

# PHILOSOPHY & CANON LAW

Vol. 8 (1), 2022

*Nomos – Ethos – Oikonomia*

In Memory of

Professor Józef Tischner



UNIWERSYTET ŚLĄSKI  
WYDAWNICTWO

# Philosophy and Canon Law

Vol. 8 (1), 2022

*Nomos – Ethos – Oikonomia*

In Memory of Professor Józef Tischner

Editor-in-Chief

**Andrzej Pastwa** (University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland)

Editorial Team

Deputy Editor-in-Chief

**Pavol Dancák** (University of Prešov, Slovakia)

Deputy Editor-in-Chief

**John P. Hittinger** (University of St. Thomas, Houston, USA)

Members of the Board

**Krzysztof Wieczorek** (Chair of Philosophy Department, University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland)

**Tomasz Galkowski** (Chair of Law Department, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw)

International Advisory Board

Chair

**Most Rev. Cyril Vasil'** (Pontifical Oriental Institute, Roma, Italy)

Members of the Board

Libero Gerosa (Faculty of Theology in Lugano, Switzerland), Wojciech Góralski (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw, Poland), Adrian Loretan (University of Lucerne, Switzerland), Janusz Kowal (Pontifical Gregorian University, Roma, Italy), V. Bradley Lewis (Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., USA), Wilhelm Rees (University of Innsbruck, Austria), David L. Schindler (Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., USA), Santiago Sia (National University of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland), Zbigniew Suchecki (Pontifical University Antonianum, Roma, Italy)

Referees of the Board

Miguel Bedolla (University of Texas, San Antonio, USA), Alexandru Buzalic (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania), Martin Dojčár (University of Trnava, Slovakia), Michał Drożdż (Pontifical University of John Paul II, Cracow, Poland), Jiří Dvořáček (Palacký University, Olomouc, Czech Republic), Roger Enriquez (University of Texas, San Antonio, USA), Lidia Fiejdasz-Buczek (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland), Kathleen Haney (University of St. Thomas, Houston, USA), Jiří Kašný (Anglo-American University in Prague, Czech Republic), Piotr Kroczek (Pontifical University of John Paul II, Cracow, Poland), Giuseppe Milan (University of Padova, Italy), Damián Němec (Palacký University, Olomouc, Czech Republic), Stanislav Příbyl (University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Czech Republic), Piotr Ryguła (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw, Poland), Elżbieta Szczot (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland), Maciej Woźniczka (Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa), Wiesław Wójcik (Polish Academy of Sciences)

Statistical Editor: Wojciech Świątkiewicz

Editorial Assistant: Marek Rembierz

English Language Editor: Michelle Adamowski

French Language Editor: Dorota Śliwa

Italian Language Editor: Agnieszka Gatti

*Da questa parte onde 'l fiore è maturo  
di tutte le sue foglie, sono assisi  
quei che credettero in Cristo venturo*

Dante Alighieri  
Divina Commedia/Paradiso/Canto XXXII, 22–24

Dedicating the next two volumes to the memory of Professors Rev. Józef Tischner and Rev. Remigiusz Sobański, the Editorial Board of *Philosophy and Canon Law* would like to express their gratitude in the form of a symbolic “rose.” The contemplation on the legacy and contribution to culture of these outstanding Thinkers, Teachers of the ethos of a scientist in limitless devotion to truth and its search—after all, makes us recall the mystical “rose” from Dante Alighieri’s world monument to literature. But also the one from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s masterpiece. As Stanisław Grygier inspiringly deduces—the presence of the “rose” gives the Little Prince’s life meaning and value, makes him free. In the bonds of his responsible love, the nation and society are born – the space for the spiritual development of man (*ethos*). Little Prince’s home (*oikos*), in which law (*nómos*) stems from love of the land, cultivated for the “rose”—that is, the common good—constitutes what is called *oikonomia*.



# Contents

## Part One Philosophy

**John P. Hittinger**

Józef Tischner on Upbringing and Hope

**Krzysztof T. Wieczorek**

In Defence of Utopia. Józef Tischner's Thinking about the Social Ethos

**Marek Petro**

The Idea of Solidarity in the Concept of Man Created in God's Image

**Pavol Dancák**

Ethics and Solidarity as Hope in the Philosophy of Józef Tischner

**Krzysztof Wielecki**

The Concept of Subjectivity in the Light of Józef Tischner's Thought

**Radovan Šoltés**

Philosophical Reflection on Ideology against the Backdrop of Józef Tischner's Thinking

## Part Two Reviews

Mette Lebech, *European Sources of Human Dignity. A Commented Anthology* — **Kathleen Haney**

Wiesław Wójcik, *Uniwersalność matematyki w ujęciu historycznym* — **Pavol Dancák**

Contents

---

Johan Bouwer, Marco van Leeuwen, *Philosophy of Leisure — Foundations of the Good Life* — **Pavol Dancák**

Notes on Contributors

Part One

# Philosophy





## John P. Hittinger

University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas, USA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0660-9653>

# Józef Tischner on Upbringing and Hope

**Abstract:** The present article examines Józef Tischner's idea of upbringing (*wychowanie*) in establishing the new awareness of solidarity among the Polish workers and people through an awakening to conscience. The present moment served as a revolutionary alternative to socialism. I look at Tischner's critique of Marxism and the central issue surrounding base and superstructure. Then I turn to his recovery of the Polish tradition of ethical ideals, especially in the person of Maximilian Kolbe and John Paul II. The text provides a detailed analysis of the chapter on upbringing in *The Spirit of Solidarity*. Tischner's notion that upbringing is a personal bond established in trust to live in hope for improvement in mind and heart is placed in the context of the solidarity as a social bond establishing an ethical community transcending the political quest for power and the need to find an enemy. The text analyzes the various counterfeit forms of education in order to deepen our awareness of the meaning of authentic upbringing. Salient points of his teaching are discussed in conclusion.

**Keywords:** Tischner, Pope John Paul II, solidarity, education, hope, Marx and Marxism, theses on Feuerbach, Maximilian Kolbe, conscience

Józef Tischner is known and revered in the United States as a key figure in Solidarity movement and as a friend and collaborator of Pope John Paul II.<sup>1</sup> In the years between martial law and the round table discussions, two of Tischner's works, written at the birth and outset of Solidarity, were translated into English. *The Spirit of Solidarity* was published in 1984 with a forward by the

---

<sup>1</sup> Pope John Paul II mentions Tischner as an important member of his intellectual circle in *Rise, Let Us Be on Our Way* translated by Walter Ziemba (New York: Warner Books, 2004) and in the editorial note to his last book, *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005), he says that he returns to themes of his conversations with Tischner and Michalski, xi.

former U.S. National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzeziński and an afterward by Lech Wałęsa.<sup>2</sup> This volume received a wide distribution and gave American readers a true flavor of the solidarity movement. Brzeziński hailed Tischner as “a truly major figure in the Polish spiritual rebirth,” and as “the major philosopher of the Solidarity movement.”<sup>3</sup> Wałęsa noted that the grim reality of the delegalization of Solidarity did not diminish the aspirations of the Polish people and Tischner’s book gives expression to “things that still flow through the minds, and even more the hearts, of my compatriots.”<sup>4</sup> Three years later, his book *Polski kształt dialogu* was translated and published as *Marxism and Christianity: The Quarrel and the Dialogue in Poland*.<sup>5</sup> This volume contains a remarkable set of essays by Tischner on the various phases and of the encounter between Marxism and Catholicism; he says that it was more quarrel than dialogue. It also gives very valuable summary analyses of the key thinkers and themes over the years of the quarrel. These two books alone grant to Fr. Tischner an important place in the annals of the Polish resistance to Soviet occupation and oppression of Poland, his impact and influence was also important after Poland regained its freedom in 1989 until his death in 2000. Most significantly, his comprehensive philosophical work was not readily available in English during this time. After his death, the Tischner Institute<sup>6</sup> undertook the project to make his philosophical writings available in a series of three editions of *Thinking in Values*, as publications in *The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*.<sup>7</sup> And more recently, the Ignatianum University Press has published a volume on Józef Tischner as part of their excellent project on The Polish Christian Philosophy in the 20th Century.<sup>8</sup> This volume includes a set of essays introducing the life and work of Tischner as well as translations of some of the key writings by Tischner. We can hope that more English speak-

<sup>2</sup> Józef Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984). Translation of *Etyka Solidarności*, 1982. Translated by Marek B. Zaleski and Benjamin Fiore, S.J. It includes his sermons of May 3, 1981, at Wawel, and those from the first congress of delegates and the first congress of Solidarity.

<sup>3</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, viii–ix.

<sup>4</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 106.

<sup>5</sup> Józef Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity: The Quarrel and the Dialogue in Poland* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1987). Józef Tischner, *Polski kształt dialogu* (Paris: Editions spotkania, 1981). Translated by Marek B. Zaleski and Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

<sup>6</sup> The Józef Tischner Institute was founded by his pupils and friends for the purpose of preserving and spreading knowledge about his work. See [www.tichner.org.pl](http://www.tichner.org.pl). I wish to thank Zbigniew Stawrowski, Director, for providing me with many resources and for meeting with faculty and students from my University.

<sup>7</sup> *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007); *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 2 (Agathology) (2008); *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 3 (Dialogue and Encounter) (2011).

<sup>8</sup> Jarosław Jagiełło, ed. *Józef Tischner* (Kraków: Ignatianum University Press, 2020).

ing scholars will now reconsider the work of this influential Polish philosopher and activist.

It is not our intention to assess Tischner's philosophy as a whole, but rather to examine his work on notion of solidarity, and to focus specifically upon one aspect of it, namely, how an idea of education, or "upbringing" (*wychowanie*) grew out of the experience of solidarity. In fact, as Dobrosław Kot has pointed out, Tischner treated his book on solidarity as "sui generis reports from the center of events, and not as an independent, complete theory."<sup>9</sup> He admits that "solidarity" is not a concept or an ethical system but an "idea that illuminates the current events."<sup>10</sup> Therefore, Kot suggests that the book is not about solidarity as such but about the "things which thanks to solidarity were brought to light."<sup>11</sup> The value of the book lies in the phenomenon of human action that Tischner observed and experienced at the critical time of solidarity's first emergence. Thus, he begins with the "fact" of "real solidarity of people," which he then describes and begins to offer some thoughtful reflections, analyses, and comparisons. When he describes the phenomenon as a willingness to "carry the burden of another" or an awareness of the "bonds" that people have to each other, he uses a scripture citation to make the point (Gal. 6:2). Solidarity is a call. He also observes that solidarity is not imposed from without but born from within, like virtue. And that solidarity does not need an enemy because it is turned towards all, and it is against no one. And notably he turns most emphatically to talk about solidarity in terms of conscience. "The ethics of solidarity intends to be the ethics of conscience,"<sup>12</sup> he famously declared. But again, there is not here a philosophical analysis of conscience, but we can refer to the deepest part of the person, where one encounters the voice of God, and stands reliably or consistently for others.<sup>13</sup> Thus, in response to the pain of others, more often victimized by an oppressive system of government, the awakening of conscience brought forward a new social movement. In the midst of a "crisis of truth, excessive suspicion, exploitation and bad organization," the Polish people chose neither passivity nor direct confrontation, but a "third path, the path of solidarity."<sup>14</sup>

In this social-political context, Tischner, in *The Spirit of Solidarity* wrote a chapter entitled "Upbringing." Tischner wrote elsewhere: "I do not deal with

---

<sup>9</sup> Dobrosław Kot, "Solidarity without Solidarity," in *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007): 98.

<sup>10</sup> Kot, "Solidarity without Solidarity," 98–99; he makes reference to Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 5–6.

<sup>11</sup> Kot, "Solidarity without Solidarity," 99.

<sup>12</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 6–7.

<sup>13</sup> Kot, "Solidarity without Solidarity," 100–102, quoted in Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 6–9.

<sup>14</sup> Kot, "Solidarity without Solidarity," 103.

the philosophy of education directly, but I touch it only insofar as this philosophy is related to man.”<sup>15</sup> Solidarity helps to illuminate an important part of any society, namely, education or upbringing.<sup>16</sup> This in turn will help us understand his philosophy of the person as tied to others by bonds of social trust.<sup>17</sup> There is an informality to the idea of upbringing that emphasizes the personal bond between mentor and the pupil, not unlike that between the parent and the child. It does not rely on formal positions of teacher and student, but readily emerges as a way of forming and influencing one another through social bonds built on trust. These bonds, established through an awakening of conscience, constituted the revolution that began to heal the sickness of work and social order. Tischner will suggest that, against the backdrop of a proper understanding of upbringing as awakening, we may say that the “ethics of solidarity” is the “ethics of awakening.”<sup>18</sup> The ethics of solidarity “wants to be an ethics of conscience.”<sup>19</sup> The solidarity movement was a revolution of conscience because solidarity was a movement of awakening, brought to pass through upbringing. Upbringing is the pivot for the change in consciousness and the action that characterizes the revolution of conscience.

The very attempt to thematize “upbringing” and view it in the light of solidarity is rooted in Tischner’s account of Christianity’s “quarrel and dialogue” with Marxism in Poland.<sup>20</sup> According to Marxist thought, it is through labor and the changing conditions of labor that human beings are created and formed. What human beings are “coincides with their production, both what they pro-

---

<sup>15</sup> Józef Tischner, *Krótki przewodnik po życiu: nieznanne teksty* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2017), 72. “Droga Sokratesa i perć Sabawy. Uwagi o filozofii wychowania,” *Znak*, no. 11 (1996); and Józef Tischner and Jacek Żakowski, *Tischner czyta Katechizm* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2009), 109–112.

<sup>16</sup> Józef Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 66–75. On the topic of upbringing, see also Józef Tischner, *Krótki przewodnik po życiu: nieznanne teksty* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2017), 71–82. Also see, Józef Tischner and Wojciech Bonowicz, *Alfabet Tischnera* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2012), 293–298.

<sup>17</sup> See Zbigniew Stawrowski, “Solidarity Means a Bond,” *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007), 159–171.

<sup>18</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 49; and awakening is what the pupil owes his teacher or mentor. Charles Taylor, in his sympathetic but critical analysis of Tischner’s account of solidarity, pinpoints the moment of “awakening” of common citizenship as the most relevant aspect of the solidarity movement for the west. “It is indispensable for the community to come alive again and to actualize itself. This is the main message of Fr. Tischner.” Charles Taylor, “Several Reflections on the Theme of Solidarity,” *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007): 73, 75.

<sup>19</sup> Tischner, “The Ethics of Solidarity,” trans. A. Fraś, in *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007), 39.

<sup>20</sup> Józef Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity: The Quarrel and the Dialogue in Poland* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1987).

duce and how they produce,” Marx stated in his book *The German Ideology*.<sup>21</sup> There is no need for another sphere of life called “upbringing” or “education,” insofar as morality, religion, and metaphysics are simply ideology, and exist only as “reflexes and echoes of real life processes.”<sup>22</sup> In sum, “life is not determined by consciousness but consciousness is determined by life [labor].”<sup>23</sup> An education not based on work, productivity, and class struggle forms a “false consciousness” and is counterproductive to the authentic liberation of human beings. Thus, to take seriously a philosophy of education, called by Tischner “upbringing,” even in an indirect way, is a sign of his rejection of Marxist theory and a challenge to its practice. Of course, Marx himself recognized the difficulties of his position that external social and economic circumstances, such as productive capacities and class division, are the sole determination of consciousness. He raises a critical question in his brief “Theses on Feuerbach.” He posed the following question: “Who will educate the educator?”<sup>24</sup> As an initial answer, Marx responds that the “coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionizing activity.”<sup>25</sup> His cryptic remark begs many questions such as what is the character of this revolutionizing activity and who will bring it about and under what conditions? Tischner discusses precisely the third thesis on Feuerbach in his *Marxism and Christianity*.<sup>26</sup> According to Tischner, this third thesis “concisely but unequivocally points to the decisive role of human beings in shaping the base.” Accordingly, the human being is not merely a product of the base, but “its particular creator,”<sup>27</sup> and indeed human beings are elevated as “the fundamental production forces above other forces.”

Perhaps the great achievement of Solidarity was to provide such a transformative activity that brought about a change in social life and deepened an awareness of responsibility. Charles Taylor describes Solidarity as “the engine

---

<sup>21</sup> This constitutes a part of the so-called first premises of materialist method, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, edited with an introduction by Christopher C. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970), 42.

<sup>22</sup> Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 47.

<sup>23</sup> Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 47.

<sup>24</sup> Karl Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach, III,” in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), 108. Also found in Christopher Arthur’s edition of *The German Ideology*, 121–122.

<sup>25</sup> Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach, III,” in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 108.

<sup>26</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 59ff. For an excellent analysis of the third thesis, see Nicholas Lobkowitz, *Theory and Practice: History of a Concept from Aristotle to Marx* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1967), 409–426.

<sup>27</sup> Tischner emphasizes the role of creativity as a feature of the human person in “Thinking and Creativity,” in *The Philosophy of Person: Solidarity and Cultural Creativity*, ed. Józef Tischner, Józef M. Życiński, and George F. McLean (Washington, D.C.: Paideia Press, 1994).

of social healing.”<sup>28</sup> Solidarity found a fresh and seemingly innovative alternative to the broken and sick socialist experiment in Poland. Solidarity was an experience that would itself “educate the educator.” At its heart is the experience of an awakening and formation of conscience derived in part from the Polish tradition, the Church, and mutual friendship. This is the task of “upbringing.” Tischner’s report on upbringing from his experience of solidarity is a valuable document to understand how this change came about. In order to analyze this chapter of *The Spirit of Solidarity*, we shall first look at Tischner’s critique of Marxism; second, we examine the importance of the Polish tradition as an alternative or rival to the Marxist position and other philosophies of Western Europe;<sup>29</sup> third, we shall do a paragraph-by-paragraph analysis of the chapter on upbringing. And in the conclusion, we identify three salient points about upbringing: upbringing belongs in an extra-political sphere, upbringing highlights personal interiority and freedom; upbringing ultimately derives from hope and the experience of the Abrahamic response to the divine promise.

## Tischner’s Critique of Marxism

In his study on *Marxism and Christianity*, Tischner deftly analyzes aspects of the Marxist account of labor to show its inability to account for the crisis of work in Poland so evident to all in the 1970s. He began the work in 1976 and completed it in 1980. He acknowledges the difficulty of examining fairly all sides of the “quarrel” between Christianity and Marxism in Poland because more often than not the meeting was a confrontation and an ongoing struggle. The whole nation was involved in the confrontational “dialogue” because everyone faced a decision, the choice between Marxism and Christianity. Thus, Tischner considers the genre of his book to be more akin to “witness,” or the honest reflection of someone close to the history; he offers his “honest testimony” but in them he provides a very substantial analysis. The efforts by the Marxist government in Poland to actively construct socialism in Poland and to provide a steady indoctrination of the Marxist ideas made it inevitable that the Marxist dogmas would “seep into one’s soul.”<sup>30</sup> The notions of class warfare, higher ideals as a mere superstructure derived from the base of economic

---

<sup>28</sup> Taylor, “Several Reflections on the Theme of Solidarity,” 72.

<sup>29</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre speaks about rival and competing traditions in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, and Tradition*, Gifford Lectures of 1998 (South Bend: Notre Dame Press, 1990).

<sup>30</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, xvii.

productivity and relations, and the international dimension of the struggle for socialism drenched the life of the country like a wet fog. Dialectical materialism was the official teaching in all venues and it claimed to provide an all embracing explanation for economics, history, and culture. The regime relentlessly attacked all the varieties of Polish thinkers who might provide an alternative to Marxism. The thousand-year tradition of Christianity in Poland provided a strong counter-current to this ideological inundation. The Polish church was a “factor in the awakening the people from slumber.”<sup>31</sup> The two figures of Stefan Wyszyński and Karol Wojtyła symbolized for the people the journey of the nation under communism and enhanced the moral and intellectual authority of the Church. It was an unequal struggle, Tischner argues, because the nation “chose according to values” and they saw themselves as a nation in the work of these two men. Fr. Tischner is clearly building upon their vision of work society.<sup>32</sup>

Presenting Marxism as a “philosophy of labor,” Tischner explains the conceptual link between their understanding of labor and the all-pervasive notion of dialectic. At all stages of the process of production Marxists identify fundamental points of opposition and antagonism, culminating of course in the defining aspect of class warfare. Labor must utilize raw materials from an unyielding earth and bring into play human relationships in division of labor and class distinctions in exchange. As production unfolds, “the world around human beings changes. The human beings themselves also change. This change goes so far and reaches so deeply that we may say that labor directly creates the human being.”<sup>33</sup> The dialectical method reduces history to the antagonism of classes designated as the exploited and the exploiters.<sup>34</sup> Tischner explores the concept of exploitation as alienation by tracing the concept through Hegel and Marx to the fantastic claim by Stalin that in the USSR, there are no longer “exploiters and exploited.” Such claims caused considerable embarrassment to the Polish communists in light of the evident failures of decades long efforts to refashion the economy and to reorder and reeducate the citizens of Poland. There was no socialism with a human face, but quite the opposite—alienated workers, widespread poverty, deeply oppressive structures. Some Marxists even proposed a rethinking of the

---

<sup>31</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, xviii.

<sup>32</sup> See Stefan Wyszyński, *Duch pracy ludzkiej* (1946); translated as *Working you Way into Heaven* (New Hampshire: Sophia Press, 1995); see also Stefan Wyszyński, *The Deeds of Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); Karol Wojtyła, *Dobrze Was rozumiem, nie obca mi praca: Kardynał Karol Wojtyła – Ojciec Święty Jan Paweł II w Piekarach Śląskich* (Katowice Diocese, 2020). John Paul II, *On Human Work “Laborem exercens”* (Vatican, 1981), [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_14091981\\_laborem-exercens.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html).

<sup>33</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 64.

<sup>34</sup> Marx and Engles, *The German Ideology*, 52–57; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York, Penguin, 1964), *passim*.

notion of alienation so to include socialist society, particularly by Adam Schaff.<sup>35</sup> The issue of alienation pitted the old guard, dogmatic Marxists, against those who championed the “younger Marx” as a humanist. Yet the experiment of socialist economy in Poland led many to search for another way to understand the sickness and exploitation of Polish labor at the heart of the Soviet system, especially through the resources of Christian Philosophy.<sup>36</sup>

Tischner explains that the basic affliction of the socialist human being is “moral” in nature, and not strictly economic. On one key page of *Marxism and Christianity*, he summarizes the multiple points made throughout his *The Spirit of Solidarity*:

Exploitation drives human beings into a state of moral conflict with themselves. [...] It is the feeling that their otherwise sincere goodwill is time after time misused for aims that have nothing to do with this goodwill and which often are even contradictory to it. [...] this new form is a direct manipulation of human beings themselves, their attitude towards others, and towards themselves. Socialized human beings discover they are below the level of human life due to an inability to exercise their proper rights and to execute the duties entrusted to them. Their right to truth is canceled, their feelings of personal dignity are taken lightly, their personal freedom suffers limitations. [...] They suffer from an excess of needless, empty tasks, and from a constant lack of time. They live in a world of the propagandistic lie.<sup>37</sup>

Marxists were simply unable to deploy ethical concepts to analyze this moral existential situation. A similar point was frequently made by Alasdair MacIntyre. The criminal policies and deeds of the Stalinist regime such as mass murder and deportation, along with the imprisonment and execution of many leaders led many Marxists in the West to attempt a critical analysis. MacIntyre discussed the attempts at the moral assessment of Stalinism in “Notes from the Moral Wilderness.”<sup>38</sup> One had to appeal to a non-Marxist morality such as utili-

---

<sup>35</sup> See Helena Czosnyka, *The Polish Challenge: Foundations for Dialogue in the Works of Adam Schaff and Józef Tischner* (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1995); and Józef Tischner, “The Dispute over Alienation,” in *Marxism and Christianity*, 40–51.

<sup>36</sup> See *A Companion to Polish Christian Philosophy of the 20th and 21st Centuries*, ed. Piotr S. Mazur, Piotr Duchliński, and Paweł Skrzydlewski (Kraków: Ignatianum University Press, 2020).

<sup>37</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 50.

<sup>38</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, “Notes from the Moral Wilderness,” in *The MacIntyre Reader*, ed. Kelvin Knight (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 34. MacIntyre's intellectual journey was fueled by his struggle to find an adequate critique of modern liberal society without succumbing to the contradictions and excess of Marxism. For an anthology of his writing on Marxism, see *Alasdair MacIntyre's Engagement with Marxism*, ed. Paul Blackledge and Neil Davidson (Leiden: Brill, 2005). Also, Alasdair MacIntyre, *Against the Self-Images of the Age: Essays on Ideology and Philosophy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press,

tarianism or Kantian categorical imperative, as espoused by modern liberalism, in order to judge the ethical errors of Marxism. But this seems to be arbitrary or inconsistent with the Marxist critique of western liberalism. Similarly, Tischner did not wish to make an arbitrary appeal to a moral system, such as Thomism, but rather to develop a form of personalism built from the experience of Polish life and readily applicable to the immediate but profound challenges.<sup>39</sup>

The central problem with Marxism according to Tischner is its failure to account for the moral agency of the human being, indeed to account for the interiority of the person at all. Tischner quotes Włodzimierz Szewczuk's statement concerning the "ingenious discovery of Marx," namely: "Human beings begin creating themselves by remaking the nature of which they are part [...]. The social conditions of life create human beings and their personalities, they shape their value systems and modes of valuation, their life styles. They shape the entire interior of the individual."<sup>40</sup> It is clear that this approach to human development has no need for an "upbringing" or education outside of the forces of production and the ensemble of social relations in labor. And if human beings are in some way "raw material" and it is productive labor that humanizes or dehumanizes the person, who can gain such power over work and thus over human beings? Tischner rightly notes that "we are at the heart of socialism."

