa Kocój rzadko korzysta z materiałów własnych. Niewiele też możemy powiedzieć o jej rozmówcach, ponieważ Autorka nie dokonuje ich charakterystyki – nie wiemy nic o ich życiu (światopoglądach, sytuacji materialnej, wykształceniu, sporadycznie znamy zawód cytowanych osób), ani też o praktykowanej na co dzień religijności. W pracy antropologicznej spodziewałabym się próby udzielenia odpowiedzi na następujące pytania: Jakie praktyki religijne badani podejmują i uważają za ważne? Jak je interpretują? Jakie są jej autorytety? Czy to są osoby duchowne? Może charyzmatyczni liderzy czy liderki religijne, a może w ogóle nie mają autorytetów? Jak układają się

[40] *Ibidem*, s. 107.

[41] Więcej przykładów *ibidem*, s. 106.

[42] *Ibidem*, s. 109.

[43] *Ibidem*, s. 108.

[44] *Ibidem*, s. 111.

[45] *Ibidem*.

relacje między duchowieństwem a wiernymi oraz z innowiercami? Jaką obecnie czytają literaturę religijną? Czy jest to literatura prawosławna czy także związana z konkurencyjnymi wobec prawosławia nurtami duchowości jak chociażby New Age? Czy rzeczywiście w tak mieszanym wyznaniowo regionie, do tego niegdyś znajdującym się pod wpływami osmańskimi, najtrwalszym i najgłębiej utrwalonym fundamentem religijności ludności prawosławnej jest bizantyńskie prawosławie?

Podmiotem, a zarazem główną kategorią analityczną w pracy Ewy Kocój nie są jednak konkretne społeczności czy jej rozmówcy, lecz „ludowa" – świadomość, religijność, pamięć czy wrażliwość. Termin ten, opatrzony wspomnianymi epitetami, Autorka stosuje w pracy wielokrotnie, bez cudzysłowu, w duchu etnografii dwudziestowiecznej i niestety, podobnie jak krytykowani dziś za zabieg esencjalizowania tej kategorii ówcześni etnografowie, idzie w ich ślady.

Jak sama deklaruje, w swojej książce podejmuje próbę ustalenia, jak najważniejsze współczesne święta prawosławne funkcjonują w „świadomości ludowej" w Rumunii, i stara się im przyjrzeć w perspektywie zmian historyczno-kulturowych. Owa świadomość wydaje się w jej opisach odrębnym bytem, oderwanym od aktorów społecznych i obdarzonym sprawczością. Moim zdaniem kategoria ta za bardzo i zupełnie niepotrzebnie zawładnęła narracją Autorki. Reasumując sposób, w jaki definiuje ona ową ludowość, można stwierdzić, że postrzega jej kulturotwórczy potencjał w deformującym sensualistycznym mimetyzmie wobec oficjalnego prawosławia i kontaminowaniu różnych źródeł, co w rezultacie prowadziło do wytwarzania na ich podstawie nowych sensów i nowej religijnej symboliki[46]. Za ilustrację może tu posłużyć następujący cytat:

> Mimo że obrzędowość cerkiewna i wypowiadane przez duchownych słowa nie były w pełni dla ludu zrozumiałe, w świadomości ludowej przejmowano je główne na poziomie naśladowania gestów i formuł modlitewnych oraz przywoływania w obrzędach związanych z życiem rodzinnym, domem, gospodarstwem, a także wprowadzania do wierzeń czynności magicznych. (2013, s. 109).

W jaki jednak sposób odróżnia Autorka magię od religii, nie wiadomo. Wydaje się, że uznaje po prostu za magiczne rytuały niezgodne z oficjalnym prawosławiem. Przyjmuje zatem kryterium konfesyjne. Wybór ten wymaga jednak antropologicznego komentarza. Perspektywa epistemologiczna antropologa związana jest bowiem z próbą obiektywizowania konfesyjnych wartościowań, a w każdym razie uzasadniania swoich subiektywnych wyborów.

I choć pozostaję krytyczna w kwestii posługiwania się przez Badaczkę kategorią ludowości i ostrożna wobec tak jednoznacznej tezy o przede wszystkim prawosławnej, postbizantyńskiej genezie analizowanej przez nią symboliki i rytuałów, uważam poczynione przez Autorkę obserwacje za niezwykle interesujące, a jej książkę za inspirujący punkt wyjścia do dalszych, także komparatystycznie zakrojonych badań nad analogicznymi zagadnieniami w innych społecznościach prawosławnych. Należy podkreślić, że Ewa Kocój, jako pierwsza antropolożka w Polsce podejmująca tego typu interdyscyplinarne studium, ułatwiła zadanie kolejnym badaczom, którzy

[46] *Ibidem*, s. 107.

zechcą pójść w jej ślady. Jej wkład pod tym względem jest ogromny. Jeśli nawet książka momentami wydaje się nadreprezentować prawosławie, stanowi zasługującą na uznanie przeciwwagę dla dotychczasowych, raczej bagatelizujących je (prołacińskich czy związanych z socjalistyczną niechęcią wobec prawosławia) interpretacji etnografów rumuńskich i może stanowić punkt oparcia dla fascynującej etnograficznej debaty na temat powiązań antropologii i teologii.

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