---

1978). Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

<sup>39</sup> Tischner's dispute with Thomism ranged beyond this choice of rhetorical style. Józef Tischner, "Schyłek chrześcijaństwa tomistycznego," *Znak*, nr 1 (1970). Helpful comments are made by Miłosz Hołda, "Discussions and Polemics," in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 115–118. Tischner claimed that Thomism "does not allow for positive research into the world and Christianity and getting really in this area new results" (Tischner, "Schyłek chrześcijaństwa tomistycznego," in Józef Tischner, *Myslenie według wartości* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 1993), 215–238; see page 236 for his comment on Maritain and Gilson). He seems to dismiss the accomplishments of Maritain and Gilson: "Recent analyzes by Maritain and Gilson do not, unfortunately, go beyond the conventions of Thomist Christianity." Tischner, "Schyłek," Footnote 11, p. 246. Tischner was probably not aware of Maritain's *On the Church of Christ: The Person of the Church and Her Personnel* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973) written near the time of his essay: "I have always thought that the so-called 'Scholastic' mode of exposition, manner and style have had their day, because they have become an obstacle to the life and to the progress of this great doctrine in human history. What it needs is no longer a doctoral and magistral approach, inscribing in marble a majestic *sed contra* and peremptory responses to numbered objections; it is a free approach, inquiring, humble and proud at one and the same time; it is to advance under the standard of St. Joan of Arc" (p. 231). The standard of Joan requires "extraordinary liberty, extraordinary simplicity, extraordinary courage, and, above all, total gift-of-oneself to give heroically assistance to the pity which is in the kingdom of the earth." From his early book *Antimoderne* (Paris: Éditions de la Revue des jeunes, 1922) to his *The Peasant of the Garonne: An Old Layman Questions Himself about the Present Time* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1968), Maritain called for a renewal of Thomism and a reinvigoration of its central insights and truths. The truth is above time and not subject to decay.

<sup>40</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 55.

We encounter the problem of how to understand its deterministic consequences of the theory of base and superstructure.<sup>41</sup>

According to the classic Marxist teaching, reality is constituted by the “base” of “the whole material intercourse of individuals within a definite stage of the development of productive forces.”<sup>42</sup> Materials, technology, relations of production give rise to various classes and beyond that ranges an “ideology” by which class relations are embodied in art, religion, culture—all a “superstructure” or deception covering the fundamental facts of the productive engines of social-economic life. The problem is not just the reductionism of the moral and cultural to the social-economic, but “the determination of human beings, their psyche, views, moral and conceptual stance, through the historical social conditions in which they live.”<sup>43</sup> Tischner believes that this premise of Marxism makes it inevitable that the process of socialization must become “a violent assault against the human spirit.”<sup>44</sup> Such an assault “met the response of protest of individuals and society” in Poland. Solidarity was a search for the truth about the human person and for the authenticity of work, as response of protest to the oppression, disorder, and misery inflicted upon the Polish people by a Marxist regime.

As noted above, Marx himself had come to the essential question about the problem of historical determinism and the need to explain the factor of upbringing and education. He failed to develop the insight, but that did prevent neo-Marxists from searching for a humanistic Marx and a “Marxism with a human face” derived from the writings of the young Marx and especially the “Theses on Feuerbach.” The third thesis on Feuerbach seemed to indicate a way out of the deterministic and reductionistic social theory. The third thesis reads as follows:

The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that it is essential to educate the educator himself. This doctrine must, therefore, divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society. The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity and self-changing can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionizing practice.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 55. See also Shlomo Avineri, *The Social & Political Thought of Karl Marx* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1968) and David McClellan, *Karl Marx* (New York: Penguin, 1975), Joseph Cropsey, “Karl Marx,” in *History of Political Philosophy*, ed. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1972), 755–781.

<sup>42</sup> Marx, *The German Ideology*, 63.

<sup>43</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 62.

<sup>44</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 63.

<sup>45</sup> Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 121.

“Who will educate the educator” does indeed open up a new vista for Marxism, but it remained the “road not taken,” according to MacIntyre. And Tischner gathers the testimony of Poland to its failed promise. Tischner approvingly cites this third thesis because it “unequivocally points to the decisive role of human beings in shaping the base.”<sup>46</sup> With the admission that “the educator must be educated” the question of upbringing comes back into view. An experience of human upbringing indicates that ideological indoctrination and official declarations about the grandeur of socialist work are a counterfeit form of education. This will be explained in the essay on upbringing in *The Spirit of Solidarity*. Marx had briefly suggested a solution within his notion of revolutionary practice that would change circumstances as it changes human nature—a prognostication that in the future, there will be a moment or threshold of the coinciding of practice and formation. And before we know it, the development of one is the development of all, and one could hunt in the morning and fish in the afternoon. For many good reasons, Tischner would declare that the “opposition between base and superstructure is nonsense.”<sup>47</sup>

According to MacIntyre, Marx was attempting to give expression to the idea of a kind of practice “such that those engaged in it transform themselves and educate themselves through their own self-transformative activity.”<sup>48</sup> But this type of ethical activity was best expressed by Aristotle: human beings discover in the ends of any practice the goods common to all who engage in it and standard of excellence for the practice. Participation in a way of life effects a “transformation in the desires that led them to the activity.”<sup>49</sup> This is typically achieved in a smaller community with a social base of friendship and reciprocity such as a polis or a commune. MacIntyre points out that Marx was aware of the uprising of the Silesian weavers in 1844, but he neglected to understand the social base for their resistance.<sup>50</sup> It is through an ethical community that one discovers a coincidence of “changing circumstances and the human activity of self-changing.”<sup>51</sup> But Marx looks forward to a large scale, universal revolutionary activity with the quality of the smaller personal scale of an ethical community, all the while dismissing authentic ethical communities as past forms of life to be left behind. The notion that the lag between productive forces and social relations will then call forth the transformative revolutionary activity

<sup>46</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 59.

<sup>47</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 60.

<sup>48</sup> MacIntyre, “The Road Not Taken,” 231.

<sup>49</sup> MacIntyre, “The Road Not Taken,” 226.

<sup>50</sup> MacIntyre, “The Road Not Taken,” 232. See Herman Beck, “State and Society in Pre-March Prussia: The Weavers’ Uprising, the Bureaucracy, and the Association for the Welfare of Workers,” *Central European History*, vol. 25, no. 3 (1992): 303–331. MacIntyre and Tischner both reference Edward Thompson’s account of weavers in Lancashire and Yorkshire at the end of the 18th century in his *Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1968).

<sup>51</sup> MacIntyre, “The Road Not Taken,” 232.

remains too mechanical and comes to be imposed from without, as in Poland. The true springs of creativity and authentic action are found in the interiority of the person, from intellect, will, and heart. The human person must be considered as a foundation for ethical community. How to form the core of the person for living in the communion of family, the community of work and for the common good of the nation becomes the paramount task. His critique of the Marxist dialectical materialism with its clumsy conceptual apparatus of base and super-structure and its unreal claims for the revolutionary practice of the international proletariat opens the way for a reclaiming of an authentic education that Tischner thematizes as “upbringing.”

In the movement of Solidarity, Tischner experienced the awakening of conscience accompanied by a transformed life among many people during the period of solidarity prior to martial law. The change came from within and was not imposed; through the change came an establishing or activating of a bond with others and for others; trust and dependability came to characterize those who changed or converted to the new attitude. He attributed the change to “upbringing” and the eruption of hope through the influence of mentors and leaders. One such leader was Pope John Paul II who brought hope to Poland through his years as Cardinal Archbishop of Kraków, but more directly through his election to the papacy and his first visit to Poland in 1979. Tischner refers to John Paul II multiple times in *The Spirit of Solidarity*.<sup>52</sup> Solidarity, as a revolution of conscience, as the growth of a forest of consciences, came to be by the responsibility, initiative, and personal witness of so many Polish citizens who recovered their identity and inner resolve.<sup>53</sup> A decade after the publication of *Marxism and Christianity*, Tischner reflected upon the influence of John Paul II: “He is one of the very few people in the West to recognize fully the extent of the devastation resulting from Communism, not only in economics and politics, but primarily within man himself. He knows it is not enough to pull down the external structures of Communism; the totalitarian menace must be overcome in each human being.”<sup>54</sup> John Paul II reminded the Polish people of their heritage and tradition. Tischner also refers to the Polish tradition of heroes in *The Spirit of Solidarity* and *Marxism and Christianity*. In order to account for the awakening of conscience and the spread of solidarity, and for a new consideration of upbringing, Tischner explained how the Marxist heroes were so contrary to the Polish tradition, and how the Polish heroes, such as Maximilian Kolbe provide a model for solidarity.

---

<sup>52</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 4, 89, 90, 99, 102, 119, 120.

<sup>53</sup> See John P. Hittinger, “Revolution of Conscience in *Centesimus Annus*,” *Philosophy and Canon Law*, vol. 3 (2017): 49–67.

<sup>54</sup> Józef Tischner, “A View from the Ruins,” in *A New Worldly Order: John Paul II and Human Freedom*, ed. George Weigel (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1992), 166.

## Tischner and the Polish Tradition

In describing his own philosophy, Tischner admits that it “bears the distinct impression of the conditions under which I have been living and working.”<sup>55</sup> Coming of age in post-world war II Poland, under the rigors of communist rule, Tischner had to respond to the challenge by learning how to frame the questions to pursue. One must always be asking “what should I be learning”<sup>56</sup> and taking an active role in one’s own education. His life tracked the various phases of post-war Poland—from the time of Stalinism to the attempted reforms under Gomułka and into the time of Solidarity and then free Poland.<sup>57</sup> The year that Tischner was ordained a priest, 1955, the primate of Poland Cardinal Wyszyński was under house arrest and he mentions seeing Gomułka addressing the crowds with a sense of hope. As Fr. Tischner served the Polish people through his pastoral duties, he found in them a “severe crisis of hope.” This discovery of the lack of hope, as the basic feature of life in Poland, laid upon him the task of being an educator or mentor and gave him a sense of special responsibility.<sup>58</sup> When he came to reflect on his life later, he mused, “when I look at my job as a priest and philosopher, I find that over those several dozen years I mainly worked on human hope.”<sup>59</sup> The work upon human hope is crucial from the early schooling to adulthood, because through hope we can establish some meaning for life and work.

Tischner therefore speaks from within the Polish experience to address himself to the crisis of hope. Tischner studied the contemporary philosophers like Scheler and Levinas, but he said that the attempt to bring that philosophy into the realm of the crisis of the day, the lack of hope, required turning more specifically to the resources of the Polish tradition. Pawliszyn explains the importance of the Polish experience under communism for Tischner’s focus upon the issue of hope:

Arguably as never before, man has come to face the system which illegitimately wanted to claim all the areas of life bar none. The experience of the

---

<sup>55</sup> Józef Tischner, “The Philosophy That I Pursue,” found in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 145. See also in the same volume, Pawliszyn, “Biography,” 11–20

<sup>56</sup> Mirosław Pawliszyn, “Introductory Presentation of Józef Tischner’s Philosophy,” in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 34.

<sup>57</sup> Tischner explains these phases of communist rule in Poland in *Marxism and Christianity*, 3–12.

<sup>58</sup> Tischner, “The Philosophy That I Pursue,” 146; see also Pawliszyn, “Introductory Presentation,” 34–35.

<sup>59</sup> Tischner and Żakowski, *Tischner czyta Katechizm*, 111. I developed a translation for the Polish texts with the help of Piotr Przybylski, Małgorzata Bujak, and Grzegorz Hołub. See Jarosław Jagiełło, “From Axiology to Agathology,” in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 53.

war and then communism is not a mere occurrence, something that happened at some point in history. It is a mechanism aimed at annihilating man as such, not only in his corporeal, but all spiritual dimension.<sup>60</sup>

Tischner himself said that “on our soil, philosophy is born out of pain. The quality of philosophy is determined by the quality of human pain that philosophy wants to express and remedy.”<sup>61</sup> That pain, of course, is primarily a pain of a mental sort, a moral misery, leading to the temptation to despair about fulfilling one’s dignity: “To the weariness of work, to the boredom and exhaustion, to the threat of hunger is added a dead weight, a pain of the soul, a heartache.”<sup>62</sup> It is a crisis of hope spawned in part by the very deterministic philosophy of the regime combined with its coercive force to extract compliance and silence. But the very imposition and demands of the system deepen the lack of hope with a sense of guilt. The Polish philosopher, indeed, each Polish citizen, had to come to terms with the Marxist practice imposed upon them. One comes to recognize that no one can remain inertly innocent because “the crisis of hope is not only about hope being taken away from man,” but also about the many ways to become complicit in the evil; one could also annihilate oneself by “becoming a player in the game.”<sup>63</sup> But hope can spring up through the drama of personal encounter: when the longing for good and a recognition of its vulnerability, a person can choose to act for value of the person. Tischner writes that hope “enables man to overcome obstacles in the present and face the future.” Hope arises when one can say “no” to a threat and see that a “change in the links between the world and the values that become realized in the world.”<sup>64</sup> A person discovers their own freedom and their own value as an agent to confront the tragic aspect of the life of the one whom I encounter.<sup>65</sup> Professor Jagiełło explains Tischner’s main point about hope as a “conviction expressed in thought, word and action that values still stand a chance of becoming realized, that they will not be annihilated or betrayed.”<sup>66</sup> Such a conviction stands upon a truth about “man, God, and the world.” This is not a neutral observation or a mere registration of facts, but an awareness of good and evil—hope involves an “agathological horizon” in which the person is aware of good and evil and the pos-

<sup>60</sup> Pawliszyn, “Introductory Presentation,” 35.

<sup>61</sup> Tischner, “The Philosophy That I Pursue,” 148.

<sup>62</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 29; see Taylor, “Several Reflections on the Theme of Solidarity,” 72.

<sup>63</sup> Pawliszyn, “Introductory Presentation of Józef Tischner’s Philosophy,” 35

<sup>64</sup> Jagiełło, “From Axiology to Agathology,” in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 55; and the entry for “Hope,” in Glossary, in Jagiełło, *Tischner*, 137–138.

<sup>65</sup> Various passages on hope are found in the glossary of *Józef Tischner*, 137–138. See extensive discussion by Jarosław Jagiełło, in “From Axiology to Agathology,” in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 53–65.

<sup>66</sup> Jagiełło, “From Axiology to Agathology,” in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 54.

sibility of “victory and failure, redemption and damnation.”<sup>67</sup> It is through this reciprocal discovery and affirmation of the value of the other and a joint refusal to accept the threats to human dignity that solidarity was born. Solidarity is the movement that became the great pedagogy of hope for the Polish people. Tischner emphasizes that this hope did not stem from a new theory or a new philosophy, but through the tradition and the experience of the Polish people. Tischner was in quest of the Polish philosophy to elaborate on the tradition and experience that was not fully articulate for the challenge of the day.

In one of the chapters of *Marxism and Christianity: The Quarrel and Dialogue in Poland*, Tischner discusses the Polish shape of dialogue (the phrase originally incorporated into the Polish title of the book *Polski kształt dialogu*). The best approach to a comparison of Marxism with Polish Christian philosophy is not to discuss the theoretical or historical deficiencies of dialectical materialism, but rather to reflect upon human hope. For, indeed, “a human is a being who needs some hope in order to live.”<sup>68</sup> The witness to hope becomes the centerpiece of his account of upbringing, as it was the central testimony of John Paul II.<sup>69</sup> Proceeding from the basis of human experience, and particularly from the Polish tradition with its 1,000 years of Christian culture, we must understand the variety of hopes that can be formed by the human person. The human person can direct their hope towards God, or to another human being, or to the world of objects, things and matter. Each form of hope contains both a promise and a somewhat hidden assumption about human suffering. What is the greatest misery for a human being and what promise do we have for overcoming such misery? Marxism clearly rejects the supernatural, indeed “radically negates it.” Marxists accuse the Christians of utopianism, peddling an “opium of the people” for an improvement of their lot beyond this life. The hope directed

---

<sup>67</sup> Jagiełło, “Agathological Horizon,” in Glossary, in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 131.

<sup>68</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 69.

<sup>69</sup> Pope Benedict XVI noted well during his homily for the beatification of John Paul II: “When Karol Wojtyła ascended to the throne of Peter, he brought with him a deep understanding of the difference between Marxism and Christianity, based on their respective visions of man. This was his message: man is the way of the Church, and Christ is the way of man. With this message, which is the great legacy of the Second Vatican Council and of its ‘helmsman,’ the Servant of God Pope Paul VI, John Paul II led the People of God across the threshold of the Third Millennium, which thanks to Christ he was able to call ‘the threshold of hope.’ Throughout the long journey of preparation for the great Jubilee he directed Christianity once again to the future, the future of God, which transcends history while nonetheless directly affecting it. He rightly reclaimed for Christianity that impulse of hope which had in some sense faltered before Marxism and the ideology of progress. He restored to Christianity its true face as a religion of hope, to be lived in history in an ‘Advent’ spirit, in a personal and communitarian existence directed to Christ, the fullness of humanity and the fulfillment of all our longings for justice and peace” Benedict XVI’s Homily for Beatifying John Paul II, [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2011/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20110501\\_beatificazione-gpii.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20110501_beatificazione-gpii.html).

to other people, however, must be realized through the more fundamental hope to “conquer the world of social relations, productive forces, and material elements.” With the elimination of private property, they hope to achieve the end of antagonism between people and classes, as well as war and poverty. But in such an account, there is drastic surgery on human hopes. The limit of hope is the earth; Tischner coins the phrase “terraistic” hope, because there is no other heaven for human beings but the earth. By rational force and efficiency, we will become more at home on this earth. Tischner notes that the great totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century also drew from the experience of hope by transferring it to earthly life: “They promised heaven on earth, or they even said that the hope had already been fulfilled—a paradise on earth already there is, you are already happy, and if you do not feel it, it means you’re stupid.”<sup>70</sup> From Christianity we learn to emphasize the “primacy of interpersonal hope over the hope of conquering the forces and elements of nature.”<sup>71</sup> Indeed, he says that which “betrays not the human being became the characteristic teaching in a socialist context.”<sup>72</sup> The defense of human conscience, and the right to hope in a religious dimension, concord in the nation, reconciliation, and unity in the family give a concreteness to the concern for the human person. The fight for hope was a fight for the human being.

Polish “patriotism” was the nut that could not be cracked by the Marxists. They put forward certain patriotic associations approved by the party and they excoriated nationalism in the name of internationalism. But they missed a peculiar trait of Polish national heroism: “The feeling of internal human identity, a feeling of being oneself, a feeling of personal dignity.”<sup>73</sup> The socialist hero, to the contrary, was characterized by a “poverty of interior life.” Deeper spiritual bonds did not form through the socialist system of work, but mere “pretended loyalty.” Also, in contrast to the socialist account of the human being, the axis of the hero of Christianity is person to person (love of neighbor) and human God (love of God). The value of the human being is deeper than the value of their actual or potential work, or their association with the collectivity. The “individual existence of a person is a value in itself,”<sup>74</sup> and the measure of human dignity is “not work but sanctity.”

Tischner turns to the life and death of Maximilian Kolbe as the great exemplar of love who has a special significance for Poland. He provides a glimpse of a way out of the crisis of hope. Tischner developed a bold project—to develop a philosophy of the human person through an understanding of the deed of Kolbe as a Polish patriot and priest:

---

<sup>70</sup> Tischner and Żakowski, *Tischner czyta Katechizm*, 111.

<sup>71</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 71.

<sup>72</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 71.

<sup>73</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 64.

<sup>74</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 73.

Father Kolbe is more than just a Franciscan friar who sacrificed his life for a fellow human being. He is a living incarnation of our Polish philosophy of man, which runs in our blood, and yet has never been fully described. [...] Kolbe discovered but he did not name it. He just did what he did. It lies in the realm of philosophy to understand and name. Here I can discern a chance and a challenging task.<sup>75</sup>

Tischner mentions contemporary currents of philosophy—existentialism, structuralism, cybernetics, Heideggerian philosophy—but he says “the fact of Kolbe is absolutely beyond it all.”<sup>76</sup> It is not simply a matter of theology, but a human perspective in an inhuman world. His is a witness to love and courage. It is a love born of his faith, but the love and courage are found in many deeds in Polish history. It is a witness to a human scale of values and a proper measure for human society. It is not work that makes us free, but love that frees us to work for the good of the other. In Marxism and Christianity, Tischner offers this reflection:

Fr. Kolbe’s heroism is revealed through the fact that he valued the life of his neighbor more than his own. Thus, by his sacrifice, he definitely transcended the level of values around which the ethical efforts of the heroes of work in a period of socialization are concentrated. Father Kolbe’s deed shows just not the value of work, but the values which work should serve. It unveils the sphere of values that gives meaning to all of human life. It also demonstrates the true order of human hopes. Faith in God is not synonymous with turning one’s back on the temporal problem; it is in no way a kind of opium, but it is the way to the deepest involvement in the struggle for a better world.<sup>77</sup>

Yet the great national and religious heroes of Polish history disappeared from the Marxist narratives about Poland. But the greatness of the Polish past brings encouragement and its prostrations—a warning. Tischner mentions St. Stanisław, Queen Jadwiga, King Jan Kazimierz, Paweł Włodkowic, and others. The purpose is to see the way that Poles were educated through their tradition—they learned to hope and to aspire for something heroic and to affirm their dignity as a people. There must be a right to truth, to search for truth and to live the truth. The pedagogy of the Church, he says, is a pedagogy of hope; and the history of revelation is a disclosure of the pedagogy of God through challenge and hope.<sup>78</sup> Tischner will explain in another writing that upbringing and education as constituted by a circle of the quest for truth and a discovery of freedom. (The Socratic dimension seeks through dialogue and questioning to

<sup>75</sup> Tischner, “The Philosophy That I Pursue,” 147–148.

<sup>76</sup> Tischner, “The Philosophy That I Pursue,” 147.

<sup>77</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 73.

<sup>78</sup> Tischner and Żakowski, *Tischner czyta Katechizm*, 111.

give birth to the truth in the pupil.) The dimension of the folk hero Sabała is to always practice shooting, or as is in readiness to defend life and freedom.<sup>79</sup> Thinking in values must see the motif of freedom: “the greater a value, the greater freedom to acknowledge it.”<sup>80</sup> Freedom is itself a value that emerges in the pursuit of truth because we must be free to pursue the truth and we must freely embrace the truth discovered. In this way, Polish history and culture are important for our understanding of the meaning of upbringing in *The Spirit of Solidarity*. We now turn to that task.

## Solidarity and Upbringing

Marx wistfully asked “who will educate the educator?” He proposed as an answer his confident expectation for the emergence out of historical forces the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and the changing of human activity through a revolutionary moment. After three decades of their socialist experiment, that moment had yet to arrive in Poland. Tischner proclaimed in his famous homily at the Solidarity Congress that “Polish work is sick.”<sup>81</sup> As to why Polish work was sick, Tischner proposed no easy answers. But the facts he said are clear: “Work in Poland, instead of deepening reciprocity, instead of being a plane of humanity, became a plane of controversy, disagreement, and even betrayal.”<sup>82</sup> Comparing the work of the nation to a great river, Tischner said that the “waters of the Vistula are dirty [...] even bloodstained.”<sup>83</sup> The Solidarity Congress was called to “work upon work” for the whole nation, to “cleanse the waters of the Vistula.”<sup>84</sup> The goal was to restore to work the reciprocity, communion, and peace. In a subsequent homily on “rooting” Tischner repeats a familiar claim—that the basic problem is neither economic nor political, but rather it is ethical—it is “a problem of conscience.”<sup>85</sup> The hope for a renewal

---

<sup>79</sup> The reference to Socrates and Sabała as the two aspects of upbringing is found in his *Krótki przewodnik po życiu*, 72–75. For the importance of Sabała in Polish culture, see Oscar Swann’s *Kaleidoscope of Poland: A Cultural Encyclopedia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015), 224. “A singer of tales Jan Krzeptowski (1809–1894), known as ‘Sabała, was a self-proclaimed former mountain brigand and an unparalleled repository of tales, legends, and songs of the Polish Podhale (Highlands).”

<sup>80</sup> Tischner, “Thinking in Values,” in Jagiełło, *Józef Tischner*, 153.

<sup>81</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 96–100.

<sup>82</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 98.

<sup>83</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 98.

<sup>84</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 98.

<sup>85</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 102–103.

of the work and the nation, like a noble tree, must be planted in the soil of conscience. He cited numerous times the person of Pope John Paul II who put forward an ethical standard for work: “work has the characteristic of binding people, the power of building a communion.”<sup>86</sup> The Polish Pope was indeed a trustee of their “highest hopes for freedom” and their spiritual leader. The vision of Pope John Paul II became a part of the Polish conscience, and for Catholic and non-Catholic alike, his defense of freedom and human dignity awoke many to the call of solidarity and strengthened their hope and resolve.<sup>87</sup> In turn, Pope John Paul II cited Fr. Tischner’s texts as the best account of the truth of Solidarity.<sup>88</sup>

In this context, we may better understand the brief account of upbringing in *The Spirit of Solidarity* and to appreciate its emphasis upon fidelity and betrayal of a bond. If Solidarity undertook the task “to work upon the work” of the Polish nation as a whole, so too did leaders like John Paul II have a special work—theirs was “to work upon human beings”: “an upbringing and an education are work with a person and upon a person—with the one who is in the process of maturing.”<sup>89</sup> Tischner introduces the notion of upbringing as a special kind of work. It is a work upon a human being. The relationship of the mentor and the pupil, he says, is akin to the parent/child relationship. We must reflect adequately upon this first principle of the work upon the person. Karol Wojtyła wrote in *Love and Responsibility*: “Education is a creative activity with persons as its only possible object—only a person can be educated, an animal can only be trained—and also one which uses entirely human material; all that is by nature present in the human being to be educated is material for the educators, material which their love must find and mold.”<sup>90</sup> Education flows from love. And the “great moral force of love lies precisely in this desire for the happiness, for the true good of another person.”<sup>91</sup> Tischner focusses on the importance of hope in this relationship between father and son, mentor and pupil:

---

<sup>86</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 102.

<sup>87</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 89–90, 120.

<sup>88</sup> Prefatory Material, in *Thinking in Values*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007): np.

<sup>89</sup> “Ethics of Solidarity,” translation of *Etyka solidarności* by Anna Fraś, in *Thinking in Values*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007), 46. The previous translation by Zeleski and Fiore states “upbringing is a work with a human being and upon a human being.” In this case, I think it is preferable to use the term “person” in order to reflect the personalist flavor of Tischner’s thought, and also to appreciate the affinity with Karol Wojtyła. See below.

<sup>90</sup> Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. Harry Willets (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1981), 56.

<sup>91</sup> Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 138. This personalistic dimension of education also defines the core of culture itself: “Culture is the cultivation of the person, precisely in their inner life.” *Love and Responsibility*, 302. See John P. Hittinger, “John Paul II’s Core Teaching on Culture,” *Communio*, vol. 48 (Summer 2021): 247–279.

Fatherhood is not only passing on life, fatherhood means also passing on hope. Between father and child, there is a bond of the passing on of hope. The father is the trustee of the child's hope, he is the support and strength of this hope. We are children of those into whose hands we have entrusted our hopes. What does it mean to be a child then? It means to entrust one's hope to somebody. What does it mean to be a father? It means to become a bearer of someone else's help. Hope is the source of our life. Therefore, the one who brings hope to a person is the spiritual father of this person.<sup>92</sup>

The work of the educator should be first of all as a “trustee” or “bearer” of hope for another. For as we have learned, hope is the central quality of human existence. The pupil comes to entrust their hope to someone. Thus, it is fitting for Fr. Tischner to look to Pope John Paul II, and other leaders in the Polish tradition, as the bearers of hope for Solidarity. Only those who have hope can teach and nurture because they teach precisely by shaping the hope of others.<sup>93</sup> Education is not simply work upon a human person, but a work at the deepest level of the person, namely, upon conscience, intellect and will—so it is a work upon the spirit. There is a priority of hope in the process of upbringing. First, we have noted that the crisis of our time is a crisis of hope. Tischner has said, for example, that the development of conscience must begin with a desire for conscience. But the desire for truth and goodness springs from hope. It is from hope and within hope that “an adequate sense of reality evolves”<sup>94</sup>; and hope is prior to both faith and love. Faith builds itself and love comes after hope, according to Tischner. In his reflections on the Catechism, Tischner more specifically argues that it is in the realm of hope that work is always to be done; less so he says for love and faith because “everyone has to work alone over your own love,” and with faith, “there is nothing to work with, because it is God's grace, either it is given or it is not.”<sup>95</sup> But with hope, in various situations and turns of life, we must work on hope. If therefore, upbringing is a bond between two persons, one a bearer of hope for the other, fidelity is a key principle for the mentor. Betrayal is the deepest violation of the trust that should characterize the mentor and pupil. To tear the bonds of entrusted hope, puts someone under the threat of despair.

We must now consider how solidarity arose under the aegis of hope, a hope inspired by Polish leaders. When we return to the beginning of the book on soli-

---

<sup>92</sup> Tischner, “Ethics of Solidarity,” trans. A. Fraś, 46; see also Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 66.

<sup>93</sup> Tischner, “Ethics of Solidarity,” trans. A. Fraś, 46; see also Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 66.

<sup>94</sup> Tischner, “Ethics of Solidarity,” trans. A. Fraś, 46; see also Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 66.

<sup>95</sup> Tischner and Żakowski, *Tischner czyta Katechizm*, 111.

darity, we first learn that to be in solidarity is to carry the burdens of another.<sup>96</sup> Tischner argues that no man is an island and we share many things that unite us: the landscape, kinship, work, and speech. But we are often unaware or forgetful of our common bonds. But “when solidarity is born, this awareness is awakened, then speech and word appear—and at that time what was hidden comes out into the open. Our bonds become visible. [...] Solidarity speaks, calls cries, makes sacrifices.”<sup>97</sup> The awakening of conscience responds to the calls and the cries of the pain and burden inflicted upon those who suffer from the oppression and harshness of the imposed system of socialism. The action comes from within, from the heart. It is born of goodwill and proceeds without violence or in a focus upon the enemy. That is why Tischner speaks about an ethical event, not an economic or political event. It pertains to the recognition and support for human dignity, the source of rights.<sup>98</sup> So he proclaims that solidarity is, first of all, a solidarity of consciences. The two key values of solidarity are human conscience and the natural bond of man with those who suffer. These two aspects of solidarity, conscience and the bond of community, stand together and constitute what I would call the moment of revolutionizing activity that brings together changing circumstances and the changing of the person. Tischner recapitulates his basic idea as such: “Solidarity is founded on conscience, and the stimulus for its growth is the cry for help from the man who has been hurt by another man. Solidarity establishes specific interpersonal bonds; a man binds himself to another man in order to protect the one who needs care.”<sup>99</sup>

Stawrowski explains how the original experience of solidarity is too easily lost under the popularity of the movement, its eventual victory over the Soviet domination, and the subsequent embrace of the democratic process and its inevitable divisions and conflicts.<sup>100</sup> We must appreciate the ethical bond as something prior to the political movement and the eventual need to engage in partisan political maneuvers. Solidarity arose when it did, almost “miraculously” he argues, precisely because its political limitations were clearly established and there was no need to focus on the socialist system and rulers as the enemy to be destroyed. It originated with a certain purity of intention to simply care for

<sup>96</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 38.

<sup>98</sup> Commenting on the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948) Pope John Paul II said: “All the subsequent international documents on human rights declare this truth anew, recognizing and affirming that human rights stem from the inherent dignity and worth of the human person.” See Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_mes\\_14121998\\_xxxii-world-day-for-peace.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_14121998_xxxii-world-day-for-peace.html). See “Human Person and Human Rights,” in *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church Vatican City*, 2004, 49–70.

<sup>99</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 41.

<sup>100</sup> Zbigniew Stawrowski, “Solidarity Means a Bond,” *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007), 159–171.

those in pain and under oppression, and to summon the courage to emerge from hiding, taking off the masks, and choosing to reject compromise and betrayal for the sake of the people in need. That was the original experience of solidarity and it included Catholics and non-Catholics alike:

At that time, both atheists and practicing Catholics converted, that is, completely changed their lives. There are many such atheists or agnostics among us who raised their heads back then and stopped fearing and having decided to live with dignity and without false compromises threw away their party IDs and other chains of slavery and falsehood.<sup>101</sup>

This also helps to explain the importance of upbringing. Anyone who stood forth and risked punishment or curtailment was a bearer of hope for others. Leaders like John Paul II and Jerzy Popiełuszko stood out as effective mentors, but they were in a sense educating the educators—for any of the participants gave hope to others by their choosing to act in accord with human dignity by standing forth to take risks and to work for the good of all. Stawrowski called this time of first solidarity an “experience of being ‘incredibly lifted up,’ the hearing of some call to surpass themselves.”<sup>102</sup>

Solidarity, according to Tischner, was a creation not only of those who had conscience but also of those who have restored it in themselves.<sup>103</sup> He continues his account of upbringing with a look at the reciprocity between the mentor and the pupil. It is a common experience to be raised up by a mentor because many have traveled through some portion of their lives “not knowing what it was about, as though we were half asleep.”<sup>104</sup> The witness and the words of a mentor roused us from the slumber. Tischner asks, “What do we owe our mentor?” “Awakening,” Tischner says, is what we owe to the mentor. And yet much of the work lies in the future to be achieved by our own efforts. He often references Socrates as his model for the teacher and mentor. Socrates acts as a midwife, bringing truth to birth within the interlocuter. The mentor does not create the truth, but helps to bring about the understanding of the truth. The Socratic mode of learning demands transparency and effort on the part of the pupil. Not all who engaged with Socrates desired to learn or to really come to the truth: Thrasymachus desired power and Meno wished to appear wise as a sophist; in

---

<sup>101</sup> Stawrowski identifies this period of time from August 1980 until martial law in December 1981. Stawrowski, a participant in the events of this period, describes the time as something like a time of conversions but towards an ethical community. See Stawrowski, “Solidarity Means a Bond,” 167.

<sup>102</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 67.

<sup>103</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 8.

<sup>104</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 67.

*Meno*, it was the simple servant boy who embraced the truth as he saw it.<sup>105</sup> The mentor in the process of upbringing serves as a Socratic midwife—the one who gives birth to the truth in the learner. Truth, says Tischner, is not created by the mentor, nor is it under the mentor’s special power as an expert or a manager. Truth must be born in the soul of the learner. The process of upbringing is a “joint effort” of mentor and pupil, a bond based in hope, and spurred by reciprocity. The work of the mentor is thus “indispensable,” and he proclaims this work “precious” even “as precious as a human being.”<sup>106</sup> This startling claim we may construe to mean that the work of upbringing accomplishes the growth of the human being within, a reclaiming of dignity and freedom.<sup>107</sup> In other words, the dignity of the student who is truly “learning” is in some way commensurate with the dignity of the mentor who is authentically teaching. The pupil is freed from illusion and participates with the teacher in the truth that sets free. Tischner ends the first part of his account of upbringing by reiterating the notion that “the work of the mentor is to work on the hope of a person.”<sup>108</sup>

The rest of the homily is devoted to identifying the forms of “counterfeit education” that are all too common and stupefying. By examining the counterfeits, Tischner will highlight the aspects of the bond and relationship involved in authentic upbringing. The three forms of counterfeit upbringing he discusses are: (i) infringing upon the freedom of the pupil or neglecting the pupil’s concrete vocation; (ii) betraying the fidelity to the common work and the common bond; and (iii) confusion about the fundamental tasks of education and confusion about the role of the institution in education. With the first counterfeit, the mentor meddles with the proper notion of hope. Hope must be borne of a personal conscience and personal aspiration. Each person has a special aspiration and must respond from within their conscience. Hope is nourished by many common features such as national, professional and religious traditions. We live as persons through hope as it nurtured by the common and personal aspects. The mentor should convey the common aspects of hope. The counterfeit goes beyond the common life to somehow take responsibility for the particular hope of the person. “He wants not only to awake from sleep, but lead the awakened by the hand by adjudicating something which the pupil must resolve on their

---

<sup>105</sup> Plato, *Meno*, 81–86, in *Plato: Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 366–371. On learning, See Jacob Klein, *A Commentary on Plato’s Meno* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 103–104. See also John Sallis, *Being and Logos: The Way of Platonic Dialogue* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 76–92.

<sup>106</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 67.

<sup>107</sup> Jacob Klein makes a similar claim in his *Commentary on Plato’s Meno*: “But even though the teacher cannot ‘produce knowledge in the learner [...] cannot be the ‘cause’ of his learning, the importance of the teacher in the process of learning matches the importance of the learner’s inner constitution,” 106.

<sup>108</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 67.

own. The counterfeit mentor intrudes upon the freedom of the person and turns the pupil to themselves or some group interest. The source of hope is not the mentor nor the group they may represent. But Tischner notes that no one can order or force someone to take a certain direction in life; each pupil must find his personal hope and make it his own. This phenomenon of the intrusion upon the freedom of the person is seen throughout the contemporary society through mass movements, religious cults, and political factions or revolutionary cells. “An education and an upbringing presupposes freedom.”<sup>109</sup>

A variation of this counterfeit upbringing which ignores the personal nature of hope is the mentor who relies upon an abstract system and attempts to erect a house from the roof down. Ritual and conformity become the hallmark of such systems of education. Education betrays a “castigation” or contempt for the pupil for not embracing the system. Authentic education and the role of the mentor is not to preach nor to indoctrinate but to encourage hope and bring forth thinking.

The next form of counterfeit stems from betrayal. Betrayal means the loss of fidelity. Upbringing depends upon a bond between mentor and pupil, a bond through which hope for the future and the achievement of what is true and good. If one breaks the fidelity to the person and the shared hope, the pupil may be cast back into despair or slumber. Such betrayal may be concealed or open. The concealed betrayal is worse insofar as it builds an illusory hope and creates suspicions or creates an atmosphere of distrust contrary to hope. Tischner explains that true fidelity requires that the mentor and the pupil be in the “same boat.” The trustee of hope is with those with whom he inspires hope. They share the same existential situation, share a common risk, carry the burden of the witness to hope in spite of difficulties and challenges. Tischner eloquently states the situation as follows: “In the land of lies, his truthfulness must be greater than that of the pupil’s; in the land of injustice, his justice must be greater than the sense of justice of his pupils. In the land of hatred and suspicions, he must be more straightforward and open.”<sup>110</sup> The mentor and pupil share a common lot and take a common risk. Faithfulness is based on this because the pupil, having entrusted his hope to the mentor, must know that he has a confidant or fearer of his hope. Otherwise, the pupil is cheated and the mentor becomes guilty of a double standard.

The third counterfeit of upbringing stems from confusion about the fundamental tasks of education and confusion about the role of the institution in education. It is possible for the mentor to lose sight of what is primary and what is secondary in the process; or, again, mistakes the common and the personal dimension of the hope. The mentor builds the roof first and forecloses the choices of the pupil—whether to believe in God, on the nature of justice.

---

<sup>109</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 68.

<sup>110</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 69.

The more immediate matters for life are left to the side, such as fidelity to truth or cooperation within the family. Tischner accuses the counterfeit mentor blunting the pupil's "natural sense of reality" instead of sharpening and fulfilling the natural inclination for truth. Such confusion is not uncommon for an education serving the interests of academic bias, party politics or ideology.

The last counterfeit Tischner describes accompanies the confusions about priorities; it pertains to the diminishment of the person in the process of upbringing and overvaluing the institution itself. Sadly, it often happens that the responsibility of the mentor is taken from the person and assigned to the institution. This no doubt means that bureaucrats in various official capacities make decisions about education. And yet it is the institution that is said to educate, to be responsible and so on. People are but a supplement to the institution. Tischner rightly says that the claim that institutions and not people carry out the task of education posits a belief in magical action—that somehow membership in the institution and its processes will yield the fruit of trustful life. Tischner mocks the idea of reducing upbringing to institutional belonging as simply asking the student to wear a uniform and its designated color. It is not important who you are but only what you wear or how you conform. Tischner concludes the chapter on upbringing with a brief but well formulated summary of his position:

The ethics of solidarity becomes an ethics of awakening – an awakening to fatherhood along the principles of hope. One must get through the world of illusions to what is fundamental. The foundation here is faithfulness. The one who has once accepted hope entrusted to him, let him bear it throughout his life.<sup>111</sup>

The chapter on upbringing turns out to be a very strong part of his presentation of solidarity. Upbringing in some way is the key to solidarity. Solidarity is a solidarity of conscience. But conscience must be awakened. Such is the task of "upbringing." It may also prove to be the most enduring legacy of solidarity as an experience, a question, and a challenge.

---

<sup>111</sup> Tischner, "Ethics of Solidarity," trans. A. Fraś, 49; see also Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 70–71.

## Conclusion: The Legacy of *The Spirit of Solidarity*

We have examined Tischner's account of upbringing in the light of solidarity. His work *The Spirit of Solidarity* is descriptive, non-systematic, and suggestive. Upbringing does serve an important role in his overall account of solidarity by providing a kind of pivot for the social movement to gain its traction and emerge as a potent force for good through "an awakening," an awakening of conscience. From these considerations, I would like to draw out three salient points about Tischner's account of upbringing that display the living legacy of *The Spirit of Solidarity*.

First, by all accounts the heart of the initial solidarity experience was non-political and perhaps for that reason short lived.<sup>112</sup> As explained by Stawrowski, it was non-political because it emerged as an attitude toward the other, all others, and not with the attitude against the others as enemy. Perhaps this was a miracle of circumstances that placed political power off limits. The transformation of solidarity into a political entity seems to have had an air of inevitability. In 2003, Pope John Paul II counseled the members to seek to recover the dominant note of a union of workers for self-help and care. In his encyclical on *Social Concerns*, he warned about the ever present pull of the disordered actions and attitudes opposed to the "will of God and the good of neighbor,"<sup>113</sup> namely, the "all-consuming desire for profit and the thirst for power, with the intention of imposing ones will on others."<sup>114</sup> It is the tendency to seek these things at any price. He warned of the "absolutizing of human attitudes," and even of "real forms of idolatry: of money, ideology, class, technology."<sup>115</sup> This is not to suggest that solidarity succumbed to the sin of idolatry in seeking political goals, but rather that the deeper meaning of the experience of solidarity transcends the political because it is at a deeper or deepest level of personal existence. In *Redeemer of Man*, John Paul II says that with any movement of true renewal "man's deepest sphere is involved—we mean the sphere of human hearts, con-

---

<sup>112</sup> Stawrowski, "Solidarity Means a Bond," 162–164; Kot, "Solidarity Without Solidarity," 98–99.

<sup>113</sup> John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (Solicitude for the Social Condition), 1988, §37.

<sup>114</sup> John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (Solicitude for the Social Condition), 1988, §37, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_30121987\\_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html). See helpful summary analysis by Franco Biffi, *The "Social Gospel" of Pope John Paul II: A Guide to the Encyclicals on Human Work and the Authentic Development of Peoples* (Rome: Pontifical Lateran University, 1989), 91–92.

<sup>115</sup> John Paul II, *Sollicitudo*, §37.

sciences and events.”<sup>116</sup> The temptations of power and profit require on our part a continual conversion.<sup>117</sup> Stawrowski argues that something can be saved from the ethical experience of “First Solidarity” if we can “de-politicize” important areas of life now under partisan pressure.<sup>118</sup> This responsibility devolves upon communities in learning, arts and culture, intermediate groups, institutions designed to reign political competition or ordinary interactions in everyday life.<sup>119</sup>

Second, upbringing shows that solidarity emerges from a rediscovery of human interiority, especially the discovery or rebuilding of conscience. Upbringing must work with the freedom of the pupil—the counterfeit forms of education disdain the freedom of the pupil. Most of all, upbringing the teacher plays a secondary role, as it is the student who must exercise their own intellectual capacity to seek and grasp the truth. Tischner appeals to the Socratic idea of the teacher as “midwife.” When the voice of the teacher aroused us from our slumber, “the rest had to be done by ourselves.” The teacher “only helps, adding his efforts to the efforts of the disciple.”<sup>120</sup> In the classical view of education, the learner or pupil is the primary agent in the learning process. The teacher, and the institutions which the teacher represents, such as family, Church, or political society, are secondary. Jacques Maritain formulates the principle as such:

The mind’s natural activity on the part of the learner and the intellectual guidance on the part of the teacher are both dynamic factors in education, but the principle agent in education, the primary dynamic factor or propelling force, is the internal vital principle in the one to be educated; the educator or teacher is only the secondary—though a genuinely effective—dynamic factor and a ministerial agent.<sup>121</sup>

Maritain is reiterating Thomas Aquinas who suggested that the art of teaching is like medical art—the doctor heals and the mentor educates as an exterior principle, not as the principle agent, “but as helping the principle agent, which is the interior principle, by strengthening it and providing it with instruments

---

<sup>116</sup> John Paul II, *Redeemer of Man*, §10. Vatican, 1979, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_04031979\\_redemptor-hominis.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html)

<sup>117</sup> Biffi offers a helpful summary of the full dimension of notion of conversion in §36 of this encyclical: “With the introduction of the theological concepts of sin and of grace, the theological reading considers the history and the present moment as a mysterious intertwisting of solidarity in good and bad fortune; this provides a profound understanding of the reality that presents itself to our eyes.”

<sup>118</sup> Stawrowski, “Solidarity Means a Bond,” 170–171.

<sup>119</sup> John Paul II, 2003 Message to Members of Polish Solidarnosc Union: “It seems to me that it was politicization of the trade union that led to its weakening” (11 November 2003).

<sup>120</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 47.

<sup>121</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1943), 90. See also Klein, *Commentary on Plato’s Meno*, 97.

and assistance.”<sup>122</sup> Simply put, education is the work of the student or pupil who must be engaged in the deeper stratum of personal existence, involving freedom and intellectual judgment. In *Meno* (86b), Socrates instructs the servant boy to arrive at the truth, to exhibit the fact that learning is recollection, namely, the student must look within for the truth. This means that insight is the critical point of learning; learning entails the “simple seeing” of a truth and an assent of the mind to evidence. Without insight, there is no learning. This assent of the mind must be from within as we see in the free assent given by the slave boy because of the evidence presented. It does not reduce to external factors. Meno answers simply from rote memory and in imitation the sophists would—he does not answer according to evidence and truth, but according to extraneous reasons, such as what flatters his vanity, what seems to hurt him, what might please or amuse or impress others. Meno appears to be handsome, rich, and free. But he is ugly, poor, and slavish. Ugly—because of his greed and ambition; poor—because of his incapacity to learn; slavish—because he can only repeat what others have said. He possesses no interiority or self at all.<sup>123</sup> It is the slave who rises to the occasion of learning and frees himself from within through assenting to the truth. Socrates declares that we are better and braver for the search for truth. Developing this classical notion and echoing Socrates in *Meno*, John Paul II considers the free embrace of truth to be the “very kernel of what we call education, and especially what we call self-education.”<sup>124</sup> He calls self-education because “an interior structure of this kind, where ‘the truth makes us free,’—cannot be built only ‘from outside’. Each individual must build this structure ‘from within’—build it with effort, perseverance and patience.”<sup>125</sup> In the same vein, Tischner says, “an education and an upbringing require freedom” and he similarly says that we must return to basics—to evidence of experience—to let truth be truth, justice be justice. The classical pattern of Socratic education suits his account very well. The distinctive feature of Tischner’s account of upbringing is his emphasis upon hope in the process of upbringing.<sup>126</sup>

Third, upbringing is a bond of trust providing hope. The mentor is a trustee or confidant of hope. The most profound and lasting legacy of Tischner’s

<sup>122</sup> “Principium exterius, scilicet ars, non operator sicut principale agens, sed sicut coadiuvans agens principale, quod est principium interius, confortando ipsum et ministrando ei instrumenta et auxilia, quibus utatur ad effectum producendum.” *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 117, art. 1. See also *Summa contra gentiles* II, 75 and *De Veritate*, q. 11, article 1.

<sup>123</sup> Klein, *Commentary on Plato’s Meno*, 184–189. See also Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 94–96.

<sup>124</sup> Pope John Paul II, “On Self-education and Related Threats.” In Letter to Youth *Dilecti amici* (March 31, 1985), [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/1985/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_31031985\\_dilecti-amici.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1985/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_31031985_dilecti-amici.html)

<sup>125</sup> Pope John Paul II, “On Self-education and Related Threats.”

<sup>126</sup> Stawrowski, “Solidarity Means a Bond,” 177–178.

*The Spirit of Solidarity* is this notion of a pedagogy of hope. It is the question of hope that brings in the sharpest contrast the conflict between Christianity and Marxism.<sup>127</sup> He contrasts a super-natural hope with a this-worldly hope (“terraistic”). Do we primarily seek to rule over this earth, its natural forces, and the social forces of production? Then the “proper gauge of human beings is their work” within the horizon of socialized productive forces. Or do we first seek the kingdom—of truth, justice, and holiness? The measure of human dignity in this case is “sanctity, not work.”<sup>128</sup> The value of the human being is not based upon their work. Tischner’s Polish prototype, Maximillian Kolbe, shows us not “the value of work, but the value which work should serve.” His sacrifice demonstrates the true order of human hopes. Not only does this contradict Marxism, but also a dominant trend in the west so intoxicated with work with the exaltation of “innovation” with an ever hope to ever expand the scope and efficiency of work. But Kolbe reminds us of the priority of the person over things, ethics over technology, and spirit over matter.<sup>129</sup> In addition to this defense of human dignity in the way that protects the person from the reduction to work and productivity, the theme of upbringing and hope puts before us the deepest source of the cultural conflict between Christianity and Marxism. Tischner says that Marxism is a form of European neopaganism.<sup>130</sup> Paganism endows the earthly forces “with a sacral character, and sorcery was a means of ruling the earth” that exalts the earth and relies upon technology as the means of control. It places the value of the human in its earthly city. Marxism is an ideology that binds the people to the earth and controls their life. The “terraistic” hope issues in a form of “terroristic” plan to achieve its lust for power. Tischner deepens this insight in a later writing on the “Challenge of Totalitarianism.”<sup>131</sup> The essential point to bring forth is the role of fate in the pagan view of the world, and its loss of hope. He discusses the unity of power and fate that allows the totalitarian regime to claim that its power cannot fail nor be supplanted power. It seeks to subjugate the whole man and its ideology justifies its unlimited actions in this pursuit. But it is the followers of Abraham, the man of faith, who can withstand

---

<sup>127</sup> “To understand correctly the process of socialization in the country with a thousand year Christian culture, one must start by grasping the sense of hope expressed by Marxism.” And “the fight for hope is the fight for the human being.” Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 69, 72.

<sup>128</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 72–73. Cf. Stefan Wyszyński, *Duch pracy ludzkiej* (1946); translated as *Working You Way into Heaven* (New Hampshire: Sophia Press, 1995).

<sup>129</sup> I develop this theme in two essays: John P. Hittinger, “Ethos, Person and Spirit—Principles of Social and Cultural Renewal.” *Człowiek w Kulturze: Pismo Poświęcone Filozofii i Kulturze* 26 (2016): 161–72; John P. Hittinger, “The Springs of Religious Freedom: Conscience and the Search for Truth,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 29, no. 1/2 (2017): 4–24.

<sup>130</sup> Tischner, *Marxism and Christianity*, 81.

<sup>131</sup> “The challenge of totalitarianism: Judaism and Christianity in Relation to Twentieth-Century Totalitarianism,” in a booklet published by The Józef Tischner Institute (2005), 29–54.

the claims of fate.<sup>132</sup> “Faith is the only force which can master the temptation of totalitarianism.”<sup>133</sup> The pedagogy of hope is inherently religious.

A very similar argument was made by Rev. Donald J. Keefe, SJ, on the basis of the Biblical teaching of the priority of the gift. He formulated this argument in response to the Marxist versions of liberation theology in the West to generate human dignity and freedom from political action.<sup>134</sup> He says that the despair over the lack of human worth and dignity is a pagan perspective that has been “pushed back” over the centuries by Eucharistic worship. But the pagan despair is reclaiming society. He states his claim as follows: “The fulfillment for which we long is actual and real with the reality of the risen Christ, the reality of the Eucharist, by which our historical existence in Christ is sustained in Christ. This is a sustenance in truth, in freedom, in dignity, in justice; it is the single source of our legitimacy; it is the gift of a future which fulfills and does not nullify the present and past.”<sup>135</sup> Keefe claims that the centuries of Christian culture centered upon and inspired by eucharistic worship could push back pagan despair and degradation; the discovery and defense of human dignity and freedom came about in the West “not by theory, not by law, not by charismatic leadership, but by the continual and cumulative appropriation by the people in the pews of the reality which is given them in this worship.”<sup>136</sup> The consciousness of human dignity and personal freedom derived from this faith and sacrament brought about a slow transformation of culture and upbringing. Participation in such divine worship brings each member a conscientious responsibility in the kingdom of Christ. This would correspond to the injunction “to bear the burdens of the other” and to live in solidarity with the injured as did the good Samaritan. Keefe says that “it is an acceptance of personal responsibility for the future which bars as sinful, as a rejection of the good creation, every resubmergence of that individual into the anonymity of a faceless mass and a featureless, meaningless present.”<sup>137</sup> I cannot think of a better way to express the essence of hope. To be awakened and to be called forth from the anonymity of the faceless collective and to rise above the titillation and distraction of the meaningless present is indeed to benefit from a pedagogy of hope as described by the spirit of solidarity.

<sup>132</sup> Tischner and Żakowski, *Tischner czyta Katechizm*, 106–112.

<sup>133</sup> Tischner, *The Challenge of Totalitarianism*, 52–53.

<sup>134</sup> “Liberation and the Catholic Church: The Illusion and the Reality,” *Center Journal* (Winter 1981): 45–63. For the theology behind this article, see Keefe, Donald J. S.J., *Covenantal Theology*. 2 vols. Vol. I, Method and System; Vol. II Metaphysics of Covenant (Novata, CA: Presidio Press, 1996). For an excellent analysis of Fr. K. Leefe on faith and reason, see Kevin A. McMahon, “Nature, Grace and the Eucharistic Foundation of *Fides et Ratio*,” *The Saint Anselm Journal* 7.1 (Fall 2009): 1–7.

<sup>135</sup> “Liberation and the Catholic Church: The Illusion and the Reality,” *Center Journal* (Winter 1981): 55.

<sup>136</sup> Keefe, “The Catholic Church and Liberation,” 55.

<sup>137</sup> Keefe, “The Catholic Church and Liberation,” 56.

Fr. Keefe's notion that the centuries of Eucharistic celebration pushed back the darkness of pagan despair rings true for the spirit of solidarity. Consider the ministry of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko in the steel works in the summer of 1980. He wrote: the "memory of that workers' Mass at the Warsaw Steel Plant will stay with me until I die."<sup>138</sup> When he heard the "thunderous response 'Thanks be God,'" he said that he knew "a bond between us was born."<sup>139</sup> He and many other priests went into the coal mines and the shipyards to celebrate the Eucharist. The public celebrations of the Eucharist by Pope John Paul II during his return to Poland, notably in Warsaw's "Victory Square" galvanized the country. The strongest impulses for solidarity came from the liturgical dimension of the Church. "From the Sunday Mass, there flows a tide of charity destined to spread into the whole life of the faithful," wrote John Paul II in his apostolic letter *Dies Domini* on Keeping the Lord's Day Holy.<sup>140</sup> He develops this idea as follows: "The presence of the Risen Lord in the midst of the people becomes an undertaking of solidarity and a compelling force for inner renewal."<sup>141</sup>

By explaining upbringing in terms of hope, Fr. Tischner traces its source to Abraham and his response to the call or word of God. In *Marxism and Christianity*, he distinguishes the hope in transforming this world and supernatural hope. In *Tischner czyta Katechizm* [Tischner Reads the Catechism], he turns to the narratives of Abraham and Odysseus to distinguish the God of hope and the gods of memory. The covenant establishes a promise to Abraham who must set out for the unknown, the promised land. Hope is oriented towards the future. In the line of Abraham through Noah and Israel, culminating in Christ, we see God working on the hope of the people. "In making a promise, you become the bearer or trustee of hope."<sup>142</sup> The promise is also an invitation to reflection on history of the covenant. The test of hope leads to moral growth, step by step. This promise of the future does not detract from care for this world. Tischner emphatically states that from the trust of hope, "the bond between people grows, a community is created, the community of the Church."<sup>143</sup> When we compare this text to the homilies in *The Spirit of Solidarity*, we clearly see that Tischner roots solidarity in the reality of Christ in the Church. The human bond of solidarity is open to non-believers of course; and we can philosophize on the meaning of hope in terms of the discovery of values to be realized in the world and the experience of oneself as a value.<sup>144</sup> But the primary experience is that one aspires to be among those "who are

<sup>138</sup> Grażyna Sikorska, *Jerzy Popiełuszko* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2010), 20–21.

<sup>139</sup> Sikorska, *Jerzy Popiełuszko*, 21.

<sup>140</sup> John Paul II, *Dies Domini: On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy* (1998), §72–73.

<sup>141</sup> John Paul II, *Dies Domini*, §73.

<sup>142</sup> Tischner, *Tischner czyta Katechizm*, 108.

<sup>143</sup> Tischner, *Tischner czyta Katechizm*, 108.

<sup>144</sup> Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 138.

deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead” (Lk 20:35).

One may ask how can the aspect of hope be integrated into his central account of upbringing as a circle with search for truth and the winning of freedom as its two points, in between which the mentor must stand? The search for truth necessarily generates a kind of hope, as we learn from Socrates in *Meno*. Because all of nature is akin, one hopes to discover more truth in the light of the whole. Indeed, Josef Pieper has a fascinating argument that wonder has the same structure as hope in so far as in wonder the mystery of the unknown beckons the learner to pursue the reasons for things and to see things as a whole.<sup>145</sup> Freedom also generates a hope—as a courage to maintain and defend the arduous good. But these activities, modeled by Socrates and Sabała, could not guarantee the promise and the hope for long struggle of historical existence of a people or even a life under oppression. We must add the point of Abrahamic hope and obedience. Perhaps we should superimpose a triangle over the circle of learning, pointing to the prophetic role of the Judaic-Christian witness. Tischner does in fact add another metaphor for upbringing to the Socratic midwife and the rifle readiness of Sabała. It is parable of the sower of the word.<sup>146</sup> He reflects upon the report in the Gospel of John that some Greeks wanted to approach Jesus in the temple. He turned them away and spoke about the grain of what must die in order to give life. Tischner then recounts the Socratic story given in *Meno* about the soul beholding the truth and goodness in a prior life which is then forgotten upon birth. The forgotten truth can be remembered with the proper questioning and thinking. Under the sway of the mystery of the good, the Greeks seek Jesus. But his time has not yet come, so he declines to see them, but rather tells his disciples that the seed must fall to the ground in order to bear fruit. He is aware of his impending death and resurrection. So too does Fr. Tischner declare that the word God when cast into the soul can spring forth as truth and goodness in the life of the hearer. With the power of God’s word, the sower can trust that the word spoken forth, in the heart of hearer, can bear fruit over one hundred-fold. He concludes his homily to educators to refrain from expecting to see the harvest or to be disappointed when success is not readily apparent. Trust the word, and keep sowing.

Although Fr. Tischner’s outspoken views on the role of the Church in Poland after 1989 were controversial,<sup>147</sup> he defended John Paul II against the critics who accused him of imposing Catholic morality upon the Polish people. He reminded them that he “directed his remarks to consciences, not political

<sup>145</sup> Josef Pieper, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture* (New York: New American Library, 1962).

<sup>146</sup> Tischner, *Krótki przewodnik po życiu*, 78–81. His homily, given in the spring of 1997 in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, is based upon John 12:20–26. “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

<sup>147</sup> Brian Porter-Szucs, *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity and Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 111, 194–195, 204, 256.

factions.”<sup>148</sup> And distinct from politics, in the sphere of culture, Tischner clearly saw the importance of Christianity for an upbringing inspired by hope. Mirosław Pawliszyn points out that Tischner had a religious upbringing that impressed upon him “an ethical and religious ideal.”<sup>149</sup> He came to view Christianity as a religion “indispensable to his mother country’s development.”<sup>150</sup> Tischner stated that Poland and Europe have vital Christian roots, for Christian culture is “a huge tree that has borne so many fruits that cutting it off will make a person a person of one dimension, a flat horizon.”<sup>151</sup> It would be a horizon without true hope. The remarks by Pope John Paul II at Castel Gandolfo would strike a common chord with Tischner’s notion of upbringing: “A certain loss of Christian memories is accompanied by a sort of fear in facing the future: a widespread fragmentation of life goes hand in hand with the spread of individualism and a growing weakness in interpersonal solidarity—we are witnessing a loss of hope.”<sup>152</sup> These remarks were given soon after his publication of *Ecclesia in Europa* (28 June 2003). He identified the most urgent need for both East and West as the “growing need for hope, a hope that will enable us to give meaning to life and history and to continue on our way together.”<sup>153</sup> Tischner often conferred with John Paul II at Castel Gandolfo, and, out of the conversations of 1993, John Paul II wrote his book *Memory and Identity*. In his concluding chapter entitled “The Vertical Dimension of European History,” John Paul II identifies the moment of Abraham’s response to the “God of promise” as the opening of a history based upon hope.<sup>154</sup> The vertical dimension awakens conscience in us to assume our responsibility before God to do good and avoid evil. Christian hope projects itself beyond the limit of time and yet Christian hope is manifest in human history. The essential vertical dimension of human existence with its hope inspired by the promise of God provides the ultimate dynamism and unity for upbringing.

In this light, we can bring together the various aspects of Tischner’s account of upbringing as presented in *The Spirit of Solidarity* and in related texts. Upbringing is a work or activity of a human person with and upon another human person, working especially in hope and trust. At a time of deep crisis in Poland, Fr. Tischner proved himself to be a great and influential teacher and articulated the principles of his vision of teaching. He combined three elements of upbringing—

<sup>148</sup> James Felak, *The Pope in Poland: The Pilgrimages of John Paul II, 1979–1991* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020), 249–250.

<sup>149</sup> Pawliszyn, “Biography,” 15.

<sup>150</sup> Pawliszyn, “Biography,” 15.

<sup>151</sup> Józef Tischner, *Alfabet Tischnera* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2012), 297.

<sup>152</sup> Angelus, 13 July, 2003, quoted in George Weigel, *The End and the Beginning: Pope John Paul II—The Victory of Freedom, the Last Years, the Legacy* (New York: Doubleday, 2010), 336.

<sup>153</sup> *Ecclesia in Europa* §4. Weigel considers this document to be John Paul II’s “last gift to the world Church of his distinctive reading of the cultural, social, economic and political signs of the times in the developed world.” Weigel, *The End and the Beginning*, 337.

<sup>154</sup> John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 153–156.

ing, so vital to social and personal renewal: Socratic inquiry, Sabała's spiritedness or courage, and Abraham's obedience to the word of God.

## Bibliography

- Avineri, Shlomo. *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx. Cambridge Studies in the History and Theory of Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.
- Biffi, Franco. *The 'Social Gospel' of the Pope John Paul II*. Roma: Pontifical Lateran University, 1989.
- Czosnyka, Helena. *The Polish Challenge: Foundations for Dialogue in the Works of Adam Schaff and Józef Tischner*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995.
- Jagiello, Jarosław. *Józef Tischner*. Kraków: Ignatianum University Press, 2020.
- John Paul II. *Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II to the Youth of the World on the Occasion of International Youth Year*. Vatican City: Vatican Polyglot Press, 1985.
- John Paul II. *On Human Work: Laborem exercens: Encyclical Letter of John Paul II*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1981. [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_14091981\\_laborem-exercens.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html).
- John Paul II. *Rise, Let Us Be on Our Way*. Translated by Walter Ziemba. New York: Warner Books, 2004.
- John Paul II. *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium*. New York: Rizzoli, 2005.
- John Paul II. *On Social Concern: Sollicitudo rei socialis*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1987.
- John Paul II and Quentin L. Quade. *The Pope and Revolution: John Paul II Confronts Liberation Theology*.
- John Paul II. "On self-education and Related Things." In postolic Letter *Dilecti Amici* of Pope John Paul II to the Youth of the World on the Occasion of International Youth Year (March 31, 1985). [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/1985/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_31031985\\_dilecti-amici.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1985/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_31031985_dilecti-amici.html).
- John Paul II. Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace. [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_mes\\_14121998\\_xxxii-world-day-for-peace.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_14121998_xxxii-world-day-for-peace.html).
- John Paul II, *Redeemer of Man*, §10. Vatican, 1979. [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_04031979\\_redemptor-hominis.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html)
- Keefe, Donald J. "Liberation and the Catholic Church: The Illusion and the Reality." *Center Journal*, vol. 1 (Winter 1981): 45–63.
- Keefe, Donald J. *Covenantal Theology*. 2 vols. Vol. I Method and System; Vol. II Metaphysics of Covenant. Novata, CA: Presidio Press, 1996.
- Klein, Jacob. *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965.
- Kot, Dobrosław. "Solidarity without Solidarity." *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007): 159–171.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Marxism: An Interpretation*. London: SCM Press, 1953.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Against the Self-images of the Age: Essays on Ideology and Philosophy*. New York: Schocken Books, 1971.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Marxism and Christianity*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.

- MacIntyre, Alasdair C., Paul Blackledge, and Neil Davidson. *Alasdair MacIntyre's Engagement with Marxism: Selected Writings, 1953–1974* [Historical Materialism book series]. Chicago, IL; Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair C., and Kelvin Knight. *The MacIntyre Reader*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Education at the Crossroads*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960.
- Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. *The German Ideology*, edited by Christopher C. Arthur. New York: International Publishers, 1970.
- Marx, Karl, Lloyd David Easton, and Kurt H. Guddat. *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967.
- Mazur, Piotr S., Piotr Duchliński, and Paweł Skrzydlewski. *A Companion to Polish Christian Philosophy of the 20th and 21st Centuries*. Kraków: Ignatianum University Press, 2020.
- Sallis, John. *Being and Logos: The Way of Platonic Dialogue*. Chicago: Northwestern University Press, Northwestern University Press, 1968.
- Stawrowski, Zbigniew. "Solidarity Means a Bond." *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007): 159–171.
- Strauss, Leo, and Joseph Cropsey. Eds. *History of Political Philosophy*. 3rd ed. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1972.
- Swann, Oscar. *Kaleidoscope of Poland: A Cultural Encyclopedia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015.
- Taylor, Charles. "Several Reflections on the Theme of Solidarity." *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007): 159–171.
- Tischner, Józef. *The Spirit of Solidarity*. 1st ed. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984.
- Tischner, Józef. *Marxism and Christianity: the quarrel and the dialogue in Poland*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1987.
- Tischner, Józef. "A View from the Ruins." In *A New Worldly Order: John Paul II and Human Freedom*, edited by George Weigel, 165–168. Washington, D. C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1992.
- Tischner, Józef. "The Challenge of Totalitarianism: Judaism and Christianity in Relation to Twentieth-Century Totalitarianism." In *Challenge of Totalitarianism*, 29–54. Kraków: The Józef Tischner Institute, 2005.
- Tischner, Józef. "Ethics of Solidarity." *Thinking in Values: The Tischner Institute Journal of Philosophy*, no. 1 (Solidarity) (2007): 37–51.
- Tischner, Józef. *Alfabet Tischnera*. 1st ed. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2012.
- Tischner, Józef. *Krótki przewodnik po życiu: nieznanie teksty*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2017.
- Tischner, Józef, and Jacek Żakowski. *Tischner czyta Katechizm*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2009.
- Tischner, Józef, Józef. Życiński, and George F. McLean. *The Philosophy of Person: Solidarity and Cultural Creativity*. Washington, D.C: Paideia Press, 1994.
- Weigel, George. *The End and the Beginning: Pope John Paul II—The Victory of Freedom, the Last Years, the Legacy*. New York: Doubleday, 2010.
- Wojtyła, Karol. *Love and Responsibility*. Translated by Harry T. Willets. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1981.
- Wojtyła, Karol. *Dobrze Was rozumiem, nie obca mi praca: Kardynał Karol Wojtyła – Ojciec Święty Jan Paweł II w Piekarch Śląskich*. Katowice Diocese, 2020.
- Wyszyński, Stefan. *The Deeds of Faith by Cardinal Wyszyński: Selected and Translated by Alexander T. Jordan*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
- Wyszyński, Stefan. *Sanctify Your Daily Life: How to Transform Work into a Source of Strength, Holiness, and Joy*. Irondale, AL: EWTN Publishing, Inc., 2018.

John P. Hittinger

## Józef Tischner : sur l'éducation et l'espoir

### Résumé

Le présent article examine la notion d'éducation de Józef Tischner dans le contexte de la formation d'une nouvelle conscientisation de solidarité parmi les Polonais, y compris les ouvriers polonais, par l'éveil des consciences. Le moment présent a servi d'alternative révolutionnaire au socialisme. Nous analysons la critique du marxisme faite par Tischner et la question centrale de la base et de la superstructure. Nous abordons ensuite la question de la récupération par Tischner de la tradition polonaise des idéaux éthiques, notamment en la personne de Maximilien Kolbe et de Jean-Paul II. Le texte propose une analyse détaillée du chapitre sur l'éducation dans l'ouvrage „Ethique de la solidarité”. Le point de vue de Tischner, proclamant que l'éducation est un lien personnel établi dans la confiance pour vivre dans l'espoir d'améliorer l'esprit et le cœur est placé dans le contexte de la solidarité en tant que lien social mettant en place une communauté éthique qui dépasse les visées du pouvoir politique et de la nécessité de trouver un ennemi. Le texte analyse les différentes formes d'éducation fausses afin d'approfondir notre connaissance du sens d'une éducation authentique. Les points saillants de l'enseignement de Tischner sont discutés en conclusion.

Mots-clés : Tischner, pape Jean-Paul II, solidarité, éducation, espoir, Marx et marxisme, thèses sur Feuerbach, Saint Maximilien Kolbe, conscience

John P. Hittinger

## Józef Tischner sull'educazione e sulla speranza

### Sommario

Il presente articolo esamina l'idea di educazione (*wychowanie*) di Józef Tischner nel contesto della formazione di una nuova consapevolezza della solidarietà tra i polacchi, compresi i lavoratori polacchi, attraverso il risveglio della coscienza. Il momento presente è servito come alternativa rivoluzionaria al socialismo. John Hittinger analizza la critica di Tischner al marxismo e la questione centrale che circonda la base e la sovrastruttura. Il ricercatore passa poi al recupero da parte di Tischner della tradizione polacca degli ideali etici, soprattutto nella persona di Massimiliano Kolbe e di Giovanni Paolo II. Il testo fornisce un'analisi dettagliata del capitolo sull'educazione ne *Lo spirito di solidarietà*. La sua idea secondo cui l'educazione è un legame personale stabilito nella fiducia per vivere nella speranza di migliorare la mente e il cuore è collocata nel contesto della solidarietà come legame sociale che stabilisce una comunità etica che trascende la ricerca politica del potere e la necessità di trovare un nemico. Il testo analizza le diverse forme contraffatte di educazione per approfondire la nostra consapevolezza dell'importanza di un'educazione autentica. I punti salienti del suo insegnamento sono discussi nel paragrafo conclusivo del testo.

Parole chiave: Tischner, Papa Giovanni Paolo II, solidarietà, educazione, speranza, Marx e il marxismo, tesi su Feuerbach, Massimiliano Kolbe, coscienza



**Krzysztof T. Wieczorek**

University of Silesia in Katowice

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7987-168X>

# In Defence of Utopia Józef Tischner's Thinking about the Social Ethos

**Abstract:** An important trend in Tischner's philosophical output was the observation of the phenomena that would occur in the current social life of Poles. The trend gained particular significance at the turn of the 1970s and the 1980s, when the processes that finally led to the systemic transformation began. During this period, Tischner made a successful attempt to reconstruct the Polish social ethos. It turned out that its integral element is the presence of utopian projects to rebuild the social order in the country. Tischner stated in his analyses that these utopias play a constructive role in the social life because they motivate people to engage in the political struggle for deep system reforms. The article presents the content of Tischner's reconstruction of Polish utopias from the 1970s and the 1980s and the correlation between social ethics, ideological discussions, and political practice of the declining period of the Polish People's Republic.

**Key words:** Józef Tischner, utopia, social ethos, Polish political system, criticism of the socialist regime, solidarity

## Historical Background of Józef Tischner's Concept

It is 1980, when Józef Tischner publishes the text entitled "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym" [Thinking about the Social Ethos].<sup>1</sup> The time of the breakthrough

---

<sup>1</sup> The article appeared in the March issue of the Krakow monthly *Znak*, no. 3 (309) (1980): 290–300. Reprinted in: Józef Tischner, *Myślenie według wartości* [Thinking in Values] (Krakow: Znak, 1982), 453–465.

in the Polish public life is closer and closer. The political system of the Polish People's Republic is faltering. Almost no one believes in communist ideals or in the official content of the state-building propaganda anymore. The leaders of the Party and the country have taken a pragmatic course and are trying to manoeuvre between the threat of the USSR intervention and radicalized attitudes of the Polish society. Alarming signals come from the economy, which in the present system of central management is becoming more and more inefficient and faces the risk of collapsing.

Tischner—a philosopher, observer of social life, and, at the same time, a priest deeply involved in everyday human affairs, listens carefully to the moods, views, fears, and hopes of common people.<sup>2</sup> He begins to notice widespread fatigue with grey and hopeless everyday life, growing impatience with the indifference of the authorities to real, pressing human problems, and hopes directed towards the future arising from these moods. He notes:

The basic dimension of hope is looking to the future. [...] Hope awakens some more or less defined project of tomorrow in consciousness. This project often takes the form of social utopia. We should not have a negative approach to utopia. Utopias say more about man than many statistics, and besides, they always shape our real world to some extent [...]. In the content of utopia, if we search well, we can discover a set of values without which a person is not only unable to understand a person in a specific place and time, but is not even able to fully feel him or herself.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1970s Poland, there was no grassroots, organized social movement that could become a vehicle for a specific model of social utopia. Therefore, the quoted words of Tischner sound a bit exaggerated. Nevertheless, it was already possible to notice the formation and growth in strength of various groups and environments opposing the apparatus of state power. It is true that they were strongly dispersed and anchored in various ethical traditions (from the Marxist left wing to the extreme-right post-Endet formations,) but from year to year they radiated more and more into the society, inspiring thinking about the need for systemic changes. There was also the Church, which at that particular time played a unique role in Poland. A role not found anywhere else, owing to which it became a significant force stimulating mental and institutional changes in the country.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Józef Tischner, “Filozofia i ludzkie sprawy człowieka” [Philosophy and Human Affairs of Man], *Znak*, no. 1 (223) (1973): 18–30; Wanda Czubernatowa and Józef Tischner, “Wieści ze słuchanicy” [*News from the Audience*] (Kraków: Znak, 2001). All translations by Szymon Bukal, unless stated otherwise.

<sup>3</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o etosie społecznym” [Thinking about the Social Ethos], in *Myślenie według wartości* [Thinking in Values], 457–458.

## Utopia as an Exercise of Political Imagination

What kind of utopia did the Reverend Tischner have in mind when he attempted to rehabilitate it in the quoted text? Certainly, he did not mean this style of thinking, which is illustrated by Przemysław Czapliński in the following way: “The utopia of universal happiness, supported by scientific socialism and mythological Prometheism, seems to be a thing of the past [...] the identification of utopia with totalitarianism sometimes seems so tight that it entails the belief that the collapse of the Evil Empire signifies the end of utopian thinking.”<sup>4</sup> Tischner would probably be the last to approve of utopian thinking aimed at restoring totalitarianism or any other revolutionary solution, and approving violence as a means to an end.<sup>5</sup> Besides, in Poland of the declining years of the Polish People’s Republic, no one thought seriously about a revolution. It was obvious that there was no other option but to accept the boundaries of reform efforts determined by the geopolitical status quo. It seemed then (and it was true until 1989) that any breach in the structure of the international order, guarded and guaranteed by the world’s greatest powers, was absolutely unacceptable. This, in turn, entailed (at least on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain) the necessity to yield to the hegemony of the USSR, which imposed its rules of the game.

However, it was possible—at least in thoughts, but also in philosophical discussions—to pose bold questions that a decade earlier seemed to be impossible to be discussed in public. The basic question was how far are these boundaries, the impassability of which is guarded by the global geopolitical order. In Poland, which since the mid-1950s (since Władysław Gomułka came to power) followed its own “Polish road to socialism,”<sup>6</sup> in many respects more liberal than in other countries of the Eastern bloc (except Yugoslavia), it was possible to count on more freedom of movement. However, we had to take into account the geopolitical reality and imponderables. Thinking about social utopia, it should therefore be placed within the political system prevailing in Poland at the time, and, at the same time, not arousing suspicions of violating Hegemon’s imperial interests. Thus, there were fierce disputes in the opposition circles about how far we could go in the reform projects. However, Tischner was not interested in

<sup>4</sup> Przemysław Czapliński, “Wątpliwe rozstanie z utopią” [Doubtful Parting with Utopia], *Teksty Drugie*, nr 4 (40) (1996): 92–93.

<sup>5</sup> “The cult of violence means the suicide of utopia”—he wrote in the quoted article (Józef Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 459) and a little earlier: “Violence abolishes freedom, and where there is no freedom, there is also no place for an honest ethos” (“Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 456).

<sup>6</sup> See Leszek Nowak, *Polska droga do socjalizmu. Pisma polityczne 1980–1989* [The Polish Way to Socialism. Political Writings 1980–1989] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza, 2011).

specific programs of political or social transformations. As a real philosopher, he wanted to go deeper—to the axiological foundations of the newly designed social ethos.

Józef Tischner, as he often admitted, from young age was keenly interested in the Marxist philosophy (which was also the reason of many problems in his own environment). From his youthful readings, reflections and discussions, he derived a conviction that the ideals of socialism, which constitute (it is a pity that only in the declarative layer) the basis of the state system, have much in common with both the Christian tradition and the universal values of humanistic culture. On this basis, it was possible to think about building social utopia, referring, at least in part, to the same values and ideals referred to in some propaganda texts of the ruling party's ideologists.

A separate issue was the fact—which was already an open secret at the end of the Gierek decade—that the actual line of action of the party-state authorities enormously differed from the verbally declared program of building a “developed socialist society,” containing a number of social demands compatible with or agreeable with the projects of social utopias that were emerging in opposition circles. This internal dissonance should not be spoken of aloud; but there was no such need, as practically all citizens knew about it—both representatives of higher and lower levels of government, as well as the society, or at least its enlightened circles, actively participating in the changes taking place.

## Communist Newspeak *versus* Aesopian Language

It is worth recalling here that in the public discourse of the countries of the Soviet Bloc, a kind of game of understatements was constantly going on. It is significant, however, that on both sides of the barrier separating the apparatus of power and propaganda from the rest of society, fundamentally different rules of the same game were in force. On the side of the Fathers of the Nation, there was an undisturbed seriousness, often taking the form of pathos and anointing, and the understatements consisted in consistently concealing everything that could be inconvenient or compromising for the authorities. Persistent adherence to the rules of this game led to a more and more total, all-encompassing distortion of reality, the more so, the more the plans and intentions of these in power were not reflected in the actual effects of their actions and with the expectations of the broad social masses. As a result, a bizarre system of apparent communication of the authorities with the society was created, called PRL's Newspeak or

Newspeak in Polish<sup>7</sup> and having much in common with the Orwellian world, described in *1984*, and with the *Lingua Tertii Imperii* functioning in the Third Reich.<sup>8</sup>

On the other side of the border between languages, there were statements by citizens who were not connected with the government apparatus. More and more often they included content critical of the system or of specific symptoms of its malfunctioning. On this side, the rules of the language-game dictated that no criticism undesirable by the authorities<sup>9</sup> should be expressed *expressis verbis*. Under the pressure of these linguistic taboos, a style of expression different from the discourse of power, but similarly enigmatic and non-literal, developed, referred to by linguists as the “Aesopian language.”<sup>10</sup> There was no seriousness here, so a joke, irony or satire were allowed; the creators of cabaret programs as well as the authors of theatre and film comedies took advantage of this opportunity abundantly. Political jokes became a permanent element of social life—more fleeting and ephemeral than written texts, but always up-to-date and often painfully accurate.

This peculiar kind of rivalry between the official Newspeak (usually blatantly artificial, stiff, and bloated, though at times trying to break the conventions that bind it) and the brilliant, intelligent, inventive, and creative Aesopian language that gave colour to everyday life and made it more bearable, or at least more tolerable and interesting.

The elements of Aesopian language appeared not only in satirical and cabaret works, which were, as was often said, a kind of safety valve that allowed venting bad emotions and turning them into laughter; maybe even bitter and powerless, but always at least a little comforting in spirit and fulfilling an important therapeutic function on a social scale. Due to the ubiquitous presence of censorship, officials of which had the right to interfere with all texts presented publicly in speech and writing (it is no coincidence that the office dealing with censorship of the statements of the citizens of the Polish People’s Republic was called the Main Office of Control of Press, Publications and Shows), anyone who wanted to say or write more than officially allowed had to master the unwritten

---

<sup>7</sup> See Michał Głowiński, *Nowomowa po polsku* [Newspeak in Polish] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PEN, 1990).

<sup>8</sup> See Victor Klemperer, *LTI — Notizbuch eines Philologen* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1947).

<sup>9</sup> The authorities of the Polish People’s Republic allowed for a certain strictly rationed form of criticism of selected elements of everyday life, such as the slowness of waiters in restaurants, unreliability of sellers (especially in a few private commercial establishments), etc., thus creating the appearance of freedom of expression. However, transgressing these permissible frames of criticism could have had far-reaching consequences. An interesting picture of this apparent freedom of speech was presented, among others, by Jacek Fedorowicz in the book *W zasadzie tak* [All in All, Yes] (Warszawa: KAW, 1975).

<sup>10</sup> See Ryszard Nycz, “Literatura polska w cieniu cenzury: wykład,” *Teksty Drugie*, nr 3 (51) (1998): 9.

rules of the game of understatement. This situation also applied to scientific publications and philosophical texts. For this reason, books, articles, and essays, including the most serious and important theoretical problems, were often written with the intention of neutralizing any censor's interference. Therefore, they should be read in an appropriately modified way, with careful consideration of the historical and socio-cultural context and with the awareness of the presence of hidden content that the author wanted the reader to understand using the rules of this particular game.

A similar interpretative strategy should also be used in relation to Tischner's philosophical writings from the times of the Polish People's Republic. While discussing his texts, I will try to extract from them also what is hidden and consciously understated.

We may wonder if there is more than a coincidence in the fact that in the same issue of the monthly *Znak*, which published the article by Tischner, "Thinking about the Social Ethos," the editors published a translation of the text by Hans-Georg Gadamer with the meaningful title *The Incapacity for Conversation*.<sup>11</sup> It is true that the philosopher from Wrocław mainly discusses existential and cultural barriers that make it difficult for people to successfully establish an understanding—he writes, for example: "When two people come together and enter into an exchange with one another, then there is always an encounter between, as it were, two worlds, two worldviews and two world pictures. [...] And it's true: every human viewpoint has something contingent about it."<sup>12</sup> There is no doubt, however, that the readers of the monthly *Znak* knew all too well other reasons, from the sphere of political conditions, for the inability to conversation. However, similarly to the obstacles indicated in the quoted Gadamer's text, also in the case of political and censorship limitations, there were ways of overcoming barriers and overcoming communication difficulties. Owing to their application, it was possible to see that—as Gadamer notices—"Thus conversation with the other, the other's disagreement or agreement, the other's understandings and also misunderstandings, become a kind of extension of our individuality and a testing of the possible community we share, toward which reason encourages us."<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Niezdolność do rozmowy" [The Incapacity for Conversation], trans. Bogdan Baran, *Znak*, no. 3 (309) (1980): 369–376, trans. from: Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Die Unfähigkeit zum Gespräch," *Universitas*, vol. 26 (1971): 1295–1304.

<sup>12</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Incapacity for Conversation," *Continental Philosophy Review* 39 (2006): 354, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-006-9041-2>.

<sup>13</sup> Gadamer, "The Incapacity for Conversation," 354.

## Tischner's Stance on Communism

Józef Tischner was not a thinker with radically anti-communist views. It was only in the 1980s when finally the illusions suggesting that a constructive dialogue with the representatives of the highest authorities of the party and the state could be held proved unrealistic, that the tone of his writing changed significantly and became colored with uncompromising criticism against the most important, in the author's opinion, structural and ethical flaws of the system. However, in the years leading up to Martial Law, a peculiar, perhaps even surprising feature can be noticed in Tischner's work. Both in descriptions and diagnoses of the then-current social reality, as well as in projects and forecasts leaning towards the future, the thinker does not seek to confront the authorities or their ideological discourse, but patiently looks for possible planes of dialogue and understanding. The new tone comes later—in publications dated 1982 and subsequent. Tischner begins to write differently: he no longer counts on the possibility of bringing views closer or on mutual understanding, therefore, he does not conceal his critical assessment of reality, and sometimes even his irritation: the emotional temperature of the polemics written at that time with the pathological features of the real socialism system can be quite high.

It should be noted that the above remarks do not apply to the book *Thinking in Values*, which was important in Tischner's intellectual output and published by the Kraków publishing house Znak in 1982. That year of publication (after the famous speech of General Jaruzelski) is only the result of many months of publishing procedures and decisions. The texts in this collection, however, come—all without exception—from the years preceding the introduction of Martial Law. By the way (it is a curiosity not necessarily widely known to Polish readers and enthusiasts of Tischner's work) over a year before the Polish edition, an Italian-language edition of the work was published, entitled *Il pensiero ei valori*.<sup>14</sup>

Returning to the issue of Tischner's surprising restraint in relation to the reality of the Polish People's Republic and its political and social dimension: this conciliatory tone seems all the stranger as at the same time the Kraków philosopher became involved in a sharp, ruthless polemic with the main ideological current of Polish Catholicism, that is, with the Thomistic trend of Catholic philosophy and theology and the style of teaching in pastoral practice that follows this trend.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Józef Tischner, *Il pensiero ei valori* (Bologna: CSEO Biblioteca, 1980).

<sup>15</sup> See Zbyszek Dymarski, "Debata księdza Józefa Tischnera ze szkołą lubelską" [Father Józef Tischner's Debate with the Lublin School], *Logos and Ethos*, no. 1 (1998): 239–245, and Marek Jawor, *Spór Józefa Tischnera z tomizmem — między konfrontacją a dialogiem*

Could Tischner be closer to the Polish United Workers' Party's Marxism than to the Thomist interpretation of Catholicism? Certainly not; such an assumption would be absurd. The explanation is different: the sharpness of the polemics and the persistence with which he criticized "Thomistic Christianity" (this is, what he called this spiritual and intellectual formation<sup>16</sup>) and defended his own beliefs, based on other types of philosophical culture, resulted from a deep concern for the Church and an equally deep emotional involvement in pastoral activity. I remember Tischner's statement from 1993 at a meeting promoting the newly published book *The Unfortunate Gift of Freedom*. Responding to the objection that, as a Catholic priest and thinker, he should defend the Church instead of criticizing her, the philosopher replied: "The more every believer loves the Church, the more he is allowed to criticize her."

Unlike matters of faith and pastoral ministry, the Reverend Tischner's attitude towards Marxism is indifferently objective, and his interest in the subject was purely scientific. Another thing is that by acting in public life as a defender of open, critical Catholicism and participating in countless meetings and talks involving various groups of debaters, in the 1970s he got closer and made friends with several representatives of leftist circles sympathizing with Marxist thinking and believing more or less orthodox in the ideals of socialism, but, like him, open-minded and capable of substantive discussion without prejudice, and even to a critical revision of their own beliefs (these were, among others, Adam Michnik, Jan Strzelecki, and Jacek Żakowski). Owing to these personal contacts, he probably acquired a more emotional attitude to some postulates of leftist thought, and certainly the contact with the most valuable figures from the circle of the "secular left," as he called it, had a significant impact on his own attitude, thoughts, and axiological preferences.

## The Crisis of Hope and an Announcement of the Coming Changes

At the time when the text "Thinking about the Social Ethos" was written and the foundations of Tischner's approach to the problem of social utopia were being formed, the situation in the country was as follows: on the one hand, the crisis

---

[Józef Tischner's Debate with Thomism—Between Confrontation and Dialogue], *Filozofia Chrześcijańska*, vol. 10 (2013): 211–227.

<sup>16</sup> See Józef Tischner, "Szyłek chrześcijaństwa tomistycznego" [The Decline of Thomistic Christianity], *Znak*, no. 1 (187) (1970): 1–26.

of power was deepening, especially in the political and economic dimension, the consequence of which had to be a rapid and radical change of course.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, a crisis of hope was growing among the Poles—this crisis was felt by Tischner with strong empathy,<sup>18</sup> and he tried to subject it to an in-depth analysis using the tools of philosophical description, primarily the instruments of phenomenology and philosophical hermeneutics. On yet another hand, the destabilizing state and the shaky state power was threatened by a crisis of international relations, which could threaten relative stability in the region, and perhaps even on a larger world scale and therefore had to be avoided at all costs.

If there was a research tool that could be called a “barometer of social sentiment,” then in the late seventies this barometer would indicate the predominance of conciliatory attitudes and a good atmosphere for meetings, talks, and attempts at understanding between the most important social circles in the Polish People’s Republic. This could be recognized, for example, by the fact that the language of official public statements on the side of the authorities<sup>19</sup> had changed—slightly but significantly, but also in Catholic circles, there was an atmosphere of hopeful expectation of a “new opening.” The atmosphere at workplaces was similar, including the largest, flagship industrial conglomerates, which were supposed to perform, apart from production tasks, also a formative function for the new type of working class,<sup>20</sup> while there was an unexpected process of gradual em-

---

<sup>17</sup> The change did take place—in December 1981, but the leadership of the Party and the state took a course exactly opposite to that expected by the circles seeking agreement on both sides on the basis of social utopia projects.

<sup>18</sup> “My philosophy was deeply influenced by the conditions I had lived and worked so far [...] first I started learning philosophy, and only then did I really meet a Man. [...] What was the result of those meetings? It was the discovery that our modern Man has entered a period of deep crisis of hope. The crisis of hope is a crisis of foundations. In the past, people killed one another in the name of believing that their own hope was superior to someone else’s. Today they are choking on their own hopelessness.” Józef Tischner, “Czym jest filozofia, którą uprawiam” [What Is the Philosophy That I Practice], in *Myślenie według wartości* [Thinking in Values], 9–10.

<sup>19</sup> One example of such a change is noted by a keen observer of Polish newspeak, Michał Głowiński, in a note made on June 8, 1981: “A new phenomenon is undoubtedly the church connotations in the speeches of members of the ruling party. In a TV interview aired on Friday, June 5 after the news, [Deputy Prime Minister] Rakowski spoke of the government as a service to the nation. [...] This is [...] a further example of the impact of the Church’s rhetoric on the party language. The word service, directed in this way, is usually used in those declarations that are mild, in which the public is not frightened or blackmailed, it seeks to mitigate conflicts, not to fuel them. This was the nature of Rakowski’s interview. Michał Głowiński, “Zła mowa. Jak się nie dać propagandzie” [Bad Speech. How to Avoid Propaganda] (Warszawa: Wielka Literatura, 2016), 196–197.

<sup>20</sup> See Sławomir Kamosiński, “Praca jako obowiązek a praca jako źródło satysfakcji. Studium historyczne roli i znaczenia pracy w dziejach Polski (po 1945 roku)” [Work as a Duty and Work as a Source of Satisfaction. Historical Study of the Role and Significance of Work in the History of Poland (post-1945)] (pl. *Annales. Etyka w życiu gospodarczym*, vol. 19, no. 2 (2016): 63–79, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/1899-2226.19.2.05>.

powerment of workers and humanization of labor relations. All in all, nothing foreshadowed the next great national drama, which was to begin shortly after—as it seemed at the time—the great triumph of reason, moderation and the spirit of interpersonal solidarity, which was the result of, among others, the August Agreements between the factory strike committees and government delegations in Gdańsk, Szczecin, Jastrzębie, and Katowice Steelworks. Before this drama took place, it was reasonable to assume goodwill on the part of all the important social and political forces that could influence the way out of a multi-symptomatic crisis. One could also hope that in the ongoing talks across the country, it would be possible to finally give up the language games imposed by the sick political situation and replace them with a new kind of game: a game of social utopia. The philosophical and social texts of Tischner from the turn of the 1970s and 1980s fit into this climate of expectations and moods, and in this spirit their contents should be interpreted, bearing in mind the traces of Aesop's speech present there.

## New Intellectual Climate around the Concept of Utopia

For a fuller understanding of the meaning of Tischner's program of rehabilitation of utopian thinking, we must take into account one more important element of the cultural context of those times: the stage of modern utopian history at that time and the associated evolution of the social perception of utopian thinking. The outline of the history of utopia, from Thomas More to the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, went through many different phases. Interesting comments on the changing fate of the historical role of utopian thinking can be found, among others, in the works of Bronisław Baczko<sup>21</sup> and Przemysław Czapliński.<sup>22</sup> Baczko devoted an extensive, 376-page-long study *Utopian Lights: The Evolution of the Idea of Social Progress* (trans. Judith L. Greenberg) to the

---

<sup>21</sup> See Bronisław Baczko, *Lumieres de l'utopie* (Paris: Payot & Rivages, 2001); Bronisław Baczko, *Światła utopii*, trans. Wiktor Dłuski (Warszawa: IfiS PAN, 2016); Bronisław Baczko, *Les imaginaires sociaux. Mémoires et espoirs collectifs* [Social Imaginations. Sketches on Hope and Collective Memory] (Paris: Payot, 1984), trans. Małgorzata Kowalska (Warszawa: PWN, 1994).

<sup>22</sup> See Przemysław Czapliński, *Resztki nowoczesności* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2011); Przemysław Czapliński, *The Remnants of Modernity. Two Essays on Sarmatism and Utopia in Polish Contemporary Literature*, trans. Thomas Anessi (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2015); Przemysław Czapliński, "Wątpliwe rozstanie z utopią," 92–105.

following issues: “Utopia and History: this book aims to bring out the complex relationship between them by examining the social imagination active in the 18th century, especially during the revolutionary period.”<sup>23</sup> The author also ruminates on the parallel between the two *fin de siècles*: “At the end of the 18th century, the utopia gives the impression of a rubble landfill. [...] We also find the ruins of a utopia in the cultural and ideological landscape of the end of the 20th century. However, every age decline is different. [...] At the end of the [20th] century, which ends in pain, amid its absurdities and murderous madness, the status of the utopia is very uncertain.”<sup>24</sup> Despite these reservations, the author begins with the *Preface* to the work—similarly to Tischner in his article written during the publication of Baczkowski’s work so close that there is a suspicion that its reading was a creative impulse for the philosopher from Kraków<sup>25</sup>—with a praise of utopia:

When utopian dreams light up on the horizon of collective and individual expectations and hopes, they illuminate the social landscape in a new way. [...] Utopian images arrange and separate black and white, opacity and transparency, the visible and the invisible differently. [...] The glances engulfed by the flames of utopia turn towards the visions of *a different society*, reconciled with reason, history, prosperity, i.e., the opposite of the existing society [...] thus receive historically variable opportunities to participate in conflicts and strategies, the stake of which is symbolic power over the social imagination.<sup>26</sup>

In turn, in the first chapter of the work, the author shows what current cognitive values are revealed to the researcher of utopia:

The center of his interests is not the relationship between utopia as an announcement and the future that should have been foreseen. He rather wonders how [...] the reality of certain present, its ways of thinking, beliefs, and its imagination are expressed in utopias [...], how utopias participate in the present, trying to go beyond it. [...] Utopias in a specific way show and express a certain epoch [...] the area of its expectations and the path taken by the social imagination.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Baczkowski, *Światła utopii*, 15.

<sup>24</sup> Baczkowski, Preface to the 2001 edition of *Światła utopii*, trans. Wiktor Dłuski (Warszawa: IfiS PAN, 2016), 7, 11–12.

<sup>25</sup> The first French edition of this book was published in 1978, and an Italian translation was published in 1979. It is highly probable that at least one of these editions was known to Tischner.

<sup>26</sup> Baczkowski, *Światła utopii*, 15.

<sup>27</sup> Baczkowski, *Światła utopii*, 22.

For the purpose of comparison, let us juxtapose this mini-apologia of utopia with the expectations that Tischner has towards it:

We should not think wrongly about utopia. Utopias say more about man than many statistics, and besides, they always shape our real world to some extent [...]. In the content of utopia [...] we can discover a set of these values, without which a person is not only unable to understand a person in a specific place and time, but is not even able to fully feel himself [...] utopian projects of tomorrow are and will be a permanent companion of social life. It is them that constantly problematize our social factuality and are themselves problematized by this factuality.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, if the presence of utopia in the space of social imagination brings so many profits, then why is this fear of utopia, to which (as to its presupposition) refers Tischner's objection "we should not think wrongly about utopia"? We can also find an explanation in Baczko. By leading us—century after century—through the history of utopian thinking, the outstanding representative of the Warsaw school of the history of ideas underlines a significant re-evaluation of utopias that took place at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s: "In 1968 and in the following years, utopia was fashionable."<sup>29</sup> In the texts of old utopias, "people admired the ability to transgress social and cultural prohibitions, they admired the discovery [...] of an active, audacious, inventive imagination seeking social otherness."<sup>30</sup> On the other hand,

since the end of the 1970s, it has been fashionable not to admire utopia, but to find in the same texts the negation of the individual or even crimes against the individual in the name of a rationalist and artificial system that destroys spontaneity and vitality. Utopia is not at all liberating and subversive; on the contrary, it is precisely the enemy of freedom [...]. Utopia would be an anticipation of a totalitarian world, not to say concentrative. [...] Behind the multitude of different utopias, there is one and the same utopian project, totalitarian in its essence.<sup>31</sup>

A similar diagnosis concerning the crisis of utopian thinking—but more extended in time—is formulated by Przemysław Czapliński:

If we delve further into the past, we can see that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries literary and philosophical utopias were laboratories for new political systems and new forms of governance. Numerous texts participated

<sup>28</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o etosie społecznym," 457–458.

<sup>29</sup> Baczko, *Wyobrażenia społeczne*, 135.

<sup>30</sup> Baczko, *Wyobrażenia społeczne*, 136.

<sup>31</sup> Baczko, *Wyobrażenia społeczne*, 136.

in a form of free intellectual play that involved inventing worlds that were better than the present one, that were free of imperfections, and, above all, that stimulated the reader to challenge the existing order and join ranks in a mass rebellion of dreamers.

The beginning of the twentieth century was a turning point for the utopian movement. Utopia ceased to mean “unrealistic thinking.” Mass movements for emancipation were creating an awareness in both writers and political activists that utopia was not so much about creating a future as instilling public awareness.

The victory of utopia would not arrive when a specific plan was put into effect, but when the strongest collective entity (the proletariat, for instance) began thinking about the future according to a common template.<sup>32</sup>

As a result of this utopian turning point at the end of the century, “the Marxist-Leninist system [was interpreted] as a realisation of utopia,”<sup>33</sup> and

the concept of a lasting utopia, which had its roots in ancient Greece and culminated in twentieth-century totalitarianism, thus entered university campuses and journalistic discussion, and became a universal idiom. The reader absorbed a language that established clear boundaries between planned history and the history of free development. When a few years later philosophical stock was taken (which will be discussed further in the chapter ‘The Orphaned Children of Prometheus’), modernity could no longer be defined by means of utopia, or utopia by means of violence.<sup>34</sup>

However—Czapliński adds in his other text—although “the utopia of universal happiness, supported by scientific socialism and mythological Prometheism, seems to be a thing of the past—most intellectuals seem to agree on this”<sup>35</sup>; nevertheless, uncertainty appears: “But does the defeat of totalitarianism in the confrontation with human striving for freedom and social striving for prosperity mean the final break with utopia?”<sup>36</sup> The source of this doubt is the following observation:

There are good reasons, however, to believe that utopia is not necessarily synonymous with totalitarian power (that is, power that controls the economic, political, and cultural areas of society at the same time), and that parting with

---

<sup>32</sup> Przemysław Czapliński, *The Remnants of Modernity. Two Essays on Sarmatism and Utopia in Polish Contemporary Literature*, trans. Thomas Anessi (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2015), 122.

<sup>33</sup> Czapliński, *The Remnants of Modernity*, 103.

<sup>34</sup> Czapliński, *The Remnants of Modernity*, 104.

<sup>35</sup> Czapliński, “Wątpliwe rozstanie z utopią,” 92.

<sup>36</sup> Czapliński, “Wątpliwe rozstanie z utopią,” 93.

Prometheus, a mass exodus from Orwellian anti-utopia, does not mean the end of utopia in general. Not only does the end of the twentieth century not result in parting with utopian thinking, but it leads to its rebirth in a different form.<sup>37</sup>

Therefore, Tischner's attempt to think positively about utopia coincides with a moment in the history of European thinking when the term utopia is perceived primarily negatively and arouses fear or aversion rather than hope. Therefore, we must praise the courage and pioneering sense of the Kraków-based thinker who dared to repeal the common idiom of the criticism of utopian thinking and recall the values of such thinking, which were neglected or ignored in the discourse (both scientific and public) at that time.

However, he also noticed the weaknesses and dangers of an excessive trust in utopia. In the quoted article, he warned: "The weakness of utopia is that it does not appreciate the power with which evil enters the world and remains there. Utopias usually minimize the power of evil, weigh it lightly. [...] only when trying to implement the utopia it turns out how illusory these assumptions were."<sup>38</sup> This weakness is an additional reason—apart from the undoubted cognitive values for a historian, philosopher, sociologist, and political activist—for whom "social utopias demand disclosure, description and criticism. Since it would be a mistake to say that they do not exist, since they cannot be banished from our imagination, we need to look at what they are."<sup>39</sup> The basic tool for a critical analysis of utopian projects is to define its attitude to the Machiavellian idea of allowing violence as a means to an end: "Utopian consciousness cannot do without criticism based on seeing what is factual, otherwise it risks falling into the cult of violence. The cult of violence occurs when the attachment to dreams is too great and the reality is too resistant to dreams."<sup>40</sup> We do not need a very skilled eye to see in this passage a veiled (Aesopian language!) criticism of the revolutionary utopias under the sign of the hammer and sickle.

Utopian thinking—yes! (Tischner seems to say), but not the one that distorts reality and closes its eyes to evident evil. It is high time to part with this version of utopia and, instead, let new utopias—those that are already stuck in the social imagination, but so far, in a world monopolized by an increasingly declining totalitarian utopia, could not become the subject of analysis, criticism, and discussion.

---

<sup>37</sup> Czaplinski, "Wątpliwe rozstanie z utopią," 93.

<sup>38</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 458.

<sup>39</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 458.

<sup>40</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 459.

## *Ethics of Solidarity as a Study of Social Utopia*

“Thinking about the Social Ethos” is more of a prolegomenon than a study of utopian thought. Therefore, we find in it the plan and directions of work worth undertaking to describe, criticize, and organize the utopian projects hidden somewhere in the social imagination. However, there is no description of any such projects. Did the author of the 1980 text continue the directions of thinking announced in it and continue his critical analyses? He certainly did not do it systematically; he did not leave behind an orderly study of Polish social utopias of the declining PRL period. Not only because such work would require systematic, academic study of the problem, and Reverend Professor never had enough time for such activities,<sup>41</sup> but also because of a sudden historical turn, which took place in December 1981 and radically invalidated a whole series of projects both intellectual and those concerning the future shape of social practice.

Before this turn took place, however, Tischner wrote a whole series of short studies, which made up an orderly and critical description of at least one—at that time the most important and most promising—social utopia, emerging spontaneously in discussions across the country. It is about *The Ethics of Solidarity*, a series of twenty-one texts originally published in subsequent issues of *Tygodnik Powszechny* from October 1980 to May 1981,<sup>42</sup> and then collected and published by the Znak Publishing House in Kraków in August 1981. This publication can be considered a philosophical and ethical study of a solidarity utopia. It is certainly not a systematic study of an academic nature, but a collection of instantaneous written impressions.<sup>43</sup> When put together,

<sup>41</sup> “From time to time I dream about what philosophy should really be practiced today [...]. I used to believe that these dreams were planning. Today I know that nothing will come of it. What arises is a compromise between a dream and the need of the moment [...] I do not do what I should. I always have to dig half a meter further than where I believe is my treasure. [...] And I think it will be like that for the rest of my life.” Tischner, “Myślenie o etosie społecznym,” 7, 13.

<sup>42</sup> The first and last text in the collection are records of two sermons delivered by Rev. Tischner at Wawel on October 19, 1980, and May 3, 1981; see Józef Tischner, “Solidarność sumień” [Solidarity of Consciences], *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 43 (1980): 1; Tischner, “Z ducha Konstytucji” [From the Spirit of the Constitution], *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 19 (1981): 1, 2; between these dates, the development period for the published material ends.

<sup>43</sup> The author himself characterized his work as follows: “My texts were a hermeneutic interpretation of events, they did not want to project reality, but to describe it [...] it was an analysis of the ethical substance of human self-awareness without digging into political and economic contexts. The point was to show readers that such a sphere—the sphere of social self-awareness—exists and is important.” Anna Karoń-Ostrowska, *Spotkanie. Z ks. Józefem Tischnerem rozmawia Anna Karoń-Ostrowska* [Meeting. Anna Karoń-Ostrowska Talks to Józef Tischner] (Kraków: Znak, 2003), 98–99. Wojciech Bonowicz comments: “Two moments

however, they show a surprisingly accurate reconstruction of a set of values that enable a deep understanding of Polish hopes, expectations, and ambitions to build together a new, better reality on the historical foundation given here and now.

Today we know that those hopes, expectations, and ambitions were brutally destroyed and squandered as a result of an ill-considered decision to introduce Martial Law in Poland, and after its abolition, historical circumstances changed so much that the implementation of the solidarity utopia recorded by Tischner turned out to be impossible. What was created in the aftermath of the process of systemic transformation and what was called the Third Polish Republic differed from that project in so many important details that it is not worth making comparisons here. However, it is worth making a short reconstruction of *The Ethics of Solidarity* to show how Tischner's theoretical contemplations in "Thinking about the Social Ethos" were given a specific shape on this one example.

I would like to emphasize once again that *The Ethics of Solidarity* is part of the theoretical model of reflection on social ethos, whose formal outline was presented by Tischner in the article "Thinking about the Social Ethos." A brief reconstruction of this pattern is as follows:

1. The subject of reflection is social ethics understood as "the way we live our social life, that is, [...] the way of responding to events [and] participating in them,"<sup>44</sup> as well as "the possibility of choosing between various hopes and involvement in their implementation" grounded in personal freedom.<sup>45</sup>

2. A researcher of social ethics has at his disposal three styles of thinking: positivist (a precise description of facts obtained through experience, programmatically free from judgments and evaluations), normative (based on an a priori recognition of the structure of obligations and looking for the best ways to obey them), and axiological (examining the essence of ethical awareness by reaching the sphere of values and ideals).<sup>46</sup> The author unequivocally supports the third of these possibilities.

3. Instructive examples of "descriptive-axiological reflection on social life"<sup>47</sup> is sought by Tischner in two sources: *The City of God* by St. Augustine and in *Phenomenology of Spirit* by G. W. F. Hegel.

---

should be emphasized here. Firstly: *The Ethics of Solidarity* was a hot-written text. Secondly: *The Ethics of Solidarity* was not a text written in a fever. Tischner liked to repeat that philosophy does not cause the fever of the world, but measures it well. In this case, the idea was to show what really caused the 'explosion' and what the ethical significance of the event was." Wojciech Bonowicz, "Od Wydawcy" [Publisher's Note], in Tischner, *Etyka solidarności* [The Ethics of Solidarity], 286.

<sup>44</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 453.

<sup>45</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 454.

<sup>46</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 455–456.

<sup>47</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 457.

4. The basic objective of a researcher of social utopias is to understand the axiological content of hope directed towards the future by reconstructing a set of values that people expect to be realized in a specific place and time.<sup>48</sup>

5. “Social utopias require disclosure, description, and criticism”<sup>49</sup> in order to “introduce some order among them,” verify which of them are internally contradictory and therefore impossible to implement, and what is their attitude towards “social reality, to which they refer,”<sup>50</sup> since utopias detached from reality and going too far beyond the scope of possible action here and now or in the foreseeable future disqualify themselves,

6. A ‘good’ utopia (eutopia) “consists in fulfilling a creative synthesis of the past and the future,”<sup>51</sup> therefore it should not radically cut itself off from tradition, but preserve everything worth preserving as a result of “preferential reading of the past.”<sup>52</sup>

7. Hope, determined by the project of utopia, “also determines the way of connecting man with the present”<sup>53</sup> offering here and now a program of “action with meaning,”<sup>54</sup> including responsibility for our actions, the obligation to give testimony to the professed values and a willingness to sacrifice.

Now I would like to turn to showing how the various elements of the model are reflected in *The Ethics of Solidarity*. The first point can be considered as realized in such a way that the entire text is, firstly, a reflection—as faithful as the author managed to accurately reflect the spiritual atmosphere of the communities involved in the Solidarity movement—of the way of experiencing and participating in the events of the beginning of the 1980s which brought great hopes. Secondly, a passionate appeal to choose the hope indicated in the text and to actively join the movement. The second point determines what research perspective should be adopted during the reflection, and the philosopher is invariably faithful to the descriptive-axiological method indicated there, not only in the text currently under discussion. Third point is the following, in *Thinking about the Social Ethos* Tischner wrote that St. Augustine recommended building the future on what is worth saving from the past, and that his choice “is the result of a preferential reading of the past.”<sup>55</sup> St. Augustine asked if “everything Roman was to perish” and answered that not everything, because “Rome is passing, but the Roman virtue remains.”<sup>56</sup> From Hegel, in turn, he

<sup>48</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 457.

<sup>49</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 458.

<sup>50</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 459.

<sup>51</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 460.

<sup>52</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 461.

<sup>53</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 462.

<sup>54</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 463.

<sup>55</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 461.

<sup>56</sup> Tischner, “Myślenie o ethosie społecznym,” 461.

proposes to adopt the idea of the art of learning from one's own opponent: "The reference to the past made by [...] Hegel is of a special character. It is essentially a reference beyond opposites. Here, we make the opponent's virtue our own. It is not about [...] continuing what is already related. It is about alluding to what is related in difference, in opposition."<sup>57</sup> When applying the decoding method contained in the text of Aesopian language, two leads can be discerned. First, there is a temptation to see a parallel between St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, and John Paul II, bishop of Rome, and to trace in Tischner's works the sources of inspiration in papal teaching from the first years of his pontificate, especially in relation to the idea of wise combining tradition with innovation (here, however, the amount of material would be so abundant that this thread should be left for another occasion). Secondly, for Tischner—at least to some extent (admittedly, not much)—a modern analogon of Rome from the time of St. Augustine could be what from the 16th century was called "Third Rome," so the Moscow Empire (of course, in its twentieth century form, known as the Soviet Union). No matter how risky a thesis that the author of *The Ethics of Solidarity* looks for something like "Roman virtues" in the communist ethos taken from the East would be, it cannot be completely ruled out that it is precisely in the form of "learning from the opponent" that he considers the possibility of such a reinterpretation of some leftist ideals that would enable an authentic dialogue with the non-confrontational part of the supporters of the PUWP's political line. It is how the content of the four central chapters of *The Ethics of Solidarity*, entitled: *Democracy, Socialism, Revolution, Ruling*<sup>58</sup> can be interpreted.

The fourth point concentrates the attention of Józef Tischner to the greatest extent. Once again, it can be said that all chapters of *The Ethics of Solidarity*, without exception, constitute a reconstruction of a set of values that make up the axiological foundation of a social project. In each episode of the cycle, the focus is primarily on values—positive (such as community, democracy or thriftiness) or negative (such as suffering, illusion or betrayal). These values are not only indicated, named, and discussed, but also "set for implementation." In the text opening the publication, Tischner writes: "The house needs to be tidied up. It is exactly what needs to be done that binds us together and inspires us to act,"<sup>59</sup> and in the following fragments we talk about what exactly needs to be done to make utopia a reality.

The fifth point is realized in such a way that everything written by the author of *The Ethics of Solidarity* is the disclosure, description, and critical reflection on the individual elements of the solidarity utopia. There is not a *reductio ad*

---

<sup>57</sup> Tischner, "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym," 462.

<sup>58</sup> See Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 46–67.

<sup>59</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 7.

absurdum<sup>60</sup> construction in the text, as the author has already selected social utopia that meets the condition of non-contradiction. On the other hand, there is a constant concern that subsequent calls to implement the values that make up the characteristics of the solidarity ethos are constantly confronted with the realities of the current Polish social and geopolitical reality.<sup>61</sup> Tischner does not want to create an abstract model of an ideal world that we can only dream about and sigh about, but tries to provide motivation for all people of good will, regardless of their ideological and philosophical orientation, to build a community of action leading to the implementation of the disclosed and described set of values.

The sixth point is a particularly sensitive issue. The attitude towards the past in the minds of a large part of the generation painfully experienced by the Stalinist crimes and a whole range of pathologies of the real socialism, euphemistically called in the language of propaganda “periods of errors and distortions,” was definitely critical. So when, as a result of the progressive erosion of the economic and political system in Poland, the prospect of far-reaching changes began to open, the expectations and hopes of many Poles were related to leaving behind everything that was associated with the ideals of socialism and communism, and which, instead of fulfilling the promises of a better life, brought disappointments. In the more radical fractions of the democratic opposition, there was direct talk of the need to depart from the path of socialist development and enter the path of rapprochement with Western democracies. However, such a radical turn is not envisaged by Tischner’s project of social changes. Basing largely on Hegel’s idea of progress, following the path of *dialektische Aufhebung*, Tischner prefers a strategy of creative synthesis of the past and the future, that is, in practice, inscribing a set of values centred around the central idea of solidarity into the existing reality without violating its political system foundations and the geopolitical *raison d’etat*. Such a scenario was considered by the Kraków philosopher to be realistic and providing an optimal chance of achieving the indicated goals. Therefore, it can be said (somewhat humorously)

---

<sup>60</sup> With the exception of those passages that refer to unacceptable from the point of view of the new social ethos and requiring mental overcoming of the relics of the Marxist concept. An example: Why should ‘people’s rule’ be—according to some—so highly commendable? The answer is about two positions. Some say: because the people are the bearer of the truth, because the people are always right. Others say: because the people are the most numerous, they have the greatest strength. [...] The issue of democracy is, as you can see, a complex matter. We can easily discover that the two extreme views of the idea of democracy mentioned at the beginning are absurd.” Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 46–47.

<sup>61</sup> For example, in the chapter *Administering* the author writes: “Today we need to better understand the nature of the bond that connects the farmer with his farm. We need to properly grasp the nature of farm work. We are in danger of treating this work as if it were the work of an industrial entrepreneur. These two images are overlapping each other today, and as a result we hold someone else responsible for one mistake.” Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 69.

that the second patron of Tischner's thinking about the choice of the path of realizing the ethos of solidarity, next to Hegel, is Reinhold Niebuhr, to whom tradition attributes the authorship of the prayer (often quoted in Tischner's oral statements): "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

The seventh point concerns the question of what we must do together here and now so that the present becomes a bridge from the past known to all of us and having a number of flaws towards the implementation of the model of social utopia, contained in *The Ethics of Solidarity*. Among the whole number of postulates addressed to the readers of the series, it is worth mentioning a few most important ones, starting with the call for shared responsibility for the implementation of the idea of interpersonal solidarity: "The word 'solidarity' brings together our anxious hopes, stimulates courage and thought, and binds together people who stood far apart yesterday. [...] Each of us feels the enormous weight of the contents hidden in this word."<sup>62</sup> Another important call concerns the need to "work on work."<sup>63</sup> Tischner writes: "Our ethos of solidarity today is [...] concrete. It was born among working people to free human labor from unnecessary pain [...] it is, above all, about the truth about the unnecessary suffering of working people. This truth should be as concrete as suffering is concrete."<sup>64</sup> Further elements of the "program of action with meaning" concern such areas of social life as: democracy (46–50), ruling (62–67), management (68–73), education (74–78), family (84–87) and homeland (96–100). Among the values that should be treated with the greatest care, Tischner listed freedom as the subject of the work of conscience: "Conscience defines in us the field of possible, free choice. [...] Owing to conscience, playfulness is transformed into freedom, and freedom is not mere understanding and adaptation to necessity. [...] The Polish real freedom is determined by the wise voice of conscience that knows the situation of people."<sup>65</sup> In the same chapter, entitled *Homeland*, the philosopher emphasizes the importance of testimony as a basic condition for commitment to better Poland: "Choosing Poland means: bearing testimony. [...] The basic testimony revolves around the sense of human dignity."<sup>66</sup> The last issue that needs to be addressed here is the awareness of the need for sacrifice and commitment, embedded in the ethos of solidarity. Their goal is,

<sup>62</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 5.

<sup>63</sup> The phrase "work on work," referring directly to the words of John Paul II, appears for the first time in Tischner's article entitled "Niepodległość pracy" [Independence of Work], *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 38 (1981), 1. Marian Graczyk writes about the role of this formula in papal teaching: "Jana Pawła II idea 'pracy nad pracą'" [John Paul II's Idea of "Working on Work,"], *Seminare. Poszukiwania naukowe* 11 (1995): 169–188.

<sup>64</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 17.

<sup>65</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 96.

<sup>66</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 96–97.

above all, the well-being of another human being. Tischner explains: “If we had to somehow define the meaning of the word ‘solidarity,’ we would have to [...] refer to the Gospel and look for its origin there. The meaning of this word is defined by Christ: ‘Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.’ What does it mean to be in solidarity? It means to bear the burden of an another person.”<sup>67</sup>

## Conclusion

When Thomas More wrote his *Utopia*, he hoped that the intellectual unrest he caused would contribute to a real improvement in the conditions of social life. The reality did not confirm his expectations. The discussions that flared up around his work were purely theoretical, and the world continued its course. It happened probably because people most interested in implementing at least some of the recommendations of the just system project were completely deprived of influence, and those who had a real influence on political decisions preferred to pursue their own particular interests.

Even worse was the implementation of another great utopian project: the twentieth-century totalitarian utopia. It is true that many of the assumptions of this project have been implemented, but the result was not a more perfect social system in which people would live better. Instead, a nightmarish world of terror and enslavement was created. Such adventures with utopia could discourage for good from looking for new forms of it, and even more so from getting involved in their practical implementation. Meanwhile, as the analysis of the history of ideas shows, utopian thinking had and still has its supporters. Józef Tischner turned out to be one of them. His approach to the idea of utopian thinking, however, was neither naively idealistic nor pragmatic-cynical. He approached the problem with his inherent philosophical inquisitiveness: first, he recognized the issue of utopian thinking in the context of ethics and social axiology. Then he developed thought tools allowing to organize hierarchical utopian projects currently in the social circulation. Among them he distinguished one—the most promising and evoking a vivid response in many diverse in social circles—a project of solidarity among all Poles, and, finally, decided to bring this project to light, analyse its individual elements in depth and describe it in a simple, communicative language, but, at the same time, subjected to strict intellectual discipline, taking care of the greatest possible fidelity to the description. This is how two important texts in Tischner’s philosophical oeuvre were created:

---

<sup>67</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 6.

*Thinking about the Social Ethos*, then *The Ethics of Solidarity*. The latter, in particular, played a role that could not be overestimated in Polish public life at the beginning of the 1980s.

We will never know, of course, and it would be in vain to speculate how the fate of the Polish nation would have turned out in the last decades of the previous century, had it not been for such an excellent model of the social imaginary built on the idea of “solidarity with everyone and not against anyone,”<sup>68</sup> It is highly probable, however, that the great power of suggestion contained in each of the chapters of Tischner’s small but powerful work shaped the style of political action and the system of axiological preferences of people who were really close to the evangelical version of the idea of solidarity. Today, forty years after those events, there is only a pale shadow left of this idea, and the society is absorbed with completely different problems and has different values. However, it is hard not to admit that the fact that the Polish nation gained—after many decades of intellectual, moral, and political dependence on foreign forces and ideas—its own, sovereign spiritual face and the right to independently define and resolve its own problems, at least to some extent, we owe to the power of the ideas unveiled and revealed in the masterpiece of Józef Tischner.

## Bibliography

- Baczko, Bronisław. *Les imaginaires sociaux. Mémoires et espoirs collectifs*. Paris: Payot, 1984.
- Baczko, Bronisław. *Lumieres de l’utopie*. Paris: Payot & Rivages, 2001.
- Baczko, Bronisław. *Światła utopii*. Translated by Wiktor Dłuski. Warszawa: IFiS PAN, 2016
- Baczko, Bronisław. *Wyobrażenia społeczne. Szkice o nadziei i pamięci zbiorowej*. Translated by Małgorzata Kowalska. Warszawa: PWN, 1994.
- Bonowicz, Wojciech. “Od Wydawcy.” In Józef Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*. Kraków: Znak, 2000.
- Czapliński, Przemysław. “Wątpliwe rozstanie z utopią.” *Teksty Drugie*, nr 4 (40) (1996): 92–105.
- Czapliński, Przemysław. *Resztki nowoczesności*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2011.
- Czapliński, Przemysław. *The Remnants of Modernity. Two Essays on Sarmatism and Utopia in Polish Contemporary Literature*. Translated by Thomas Anessi. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2015.
- Czubernatowa, Wanda, and Józef Tischner. *Wieści ze słuchanicy*. Kraków: Znak, 2001.
- Dymarski, Zbyszek. “Debata księdza Józefa Tischnera ze szkołą lubelską.” *Logos i Ethos*, no. 1 (1998): 239–245.
- Fedorowicz, Jacek. *W zasadzie tak*. Warszawa: KAW, 1975.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. “Die Unfähigkeit zum Gespräch.” *Universitas*, vol. 26 (1971): 1295–1304.

<sup>68</sup> See Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 7.

- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. "Niezdolność do rozmowy." Translated by Bogdan Baran. *Znak*, no. 3 (309), (1980): 369–376.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. "The Incapacity for Conversation." *Continental Philosophy Review* 39 (2006): 351–359. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-006-9041-2>.
- Głowiński, Michał. *Nowomowa po polsku*. Warszawa: PWN, 1990.
- Głowiński, Michał. *Zła mowa. Jak się nie dać propagandzie*. Warszawa: Wielka Litera, 2016.
- Graczyk, Marian. "Jana Pawła II idea pracy nad pracą." *Seminare. Poszukiwania naukowe*, 11 (1995): 169–188.
- Jawor, Marek. "Spór Józefa Tischnera z tomizmem — między konfrontacją a dialogiem." *Filozofia Chrześcijańska*, vol. 10 (2013): 211–227.
- Kamosiński, Sławomir. "Praca jako obowiązek a praca jako źródło satysfakcji. Studium historyczne roli i znaczenia pracy w dziejach Polski po 1945 roku." *Annales. Etyka w życiu gospodarczym*, vol. 19, no. 2 (2016): 63–79.
- Klemperer, Victor. *LTI — Notizbuch eines Philologen*. Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1947.
- Nowak, Leszek. *Polska droga do socjalizmu. Pisma polityczne 1980–1989*. Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University, 2011.
- Nycz, Ryszard. "Literatura polska w cieniu cenzury: wykład." *Teksty Drugie*, nr 3 (51) (1998): 5–27.
- Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1949.
- Tischner, Józef, and Anna Karoń-Ostrowska. *Spotkanie. Z ks. Józefem Tischnerem rozmawia Anna Karoń-Ostrowska*. Kraków: Znak, 2003.
- Tischner, Józef. "Czym jest filozofia, którą uprawiam," 9–13. In *Myślenie według wartości*. Kraków: Znak, 1982.
- Tischner, Józef. *Etyka solidarności*. Kraków: Znak, 1981.
- Tischner, Józef. "Filozofia i ludzkie sprawy człowieka." *Znak*, no. 1 (223) (1973): 18–30.
- Tischner, Józef. *Il pensiero ei valori*. Bologna: CSEO Biblioteca, 1980.
- Tischner, Józef. "Myślenie o ethosie społecznym." In *Myślenie według wartości*, 453–465. Kraków: Znak, 1982.
- Tischner, Józef. *Myślenie według wartości*. Kraków: Znak, 1982.
- Tischner, Józef. "Niepodległość pracy." *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 38 (1981): 1.
- Tischner, Józef. "Schyłek chrześcijaństwa tomistycznego." *Znak*, no. 1 (187) (1970): 1–26.
- Tischner, Józef. "Solidarność sumień." *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 43 (1980): 1.
- Tischner, Józef. "Z ducha Konstytucji." *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 19 (1981): 1–2.

Krzysztof T. Wiczorek

## Pour la défense de l'Utopie. « Réflexion sur l'éthos social » de Józef Tischner

### Résumé

L'observation de phénomènes se produisant dans la vie sociale des Polonais a représenté un courant important dans l'oeuvre philosophique de Tischner fut une observation de phénomènes se produisant dans la vie sociale des Polonais. Cette tendance est devenue particulièrement significative au tournant des années 1970 et 1980, lorsque les processus, qui allaient finalement conduire à la transformation politique, ont commencé à se produire. Au cours de cette période,

Tischner a tenté avec succès de reconstruire l'éthos social polonais. Il s'est avéré que l'élément central de cet échos est la présence de projets utopiques pour reconstruire l'ordre social dans le pays. Dans ses analyses, Tischner a déclaré que les utopies jouent un rôle constructif dans la vie sociale, car elles motivent les individus à s'engager dans la lutte politique pour des réformes systémiques profondes. Cet article présente le contenu de la reconstruction des utopies polonaises des années 1970 et 1980 proposé par Tischner, ainsi que la corrélation entre l'éthique sociale, les discussions idéologiques et la pratique politique de la période de déclin de la République populaire de Pologne (PRL)

Mots-clés : Józef Tischner, utopie, éthos social, système politique polonais, critique du système socialiste, solidarité

Krzysztof T. Wiczorek

## Per la difesa dell'utopia. «Riflettendo sull'ethos sociale» di Józef Tischner

### Sommario

Una tendenza importante nel lavoro filosofico di Tischner era l'osservazione dei fenomeni che si verificano nella vita sociale dei polacchi. Questa tendenza divenne particolarmente rilevante a cavallo tra gli anni '70 e '80 del secolo scorso, quando iniziarono a verificarsi i processi che alla fine portarono alla trasformazione politica. Durante quel periodo, Tischner ha tentato con successo di ricostruire l'etica sociale polacca. Si è scoperto che l'elemento integrante dell'ethos è la presenza di progetti utopici per ricostruire l'ordine sociale nel paese. Nelle sue analisi, Tischner ha affermato che le utopie svolgono un ruolo costruttivo nella vita sociale, perché motivano le persone a impegnarsi in una lotta politica per l'attuazione di profonde riforme sistemiche. Questo articolo presenta i contenuti della ricostruzione delle utopie polacche degli anni '70 e '80 proposta da Tischner, nonché la correlazione tra etica sociale, discussioni ideologiche e pratica politica del periodo di declino della Repubblica popolare polacca (PRL)

Parole chiave: Józef Tischner, utopia, etica sociale, sistema politico polacco, critica del sistema socialista, solidarietà



**Marek Petro**

University of Prešov, Slovak Republic

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2024-9981>

# The Idea of Solidarity in the Concept of Man Created in God's Image

**Abstract:** Moral theology concerns the morality of society and acts of an individual or a group of individuals that constitute that particular society. Morality teaches us to properly respond to God's calling, so that we can fulfil our ultimate goal. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, regarded as a compendium of the doctrines of the magisterium of the Church, can also serve as a valuable source for teaching moral theology. In the first section ("Man's Vocation Life in the Spirit") of the third part ("Life in Christ") of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, we can learn that man has been created "in the image and likeness of the Creator" (chap. 1, art. 1), where solidarity plays a significant role. The present paper analyses this issue.

**Keywords:** human, God's image, human dignity, anthropocentrism, solidarity

## Introduction

Teaching of moral theology concerns not only the moral aspect of life of a society, but also acts of an individual or a group of individuals that constitute a particular society. Morality shows us the moral acts a person should do in order to fulfil his or her ultimate goal. *Optatam totius*, the Decree on Priestly Training, produced by the Second Vatican Council and promulgated by Pope Paul VI, urges:

Special care must be given to the perfecting of moral theology. Its scientific exposition, nourished more on the teaching of the Bible, should shed light on the loftiness of the calling of the faithful in Christ and the obligation that is theirs of bearing fruit in charity for the life of the world. (*Optatam totius* V, 16)

The purpose of this article is to provide an analysis of solidarity understood as a constituent of the concept of a human being created in the image of God. I will draw upon Holy Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*—a sure norm for the teachings of the Church’s Magisterium. The *Catechism* helps our spiritual life grow, it provides us with the doctrines of our faith and teaches us how to live our life more profoundly, and communicate our way of life in a more convincing manner. From a juridical point of view, the *Catechism* is a document of pontifical law. It was promulgated for Christendom by John Paul II in 1992 through his authority of teachings proper to him.

The paper is primarily concerned with the third part of the *Catechism* entitled “Life in Christ.” It opens with a statement: “Christian, recognize your dignity [...]” (CCC 1691). It explores the life that is to correspond to the dignity of a human person and Christian. It also accentuates that the Christian life is the life of the triune God—the life in Christ. Then it proceeds to explain what standards should be applied in the catechesis aimed at the Christ’s life.

“Man’s Vocation Life in the Spirit” is the title of the first section of the third part of the *Catechism*, which asserts that human beings are created in the image of God and destined for the ultimate goal, which is eternal beatitude. By free will, one is capable of following this path to eternal beatitude. One’s conscience judges the morality of one’s deeds. Those deeds presuppose the emergence of one’s disposition for good, which we know as virtues. Sin, on the other hand, is a wayward act that does not direct us to the ultimate goal. Since it is an offense against reason, truth, and true conscience, sin is also an offense against God. The prevalence of sin has also social implications. Therefore, a human being, called to beatitude but wounded by sin, needs God’s salvation. Divine help is given to him/her in Christ through the law that guides him/her and through grace that strengthens him/her. The doctrine of grace points to man’s calling to be holy.<sup>1</sup>

In many cultural settings, human dignity is recognized as a fundamental principle for evaluation of human acts. In itself, however, it does not present any specific norms of act. Indeed, the morality of any human act is determined by the nature of the set goal, the means employed to attain that goal, the intention, and implications of such act. An act is good if its individual elements are

---

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Ratzinger and Christopher Schönborn, *Malý úvod ku Katechizmu katolíckej Cirkvi*, trans. Mária Škovierová (Bratislava: Nové Mesto, 1995), 78–81.

good.<sup>2</sup> Human dignity is also a fundamental value safeguarded by the European Union in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and constitutes the very foundation of the European Union's value system. "Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected."<sup>3</sup> Today, no one seems to challenge the primacy of human dignity. Everyone knows the horrors of Nazism and, more recently, of Communism. Yet, there are some areas where the issue of human dignity may raise many questions, for instance, in relation to violence, murders, racism, cloning, gene manipulation, etc. What is the bedrock on which one embraces human dignity as a fundamental principle of protecting and respecting the freedom of every human being, when in so many specific situations it is not? In the following sections of this paper, I attempt to answer this question from the perspective of moral theology.

## Human Dignity Dwells in the Image and Likeness of God

Every human being is unique and inimitable. With their individuality they decide for themselves—they are free to act. In the fullest, a human being becomes a human person in the encounter with the Divine Person. One is to unite all of one's faculties within oneself and thus determine for oneself the direction of one's own existence, which is a union with Christ.

In ancient philosophy, the unusual character of human existence was rendered in the expression of microcosmos. One is great because he/she reflects in oneself the greatness and perfection of cosmos. The Church Fathers often referred to this claim, but they also gave it a new and enriched meaning derived from the biblical doctrine of the image and likeness of God. There is the image and likeness of cosmos in every person, however, at the same time, as St. Gregory of Nyssa claims, that person does not identify with flies or mice.

A value of a human being does not derive from his/her likeness to the world, but from the possibility of participating in God's perfection through the image and likeness that he/she bears within him/herself. A human being is a person and given his/her individuality, he/she does not have to describe his/her position in relation to cosmos. Just the contrary, the cosmos acquires its value as it devotes itself to the service of a human person who gives meaning to the world.

---

<sup>2</sup> Josef Reiter, "Genový výzkum a bioetika," *Scripta Bioethica* 3 (2003): 7.

<sup>3</sup> Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Art. 1, accessed November 10, 2021, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text\\_en.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf)

A human person is therefore a hope for the world, but can also pose a threat to it if he/she chooses the wrong direction in his/her own individual growth. Speaking of this dynamism of self-realization, Eastern anthropology describes, on the one hand, an innate capacity of a person, and, on the other, a need to go beyond, to move in the direction towards something that is transcendent in relation to that person. This tendency would seem incomprehensible and, in a certain sense, even pathological if there were not something within a human person that enables him/her to nurture the hope for a more perfect than just ordinary fulfilment. That something is actually the image of God, which, in the words of St. Gregory of Nyssa, is “the face of God expressed in the features of man.”<sup>4</sup> From this standpoint, one feels an inner tension between the person one has become after Adam’s sin and the person one truly is in his/her very essence.

In the teachings of the Church Fathers, one can find various interpretations of concept of image and likeness. For example, St. Gregory of Nazianzus speaks of the eschatological aspect of the image: “As an earthly individuality, I am bound up with temporal life but since I am also part of the Divinity, I also carry in my womb the desire of the life to come.”<sup>5</sup> The life to come is not to be understood only in terms of a fulfilled eschatology, but also in terms of a Kingdom eschatology that begins with God’s grace—the concept of “already, but not yet.” In this understanding, the image of God signifies an initial charismatic state that is characterized by the indestructible presence of grace, inseparable from human nature, resulting from the very act of creation. As a result, a human, just like every other creature, is not only a subject to the moral law resulting from God’s will, but also belongs to the same offspring of God of which the Holy Scriptures say: “[...] we are therefore the God’s offspring [...]” (Acts 17:29).

St. Gregory of Nyssa sees in the image of God the proof that a human person is a friend of God, since he/she is capable of knowing and loving, just like God. Human, knowing and naming creatures (animals), has the capacity, if you will, of a cosmic word, similar to the word of God, in which all things came into being. God’s Logos created the world. The human being gives names to the created reality, thus performing a kind of second creation (cf. Gen 2:19–20). This analogy is so evident that Evdokimov does not hesitate to assert that “the only difference between God and the divinized man of the Kingdom is that God is not created, while man exists by virtue of creation.”<sup>6</sup>

Man, created in God’s likeness, bears within oneself the image of God, but only the begotten God brings with Him the true image of that being. Christ revealed the plan according to which humankind was created. In the histori-

<sup>4</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, Ps, c. 4; PG 44, 446 BC.

<sup>5</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus, *Poemata dogmatica*, 8; PG 37, 452.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Evdokimov, *Prawosławie*, trans. Jerzy Klinger (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 2003), 103.

cal dimension of salvation, a human being was created first. In the theological sense, however, the Incarnation had actually occurred before the creation of humans. The actual creation of humankind had therefore its pattern in Christ. It should be noted here that Eastern theology is confronted with a certain dilemma pertaining to human body. On the one hand, the body is a vessel of envy and thus a source of sin; on the other hand, it is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit. The first view inspired the ascetics in their struggle with the body and its lust. The second view tends to reveal the autonomous value in the body as the source of the transubstantiation of matter.<sup>7</sup> In this context, the confession of the Blessed Sister Faustina sounds rather interesting: “If the angels could envy, they would envy us two things: the Holy Communion and suffering.”<sup>8</sup> None of these experiences would not be possible without the body. It is a common knowledge that the verse from the Book of Genesis about the image of God also refers to likeness: “Then God said: “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness!” [...] So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them” (Gen 1:26–27). This twofold expression “image–likeness” has provoked a debate about its meaning among theologians. Is it merely a literary device, often present in the Bible, or is there some new truth behind it?<sup>9</sup>

It is in the patristic period that one can notice this division into image (eikon–imago), describing the order of nature, and likeness (*homoiosis–similitudo*), referring to the supernatural dimension of humankind. Eastern theology is founded upon this teaching. In his/her nature, especially in his/her soul, a human being is the image of God, and is likened to God by virtue of his/her supernatural participation in His life. The ontology of beings created in the image of God makes them, as God’s offspring, open to the task they are to perform—to become truly holy through their participation in God’s life that is immortal, integral, and pure. The image, as an objective foundation of one’s dynamic structure, demands a form that is subjective and thus personal. Creation in the image of God thus leads to flourishing—to “existence in the image of God.”<sup>10</sup> This implies that a human being was created not merely as the image and likeness, but as the image in likeness.<sup>11</sup> Although, after the original sin, the image of God remained intact, it has shifted into somewhat of the

---

<sup>7</sup> Tomas Spidlik and Innocenzo Gargano, *Duchowość Ojców greckich i wschodnich*, trans. Janina Dembska (Kraków: Wydawnictwo M, 1997), 76.

<sup>8</sup> Faustyna Kowalska, *Dzienniczek Sługi Bożej S. M. Faustyny Kowalskiej Profeski wieczystej Zgromadzenia Matki Bożej Miłosierdzia* (Kraków–Stockbridge–Rzym: n.p., 1981), 383.

<sup>9</sup> José Morales, *El misterio de la creación* (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1994), 213.

<sup>10</sup> Jewgienij Raszkowski, “Protojerej Aleksander Mień: sylwetka intelektualna,” *Ethos* 30–1 (1995): 153–165.

<sup>11</sup> Irénée Hausherr, *Philautie. De la tendresse pour soi à la charité selon St. Maxime le Confesseur* (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1952), 137.

“ontological silence.” It means that it was deprived of that inner dynamism that would enable it to be transformed into likeness. After the fall, we have rejected the likeness, but we did not lose the image.

Through His grace, Jesus Christ not only restores the image tainted by the original sin, but He also provides humankind with an actual instrument of realizing the likeness. In the Eastern tradition, the sacrament of Holy Baptism restores the image of God, while Chrismation (Confirmation) initiates the process of constructing the image that takes place in the Holy Spirit. This is why these sacraments are administered simultaneously. Only then, one “begins to be who he/she essentially is” and this happens through the action of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes from God but, at the same time, enters into the structure of the person him/herself. As a result, it belongs to that person’s “essence” and becomes the primary moral principle.

In line with human nature (*kata phýsin*), all that constitutes one’s good involves charity, faith, virtues, and contemplation. Conversely, anger, sin, and evil thoughts are against human nature (*para phýsin*). Human nature expressed in the image of God, is the source of all good for a person. God’s grace plays an essential role in this process. One is not only a passive recipient here, but also an active collaborator, primarily as a subject of God’s image that is in him/her and which he/she truly is. This collaboration is described by the term synergism.

To a certain extent, the theology of God’s image in that twofold expression of “image–likeness” can be found in the icon cult. An icon is never written with all the details, it is rather a sketch, a half-finished work in its artistic essence. It reveals the mystery of God, but it also requires a special engagement and response.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, anyone who contemplates an icon must discover that he/she him/herself is an image of God, which demands its realization on a journey directed towards the likeness according to individual vocations through which God reveals to every one of us our personal paths to holiness. In this way, a human being completes the writing of the icon by truly living his/her own life. We cannot remain indifferent to the icon for it reveals the need for direction to holiness, just as the God’s image demands fulfilment in the likeness of God.

---

<sup>12</sup> Marcel Mojzeš, “Ikona Božej Múdrosti v kontexte byzantskej tradície,” *Logos* 3–4 (2005): 27.

## Violation of Human Dignity

The doctrine about a human being created in the image and likeness of God also involves a social dimension. God is not a solitary being. He is a community of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, it is only natural for a human being, created in God's image and likeness, to create communities that are familial, religious, political, economic, etc.

God, who has fatherly concern for everyone, has willed that all men should constitute one family and treat one another in a spirit of brotherhood. For having been created in the image of God, who "from one man has created the whole human race and made them live all over the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). All men are called to one and the same goal, namely, God Himself. For this reason, love for God and neighbor is the first and greatest commandment. Sacred Scripture, however, teaches us that love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbor. "If there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself... Love therefore is the fulfilment of the Law" (Rom 13:9–10; cf. 1 Jn 4:20). To man growing daily more dependent on one another, and to a world becoming more unified every day, this truth proves to be of paramount importance. Indeed, the Lord Jesus, when he prayed to the Father,

that all may be one ... as we are one" (cf. Jn 17:21–22) opened up vistas closed to human reason, for He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons, and the unity of God's sons in truth and charity. This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself (*Gaudium et spes* 24).

Although we see that the teaching of the Second Vatican Council in the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et spes* presents a vision of "man to man, brother to brother," which is in fact the Gospel message, that is, the message of Christ, yet we often encounter the contrary approach, that is, "man is a wolf to another man." Why does all this happen?

In his book *Memory and Identity*, St. John Paul II affirms that evil is always the absence of some good, but it is never a total absence of good. Human history presents a scene of the coexistence of good and evil, which means that even if evil exists alongside good, good perseveres beside evil in the same human nature (the image of God), because it has not been completely destroyed despite original sin.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, trans. John Corrigan (New York Rizzoli, 2006), 11–12.

St. Augustine described the nature of original sin as “self-love to the point of contempt for God.”<sup>14</sup> It was the love of self that drove our first parents towards that initial disobedience and this gave rise to the spread of this sin throughout the history of humankind. The original dimension of sin did not find the same compensation in another form: “love for God to the point of contempt for self.”<sup>15</sup> If the Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can call evil by its name, it does so only to demonstrate that evil can be overcome. And it is precisely “love for God to the point of contempt for self” that has such power. For a human being cannot get back on his/her feet alone; he/she needs the help of the Holy Spirit. If he/she refuses this help, he/she commits the sin that Christ called “the blasphemy against the Spirit”<sup>16</sup> and thus affirmed that it will not be forgiven (Mt 12:31). Why will it not be forgiven? Because it means that there is no desire for forgiveness.

For a better understanding of the ideologies of evil, St. John Paul II returns to the philosophical thinking brought about by René Descartes. The “*cogito, ergo sum*” meant the radical change in the way of doing philosophy. There was a change in the direction of philosophical thought because the *esse*, which was considered prior and the *cogito*, or rather *cognosco*, was subordinate to it, seemed secondary to Descartes. The *cogito* came to be considered prior. God as fully Self-sufficient Being was believed to be an indispensable ground of all created beings, including humans. The “*cogito, ergo sum*” has overthrown this tradition of thought. After Descartes, philosophy has become a science of pure thought: all *esse*—both the created world and the Creator—remained within the realm of the *cogito* as the content of human consciousness.

The question that remains contested is the very possibility of knowing God. According to the logic of the “*cogito, ergo sum*,” God could only remain as an element within human consciousness and could no longer be the one who ultimately explains the human *sum*. Nor He could remain as a Self-sufficient Being. The God of Revelation ceased to exist as the God of the philosophers. All that remained was the idea of God as a topic for free exploration by human thought. But in this way, the foundations of the philosophy of evil also collapses. For evil, in a realist sense, can only exist in relation to good, and particularly, in relation to God, the supreme Good.

This evil was redeemed by Christ on the Cross. All this drama of salvation history disappeared in the Enlightenment intellect. The human remained alone: alone, as the one who decides what is good and what is evil, as the one who

---

<sup>14</sup> St. Augustine, *Teaching Christianity De Doctrina Christiana* (New York: New City Press, 2014), 123.

<sup>15</sup> Marek Petro, *Povolanie človeka k blaženosti 2* (Prešov: Vydavateľstvo Prešovskej univerzity, 2019), 15.

<sup>16</sup> Štefan Paločko, *Ježiš z Nazareta záchrana ľudí* (Prešov: Prešovská univerzita v Prešove Gréckokatolícka teologická fakulta, 2010), 84.

would exist and act even if there were no God. If a human person remained alone, without God, he/she could determine what is good and what is evil. He/she could also determine what person (abortion, murder, euthanasia) or a group of persons is to be annihilated (Nazism, Communism). The elimination of a person does not have to be physical, but sometimes also psychological or moral. By psychological or moral elimination, the person would be more or less drastically deprived of his/her rights. Why does all this happen? According to St. John Paul II, the answer is clear and simple: “It happens because of the rejection of God *qua* Creator, and consequently *qua* source determining what is good and what is evil.”<sup>17</sup> The human has become the center of everything.

## Solidarity as a Constituent of the Concept of a Human Being Created in the Image of God

Anthropocentrism is a belief that regards human beings as the measure of all things, as it implies a denial of God’s love, reverts human beings to themselves and thus encloses them in a pretended autonomy (atheism, subjective non-belief, any philosophy that is not open to one’s quest for objective truth, etc.).<sup>18</sup>

This is actually an anthropocentric view of humans, which arises from their age-old desire to “be like God” (Gen 2:5–6). But this Godlessness brings unhappiness to humans. Take the example of the French Revolution. A purely secular state, which set aside the God’s divine guarantee, was established. God was declared a private affair that had no place in public life or the formation of the popular will.<sup>19</sup> We know that the effort to establish the rule of law without God failed. The values of equality, fraternity, and liberty, supported solely by human reason without God, turned into tyranny and hegemony, symbolized by the guillotine.

We see that anthropocentrism, where human beings become the center of the whole universe, brings misfortune to people. By self-selecting, humans gave rise to elitism, selfishness, exploitation, unrest, wars, the theory of *Übermensch*, etc. Anthropocentrism could be seen as positive only if it were based on the moral principle of rules of preference in acts of love. These concern:

---

<sup>17</sup> John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 12.

<sup>18</sup> Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, *Teologický slovník*, trans. František Jirsa, Jan Sokol, and Jan Kranát (Praha: Zvon, 1996), 17.

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Europe Today and Tomorrow*, trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 20.

1. persons (by degree of kinship, acquaintances, etc.),
2. values (spiritual, temporal),
3. needs (necessary, serious, ordinary).

According to circumstances, love of neighbor involves mainly material or spiritual help. Material help is expressed by almsgiving and spiritual help by fraternal admonition. Generally, the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself is not binding in the case of grave difficulties (self-love must be properly understood). This is an anthropocentric view of oneself and one's neighbor. If one's neighbor is in material need, he/she is to be helped out of the goods that are necessary for an adequate life. If one is in serious need, he/she is to be helped out of our surplus goods. In spiritual need, that is, if one's neighbor is in danger of grave sin or a sinful condition, he/she is to be helped in an appropriate way, for instance, by fraternal admonition.<sup>20</sup> This perception of anthropocentrism allows us to consider our neighbor as a subject (someone I care about) rather than an object (someone I want to use). Thus seen, anthropocentrism and theocentrism are not at all contradictory.

Self-centeredness involves two basic attitudes: the inability to empathize with another person's situation and the overestimation of the importance of one's own person. The challenging task for humankind to tackle is the shift from egoism to an altruistic view of the world and life.<sup>21</sup> Everyone has to look at the world through the eyes of the other person and empathize with his/her situation. This is the very essence of solidarity, in which the other person is seen as having the same gift of existence with all his/her wounds, pains, and sufferings. It is also a move out of indifference towards responsibility. This way, one emerges from his/her egoistic self-centered orientation towards the other person, so that one can share his/her fate and lend a helping hand. It is a shift from egoism to solidarity, where people help one another to carry their burdens. Freedom, truth, and responsibility are all interconnected.

Solidarity also manifests itself in fair distribution of goods and rewards for work. It also implies the pursuit of a fairer social order in which social conflicts can be resolved gradually through negotiation. Solidarity is imperative where "perverse mechanisms," which hinder the growth and progress of less developed countries, need to be abandoned.

According to the *Catechism* 1948, solidarity is a Christian virtue that ensures participation in both material and spiritual goods. God has entrusted the earth with its resources and has given humanity the task of caring for the earth, controlling it with its labor and enjoying its fruits. The earth is divided among

---

<sup>20</sup> Marek Petro, *Prednášky z morálnej teológie. Dekalóg 1–3* (Prešov: Pro communio, 2006), 60.

<sup>21</sup> Pavol Dancák, "The Fundamental Issue in Education and the Problem of Responsibility," *Journal of Critical Realism*, vol. 20, no. 4 (2021): 382, accessed November 10, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767430.2021.1966715>

human beings to ensure the security of their lives, which are subject to misery and threatened by violence. Created goods are meant for the whole of humanity. The acquisition of ownership of earthly goods is justified in order to secure the freedom and dignity of persons, to enable each to provide for his/her own basic needs and the needs of those in his/her charge. Ownership of goods is intended to enable natural solidarity among people.

Historical experience has shown that socio-economic problems can only be solved through solidarity among the poor, between the rich and the poor, among workers, between employers and employees, but also through solidarity between states and nations. International solidarity is a requirement of the moral order on which the peace of the world depends. The Catholic Church teaches that a human being, created in the image of God and as a member of human community, meets the demands of justice, charity, and solidarity in this domain, too. Every believer should help, through their means and capacities, in the formation and diffusion of sound public opinion. Solidarity is a consequence of genuine and right communication and free circulation of ideas that further knowledge and respect for others (*CCC 2495*).

## Conclusion

God created humankind so that they would celebrate Him. This is done by fulfilling God's will in pursuit of happiness. It is not a momentary joy, even if it lasted many years. It is an eternal and forever-lasting beatitude. It is to be attained here on earth—it is what the Church Fathers call “already, but not yet”; and to continue in eternity—in what the Church Fathers call “transubstantiation.”

As mentioned above, a human being has an eternal desire “to be like God.” In reality, God has no other plans for us—we are to “be like God.” This, however, does not mean that we should become the measures of all things or the creators of moral values that would be contrary to the will of the Creator. For it has become apparent that social agreements alone cannot guarantee sound and correct ethical principles (Nazism, Communism). Moreover, no political system can guarantee certitude of peace, economic well-being, etc.

“Being like God” means that a human being realizes his/her dependence on God. It is clearly impossible to “be like God” without God Himself. He cares for every human being. To God every man is important. It is not a human being who sees him/herself as the center of everything, but God sees him/her that way. He cares for His creation; He wants His creation to be happy, always and forever.

In his first encyclical, *Redemptor hominis*, St. John Paul II wrote:

Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it. This is why Christ the Redeemer “fully reveals man to himself.” If we may use the expression, this is the human dimension of the mystery of the Redemption. In this dimension man finds again his greatness, dignity and value that belong to his humanity. (*Redemptor hominis* 10).

St. John Paul II presents here a long-standing Christian experience, a true humanism in which human beings remain faithful to their human dignity only if they acknowledge that they are created in the image and likeness of God. But if individual persons assert their own autonomy, they run the danger of losing their own identity. History has shown us what it means if an individual autonomously creates his/her own moral norms. We are all familiar with the not-so-distant evils of Nazism or Communism. Such ideologies strip certain groups of people of their human dignity.

Jesus, however, teaches us otherwise. When the rich young man asked him what good he should do to gain eternal life (Mt 19:16), Jesus replied: “[...] you shall love your neighbour as yourself!” (Mt 19:19). “In this commandment we find a precise expression of the singular dignity of the human person, ‘the only creature on earth that God has wanted for its own sake’” (*Veritatis splendor* 13).

The purpose of the paper was an analysis of solidarity as a constituent of the concept of a human being created in the image of God. The dignity of the human person will be respected only if one respects the fundamental call to solidarity—“to love one’s neighbour as oneself” (Mk 12:31). A human person is not called to create his/her own autonomous moral norms that would result in ruining humanity, but he/she is to respect and participate in the divinely revealed moral norms because he/she was created in the image and likeness of God.

## Bibliography

Augustine, St. *Teaching Christianity De Doctrina Christiana*. New York: New City Press, 2014.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, promulgated by His Holiness Pope John Paul II in 1992. [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_INDEX.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM). Accessed October 15, 2020.

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Accessed November 10, 2021. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text\\_en.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf).
- Dancák, Pavol. "The Fundamental Issue in Education and the Problem of Responsibility." *Journal of Critical Realism* vol., 20, no. 4 (2021): 381–395. Accessed November 10, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767430.2021.1966715>.
- Evdokimov, Paul. *Prawosławie*. Translated by Jerzy Klinger. Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 2003.
- Gregory of Nazianzus. *Poemata dogmatica*, 8; PG 37, 397–522. *Patrologia graeca* [= *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*]. Edited by Jacques Paul Migne. Sydney: Wentworth Press, 2016.
- Gregory of Nyssa. *In inscriptiones Psalmorum*, c. 4; PG 44, 446 BC. *Patrologia graeca* [= *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*]. Edited by Jacques Paul Migne. Sydney: Wentworth Press, 2016.
- Hausherr, Irénée. *Philautie. De la tendresse pour soi à la charité selon St. Maxime le Confesseur*. Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1952.
- John Paul II. *Memory and Identity*. Translated by John Corrigan. New York: Rizzoli, 2006.
- John Paul II. *Redemptor hominis*, 1979. [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_04031979\\_redemptor-hominis.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html). Accessed October 15, 2020.
- John Paul II. *Veritatis splendor*, 1993. [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_06081993\\_veritatis-splendor.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html). Accessed October 15, 2020.
- Kowalska, Faustyna. *Dzienniczek Sługi Bożej S. M. Faustyny Kowalskiej Profeski wieczystej Zgromadzenia Matki Bożej Miłosierdzia*. Kraków–Stockbridge–Rzym: [n.p.], 1981.
- Mojžeš, Marcel. "Ikona Božej Múdrosti v kontexte byzantskej tradície." *Logos* 3–4 (2005): 27–30.
- Morales, José. *El misterio de la creación*. Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1994.
- Optatam Totius*, Decree on Priestly Training, proclaimed by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965. [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19651028\\_optatam-totius\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html). Accessed October 15, 2020.
- Paločko, Štefan. *Ježiš z Nazareta záchrana ľudí*. Prešov: Prešovská univerzita v Prešove Gréckokatolícka teologická fakulta, 2010.
- Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965. [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html). Accessed October 15, 2020.
- Petro, Marek. *Povolanie človeka k blaženosti 2*. Prešov: Vydavateľstvo Prešovskej univerzity, 2019.
- Petro, Marek. *Prednášky z morálnej teológie. Dekalóg 1–3*. Prešov: Pro communio, 2006.
- Rahner, Karl, and Vorgrimler, Herbert. *Teologický slovník*. Translated by František Jirsa, Jan Sokol, and Jan Kranát. Praha: Zvon, 1996.
- Raszkowski, Jewgienij. "Protojerej Aleksander Mień: sylwetka intelektualna." *Studia Theologica Varsaviensia* 2 (1993): 253–266.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. *Europe Today and Tomorrow*. Translated by Michael J. Miller. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007.
- Ratzinger, Joseph, and Christopher Schönborn. *Malý úvod ku Katechizmu katolíckej Cirkvi*. Translated by Mária Škovierová. Bratislava: Nové Mesto, 1995.
- Reiter, Josef. "Genový výzkum a bioetika." *Scripta Bioethica* 3 (2003): 7–13.
- Spidlik, Tomas, and Innocenzo Gargano. *Duchowość Ojców greckich i wschodnich*. Translated by Janina Dembska. Kraków: Wydawnictwo M, 1997.

Marek Petro

## Notion de solidarité dans la conception de l'être humain créé à l'image de Dieu

### Résumé

La théologie morale traite de la moralité de la société en matière des actes de l'individu ou des groupes d'individus qui composent cette société particulière. La morale nous apprend à répondre correctement à l'appel de Dieu, afin que nous puissions atteindre notre but ultime. Le Catéchisme de l'Église Catholique, considéré comme un compendium des doctrines du Magistère de l'Église, peut également servir de source précieuse pour l'enseignement de la théologie morale. Dans la première section («La vocation de l'homme La vie dans l'Esprit») de la troisième partie («La vie dans le Christ») du Catéchisme de l'Église Catholique, nous apprenons que l'homme a été créé «à l'image et à la ressemblance du Créateur» (chap. 1, art. 1), où la solidarité joue un rôle important. Cette question est analysée dans le présent article.

Mots-clés : être humain, image de Dieu, dignité humaine, anthropocentrisme, solidarité

Marek Petro

## L'idea di solidarietà nel concetto di uomo creato a immagine di Dio

### Sommario

La teologia morale riguarda la moralità della società e gli atti dell'individuo o dei gruppi di individui che costituiscono quella particolare società. La moralità ci insegna a rispondere adeguatamente alla chiamata di Dio, in modo da poter realizzare il nostro obiettivo finale. *Il Catechismo della Chiesa Cattolica*, considerato come un compendio delle dottrine del Magistero della Chiesa, può servire anche come fonte preziosa per l'insegnamento della teologia morale. Nella prima sezione ("La vocazione dell'uomo: la vita nello Spirito") e nella terza parte ("La vita in Cristo") del *Catechismo della Chiesa Cattolica*, possiamo scoprire che l'uomo è stato creato "a immagine e somiglianza del Creatore" (cap. 1, art. 1), dove la solidarietà gioca un ruolo significativo. Il presente articolo analizza questo problema.

Parole chiave: umano, immagine di Dio, dignità umana, antropocentrismo, solidarietà



**Pavol Dancák**

University of Prešov, Slovak Republik

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8067-5651>

# Ethics and Solidarity as Hope in the Philosophy of Józef Tischner

**Abstract:** In this paper, the concept of solidarity will be introduced as voluntary cohesion, mutual help and support not only within a loose group, but, above all, within the whole human race. Tischner wants to help contemporary man because he is aware that contemporary man has entered a period of profound crisis of his hope. The reflection on solidarity and hope in the philosophy of Tischner represents a neuralgic point which has its justification in Christian thought. Hope is the prospect of something better which, together with mutual support, removes both fear and isolation, and brings about the development of both the individual and the community. The deepest solidarity is solidarity of conscience. The community of solidarity differs from many other communities precisely because it is “for him” that is fundamental. It is only on this foundation that the community of “we” grows.

**Keywords:** solidarity, hope, human, dialogue, community

## Introduction

People often think of hope ambivalently in the modern world, yet philosophers and scholars point out that it is a very important element in the life of every person. Tischner wanted to be a philosopher of Polish hope at the time of the two terrible experiences of Nazism and Communism. He analyzes the evil which was contained in totalitarian regimes with the purpose to outline of the prospects for liberation. It is significant that his first book *Świat ludzkiej nadziei* [The World of Human Hope] is entirely devoted to hope. Tischner found the meth-

odological key to this philosophy in phenomenology and related currents in the philosophy of dialogue and hermeneutics. Tischner defended his doctoral dissertation under the guidance of the most eminent Polish phenomenologist, Roman Ingarden, and was deeply inspired by him in his habilitation. He believed, as did Karol Wojtyła, that the understanding of man and religion must begin with the understanding of the subject of individual experience, and not with man as an element of the cosmos.<sup>1</sup> The author of *Thinking in Values* readily admits that during the Polish crisis of hope, he referred not only to Scheler, Heidegger, and Levinas, but also to Marcel and Ricoeur.<sup>2</sup> They helped him rebuild real hope in the nation.<sup>3</sup> He saw liberation from totalitarianism above all in reminding us of who a free man is and can be, and he also saw it in religious faith, Christian faith from its deepest side.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper, I will first present hope viewed as the prospect of something better. However, the prospect of something better is based on ethics, which is closely related to solidarity. Ethics and solidarity are two complementary notions. According to Tischner, solidarity without conscience is impossible. Conscience is basically the view of the other within me, which means that I cannot directly influence my own conscience. However, the other within me is in solidarity with me, and, therefore, hope is tied to the idea of “being for the other,” of being with the other, coming out of hiding and creating community. Hope for a better coexistence lies in the solidarity that is born in dialogue.

## Hope—Offering a Better Vision

Tischner writes in the introduction to *The World of Human Hope* that hope is a more or less hidden supposition of the solutions proposed here, both those that are critical and those that claim to bring something positive. Hope is both a fundamental experience and a fundamental value that reflection on the various issues of our lives seeks to express and sustain. Our hope is the most appropriate perspective for us to discover and view the truth, the truth about Christianity, about man, about our world. In and through hope the axiological dimension of human existence is revealed.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Karol Tarnowski, *Józef Tischner – niezastąpiony filozof nadziei*, accessed July 13, 2020, <http://www.tischner.org.pl/karol-tarnowski/tischner-niezastapiony-filozof-nadziei>.

<sup>2</sup> Józef Tischner, *Myslenie według wartości* (Kraków: Znak, 2000), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Józef Tischner and Jacek Żakowski, *Tischner czyta Katechizm* (Kraków: Znak, 1997), 94.

<sup>4</sup> Tarnowski, *Józef Tischner – niezastąpiony filozof nadziei*.

<sup>5</sup> Józef Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei* (Kraków: Znak, 1994), 9–10.

Marcel writes that we are presumably capable of hope only insofar as we consider ourselves enslaved, and slavery can take many forms, such as illness or exile. Often in highly technical countries, where life is comfortable, hope disappears, and with it all religious life. Life then comes to a standstill and an insurmountable boredom spreads everywhere. Hope is therefore connected with a certain tragedy. In hope the idea is that, whatever the present situation, there is a better way out. The hopeful patient not only wishes to get better, he does not limit himself to the words: “I would like to get well,” but assures himself: “You will recover”—and it is under this condition that hope can sometimes contribute to a person’s recovery.<sup>6</sup>

Tischner claims that hope makes heroism possible, and whoever has lost hope—has lost heroism. Moreover, what human hope is—such is human heroism. Hope is fulfilled in the present: here a moral choice must be made. Man is capable of heroism only in the name of some hope, and true heroism is fulfilled in the present formed by hope. Here one must accept suffering, even death. And to these situations hope brings the consolation that it promises in the future. Hope is what enables us to reflect that everything is not lost in the face of our current situation. This hope must, likewise, be coupled with faith that we can do something through the Absolute Thou, who is at the same time the final guarantor of our liberation.<sup>7</sup> Christ is the Trustee of such a hope. Christ’s death for man means that the Son of God also places his hope in man. Through the proper binding of hope, Christianity manifests itself in man. To bind up hope means that the end of one hope becomes the beginning of another; it also means to make the voice of hope from that earth heard in earthly hope; it also means to incite hope to action. Then the voice of hope is like the voice of the pre-action conscience, which says: in the name of Hope give bread to the hungry, bear witness to this truth, keep silent and speak, pray and work, here and now cry out on the rooftops, and when today you have received a blow with a stone, tomorrow throw bread.<sup>8</sup> Hope in Christianity is special because it reaches beyond the horizon of death, it speaks of eternal life and resurrection.

In Tischner’s thoughts, the Christian virtue of hope finds a philosophical foundation, as it does in Marcel. Tischner emphasizes that hope enables heroism, that is, the individual’s elevation to the heights of humanity. Everyone needs hope in everyday life, in the daily hardships of struggling with one’s own fate. Few people can show heroism, but everyday problems must be overcome by everyone. Most of us are guided by a “modest hope for a better tomorrow,” which even many, colloquially speaking, “keep alive.” The experience of hope is largely an apophatic experience that is difficult to articulate and far from the

<sup>6</sup> Gabriel Marcel, *Tajemnica bytu*, trans. M. Frankiewicz (Kraków: Znak, 1995), 365–367.

<sup>7</sup> Józef Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei*, 294–310.

<sup>8</sup> Gabriel Marcel, “Structure of Hope,” trans. David-Louis Schindler, *Communio* 23 (1996): 611.

resources of a language describing the world that falls under sensual cognition.<sup>9</sup> Hope implies human freedom, for without freedom there would be no hope; thus, where there is hope, there is freedom, and where there is freedom, there is room for hope.<sup>10</sup>

As in Marcel, so in Tischner, hope is always preceded by some trial in life, accompanied by uncertainty, anxiety, justified fear, and even the temptation of despair. Hope is then a response to these states and human experiences. It is the power to undertake hardship; it is a promise: Man is greater than his despair.<sup>11</sup> Hoping in liberation is nothing without the essential virtue of love. This love calls us to be available to others' needs, especially in their times of trials and darkness. This bond created by loving and remaining with the other likewise creates a communion with the Absolute Thou. As a proclaimer of hope for people enslaved in totalitarian regimes, Tischner wants to offer hope for the betterment of their lives, which is why he raises the theme of ethics and solidarity. The totalitarian regime has thrown people into "shelter" so that it can use them for its inhumane purposes, in the sense of *divide et impera*. It is a topic that is intrinsic to man as a social creature.

## Solidarity—The Opportunity for People

Solidarity means voluntary cohesion, mutual help and support not only within a loose group, but, above all, within the whole human family. Mutual support builds community and develops the individual; isolation leads to social and individual deviance. It is that solidarity in greater community and the larger it is, the harder it is to maintain solidarity.<sup>12</sup>

The Latin word *solidus* (solid, whole, in the legal context in *solidum*) denotes a loose group of people who make a commitment as a whole. Solidarity in the true sense of the word is mutual, voluntary and not enforced by law. The requirement of solidarity is a moral challenge to all those who are disadvantaged in any way. Solidarity as an expression of a sense of belonging is not only helping, but also responsibility for the whole, for the community, for the

---

<sup>9</sup> Marek Rembierz, "Nadzieja – transcendencja – paideia. O perspektywach nadziei i pedagogii nadziei w kontekście (przekraczania) ludzkiej niedoskonałości," *Świat i Słowo* 1 (2016): 14.

<sup>10</sup> Józef Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei*, 301–309.

<sup>11</sup> Jarosław Jagiełło, "Problematyka nadziei w współczesnej filozofii człowieka," *Kieleckie Studia Teologiczne* 3 (2004): 49–68.

<sup>12</sup> Jürgen Habermas, "Democracy, Solidarity and the European Crisis," *Pro Europa. In Defence of European Culture* (2014), accessed July 13, 2020, <https://www.pro-europa.eu/europe/jurgen-habermas-democracy-solidarity-and-the-european-crisis/>.

world, for the earth.<sup>13</sup> According to Durkheim, to behave in solidarity is to behave morally. Morality is everything that is the source of solidarity, everything that makes one reckon with others and be guided in one's actions by motives other than egoism. The more stable morality is, the more such ties there are and the stronger they are.<sup>14</sup>

Józef Tischner used metaphorical language to explain the phenomenon of solidarity. He sees the starting point for understanding the concept of solidarity in the Gospel. He considers that to be in solidarity, as well as to be responsible, means "to bear another person's burden."<sup>15</sup> Solidarity shows itself as a phenomenon in which a person realizes that he is connected to other people. Solidarity awakens consciousness, and then speech and word appear and what was hidden comes to light. Our connections become visible.

On the one hand, solidarity appears to Tischner as a virtue that appears spontaneously and expresses the good will of man. On the other hand, the source of solidarity is what every human being is really concerned about in life. People are concerned with truth and justice. What people want as a unifying factor, according to Tischner, is duty. Solidarity cannot be imposed on a person through violence. According to Tischner, solidarity is, on the one hand, the pursuit of a goal, the building of a community, which is part of the eudaimonism, the teleological current in moral reflection. On the other hand, solidarity is based on duty, which is part of the deontological current of Kantian ethics. It is about the relationship between the primary existence of the individual and the relationships between individuals (especially relationships in which individuals by their own decision participate with commitment, producing new and important qualities for them), and the possibilities and conditions for the functioning of society. In this perspective, the existence of society is secondary, because it depends on the existence of individuals, founded on the prior existence of individuals and relations (ties) between them.<sup>16</sup>

Solidarity is neither a concept nor a ready-made ethical theory, but an idea—a pattern of things rather than an expression of their actual state. The idea is like light.<sup>17</sup> This means that it cannot be easily characterized, like a concept, but remains undefined. Solidarity is something for people to map out, something that is defined as it comes to fruition, and something that still needs to be redefined. Solidarity is an indispensable imperative in our democratic times, and, at the same time, it is a calling which we cannot answer unconditionally.

---

<sup>13</sup> Dariusz Dobrzański, *Zasada solidarności. Studium z filozofii społecznej* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2013), 72–74.

<sup>14</sup> Émile Durkheim, *Sociology and Philosophy*, trans. David F. Pocock (New York: Routledge, 2010), 176.

<sup>15</sup> Józef Tischner, *Etyka solidarności* (Kraków: Znak, 1981), 6.

<sup>16</sup> Marek Rembierz, "Spór o koncepcję społeczeństwa i wartość jednostki jako kontekst i wyzwanie dla polskiej myśli pedagogicznej," *Polska Myśl Pedagogiczna* 4 (2018), 64.

<sup>17</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 10.

This is the tragedy of our current position.<sup>18</sup> We do not find an exact definition of solidarity. Tischner's reflections are descriptions of the space of life shown in the perspective of solidarity.

Tischner draws attention to the ethical character of solidarity, by which he means the values that man encounters in his life. The key values are man's conscience and man's natural relationship with those who suffer.<sup>19</sup> He postulates that the ethics of solidarity is the ethics of conscience, and defines conscience as man's "ethical sense" that is largely independent of various ethical systems, prior to them and autonomous. According to Tischner, one cannot be in solidarity with people without conscience, and he emphasizes that authentic solidarity is the "solidarity of conscience."<sup>20</sup> Solidarity with a person is related to the ability to rely on this person. If one can rely on another person, one believes that there is something constant in him or her that does not fail. That something is conscience. Under the influence of Heidegger, Tischner claims the only condition for conscience is the will to have a conscience.<sup>21</sup>

With whom can you stand in solidarity? The solidarity community did not acknowledge anyone as an enemy, which was proved by the fact that it was open to everyone who wished to participate in it. Everyone who wanted to have a conscience, regardless of his or her background, could become its member. The time of the "First Solidarity" was a period of effective "new beginnings," a time of absolving faults and of the preeminence of mercy over justice. The past sins of ex-opportunists—and almost everyone was to be counted as such—their abuses, trespasses, and weaknesses, though surely not crimes, had no meaning in the circle of those who resolved to live truly as people of conscience.<sup>22</sup>

According to Tischner, solidarity is first and foremost towards people suffering by others—people without conscience. Solidarity, therefore, refers especially to those affected by suffering that is not culpable and can be remedied. The basis of solidarity is conscience, and the impulse for its appearance is a call for help from a person who has been hurt by another person. In conscience as the basis of solidarity, there is an order of goodness. Solidarity, like drama, is something that is created, but also something that creates unique human relationships. A person bonds with another person for the sake of a third person in need of care. Tischner argues that solidarity is always the solidarity of some dialogue.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Charles Taylor, "Several Reflections on the Theme of Solidarity," trans. Artur Rosman, *Znak* 543 (2000), 24–34.

<sup>19</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 11.

<sup>20</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1962), 312–348.

<sup>22</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 15

<sup>23</sup> Zbigniew Stawrowski, "Solidarity Means a Bond," accessed December 16, 2022, [http://www.tischner.org.pl/Content/Images/tischner\\_12\\_stawrowski.pdf](http://www.tischner.org.pl/Content/Images/tischner_12_stawrowski.pdf).

Dialogue builds reciprocity and assumes that both parties are able to learn the truth about themselves only if they look at themselves, as it were, from the outside, from the perspective of the interlocutor. Persons in dialogue have to compare their points of view in order to know the truth about themselves. The whole truth is a result of their mutual experience. The one entering into a dialogue is thus ready to make the truth of the other part of his own truth, and to make the truth about himself part of the other's truth. The topic of dialogue in the ethics of solidarity is the suffering caused to man by another man. The purpose of dialogue is the truth about the unnecessary suffering of working people. Human suffering gives the speech of solidarity great moral weight. It is not a mere human speech, it is not even a speech of complaint, it is, above all, a speech of witness. To go through the world of suffering of the working man and bear witness is the solidarity of conscience.<sup>24</sup> In other words, a man who encounters another suffering man realizes that a certain value has been destroyed. He is joined by others who, in solidarity with the sufferer, form an open community of witnesses sharing the same value. By witnessing in solidarity with their sincere intentions, the members of the community can finally remedy unnecessary suffering.

According to Tischner, solidarity is born in dialogue, and such a dialogue can also be scientific work. The fate of science is truth and the fate of science is dialogue. Scientific dialogue is distinguished by the fact that the pursuit of truth is consistent and uncompromising in it. Science emerged when man decided to find out what really is, what is, and can be. However, it cannot be done alone. Cognition always takes place in agreement with other people. Tischner claims that one can speak of truth in at least three ways: (1) we speak of true cognition when it is consistent with the reality it concerns, (2) we speak of true or false expression of one's inner convictions in speech, and (3) finally, we speak of "existential" truth, "truth of being," of being oneself, that is, an "authentic" person.<sup>25</sup> Each of these three cases of truth reveals its deeply ethical dimension—it is a source of moral obligation for human beings. Tischner states that science is done for someone and with someone. In his opinion, the issues of science today are extremely complicated. Therefore, to the abovementioned two planes of encounters with man one should add a third one—the plane of relations with the organizer of scientific life.

According to Tischner, the idea of solidarity is closely related to the sphere of human work.<sup>26</sup> Work is the axis of solidarity. By work he means a particular form of conversation between man and man, serving to sustain and develop human life. Work is conversation in the service of life. The dialogue of work is

---

<sup>24</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 15–18.

<sup>25</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 35.

<sup>26</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 45

thus more than mere conversation. The objects of exchange of working people are not only words but also certain products. They grow out of the agreement and serve it, hence their similarity to words. Like speech, work should also be “truthful.” True speech is speech in harmony with things, speech that grows out of understanding and develops understanding. Real work is work that truly serves life and also grows out of and continues understanding. Tischner calls exploitation the “lie of work.”<sup>27</sup> The sign of exploitation, according to him, is unnecessary suffering. Through moral exploitation of labor, the basic vertical and horizontal structures of the dialogue of labor are disturbed. The awareness of the pain and suffering of working people has its origin precisely in exploitation. The exploitation of human labor is also the exploitation of man himself. Man’s good will is despised, humiliated, and betrayed by exploitation. In such a situation, the fundamental duty of conscience as the voice which calls for fidelity is rebellion against exploitation.

## Being for Another

Man creates himself and, in response to the challenge of values, he satisfies the hope that emerged in the encounter with the other person. The quality of this response determines who a person actually is. Depending on how he responds to the challenge, we can say of him: he is a traitor, or he is a saint. Human dignity as the principle of ethics is what comes to the fore here. Ethics, on the other hand, is understood here by Tischner as a grammar of interpersonal relations. Grammar organizes statements, while ethics organizes interpersonal relations. The author of *Ethics of Solidarity* first draws general attention to the harmfulness of illusions to emphasize that if the illusions concern the reality of work, their effects are tragic and resemble the effects of labour exploitation.<sup>28</sup> An example of such situations are the illusions related to the concept of property, resulting from the ambiguity around the basic concepts, namely, private property and common property. Disputes around the concept of property arise because it has not been fully clarified what it means for something to be property, or what it means for something to be common and something to be private. According to Tischner, the source of the illusion is a metaphysical style of thinking about social life.

According to Tischner, metaphysics has other concerns<sup>29</sup> and this style of

---

<sup>27</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 19–22.

<sup>28</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 30–31.

<sup>29</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 33.

thinking must be rejected. The proper way of thinking about social life should be sought in ethics. As an example of the common property of people, Tischner gives speech and language. They are the ones that condition the communication between man and man. If the meanings of words are common, then the language that people use is also common. The community here is above all a community of fruit. What is truly common begins at the level of fruit. The desire to speak a common language causes man to try to adapt what is his own to the requirements of the community. The common fruit, as it were, radiates backwards, permeates the personal and makes it too—without ceasing to be man's property—serve the community. The truth about common property is a truth from the ethical sphere. What is common is what is for me, for you, for us.<sup>30</sup> The word “for” best expresses the essence of ethical community, which is moral rather than metaphysical in character. Solidarity is thus a social phenomenon, developing and manifesting itself in a particular social system, a particular space-time continuum. This entails a connection with politics. Solidarity grows out of indignation at unnecessary suffering, out of pity for people who suffer unnecessarily, and gives hope for better social conditions. Tischner is convinced that solidarity is proximity—it is brotherhood for the paralysed.<sup>31</sup> The “paralysed” are the people whose faces we meet and to whom we respond with solidarity. According to him, the purpose of politics is to organize public space in such a way that people do not inflict unnecessary suffering on each other. Politics gives hope when it deals with the evildoers, and people in solidarity with the wronged can help them without hindrance.

According to Tischner, the ethics of solidarity of working people and solidarity with working people is Christianity's answer to the ideology of struggle.<sup>32</sup> Hope is created by solidarity when it appears in the space of human encounter with another human being. “Solidarity of conscience” is the deepest and most essential bond uniting people into one community. Thanks to it, it is possible to realize the human plan of building the common good, which finds its foundation in truth. This common good, together with the moral good, is the object of particular concern in this plan. Communities, such as the family or the homeland, take up the idea of solidarity, being the field of personal realization for individuals.<sup>33</sup> They also delimit the scope of individual action. Within the scope of a given community, the individual, with a sensitive conscience, formulates an “ethic of solidarity” through his choices and actions. Thus we have a basis for solidarity that is linked to conscience as a source of duty. Conscience plays a significant role in solidarity with values. One such value is truth. Truth is arrived at in dialogue. Truth as agreement is something that requires solidarity.

<sup>30</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 34–35.

<sup>31</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 12–13.

<sup>32</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 44.

<sup>33</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 84.

The pursuit of truth is the glue of solidarity. It builds community as a task of solidarity.

The foundation of community is thinking in the horizon of the good, thinking “for someone” that builds social bonds based on truth, respect, fidelity, trust, and solidarity.<sup>34</sup> Because solidarity is, on the one hand, the recognition of a certain duty in conscience and, on the other hand, the building of a consensus around some threatened value, such as the dignity of marginalized and suffering people, it acquires a practical and political dimension. Solidarity can be interpreted as a principle of realizing the good, a principle that is created by the hope of better living conditions.

## Conclusion

Tischner believed that in order to build a community, it is necessary to create a sense of solidarity among its members. He pointed to the teachings of the Church, according to which solidarity, and not for example justice, should be the guiding principle in the case of poverty, which almost always appears in larger communities. He very often quoted the words of St. Paul and recalled the words of St. Paul: “Bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2).<sup>35</sup>

Tischner’s interest in man and his freedom stems not only from exact scientific interests, but also from an authentic pastoral concern. Indeed, human action today has implications for the whole earth and in the context of the experience of world wars, extermination camps, terrorist actions, and in confronting the possibility of nuclear and ecological catastrophe. Man is suffering from a loss of hope.<sup>36</sup> Tischner wants to help contemporary man because he is aware that contemporary man has entered a period of profound crisis of his hope. The crisis of hope is a crisis of foundations, which Tischner reflects as the starting point of philosophical thought: Philosophy was once born out of wonder at the world around us (Aristotle). And then also out of doubt (Descartes). And now, on our earth, it is born out of pain.<sup>37</sup> Despite his awareness of the critical situation, Tischner was an optimist who believed in the meaning of human existence, and,

<sup>34</sup> Zbigniew Stawrowski, “O pewnej fundamentalnej iluzji. Polemiczny komentarz do myślenia politycznego Józefa Tischnera,” in *Bądź wolność twoja. Józefa Tischnera refleksja nad życiem publicznym*, ed. Jarosław Jagiełło and Władysław Zuziak (Kraków: Znak, 2005), 72.

<sup>35</sup> Józef Tischner, “Solidarność sumień. Kazanie wygłoszone na Wawelu dnia 19 X 1980 r.,” *Tygodnik Powszechny* 43 (1980): 1.

<sup>36</sup> Karol Tarnowski, “Ziemia obiecana, ziemia odmówiona,” in *Pytając o człowieka*, ed. Władysław Zuziak (Kraków: Znak, 2001), 139.

<sup>37</sup> Tischner, *Myślenie według wartości*, 10.

importantly, unlike the positivists, pessimists, and minimalists, he believed that the existence of this meaning could be justified.<sup>38</sup>

According to Tischner, the community of solidarity differs from many other communities precisely because it is “for him” that is fundamental. It is only on this foundation that the community of “we” grows. I am with you, you are with me, we are together—for him. We—for him. We, but not in order to look at ourselves, but—for him.<sup>39</sup>

A person without any awareness of another person’s existence could not be certain of who this person is, would not find the whole truth of his or her existence, and would not discover the full extent of his or her responsibility for his or her existence and the existence of others. Inextricably linked to the experience of the other person through the prism of value is the experience of hope. It is always the case that either I am recommending some value for realization to somebody else and have the hope that the other will accept my proposition, or the other is recommending something similar to me, nurturing a similar hope towards me.

## Bibliography

- Dobrzański, Dariusz. *Zasada solidarności. Studium z filozofii społecznej*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2013.
- Durkheim, Émile. *Sociology and Philosophy*. Translated by David F. Pocock. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Habermas, Jürgen. “Democracy, Solidarity and the European Crisis.” *Pro Europa. In Defence of European Culture* (2014). Accessed July 13, 2020. <https://www.pro-europa.eu/europe/jurgen-habermas-democracy-solidarity-and-the-european-crisis/>.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1962.
- Jagiello, Jarosław. “Problematyka nadziei w współczesnej filozofii człowieka.” *Kieleckie Studia Teologiczne* 3 (2004): 49–68.
- Marcel, Gabriel. *Tajemnica bytu*. Translated by M. Frankiewicz. Kraków: Znak, 1995.
- Marcel, Gabriel. “Structure of Hope.” Translated by David-Louis Schindler, Jr. *Communio* 23 (1996): 604–611.
- Rembierz, Marek. “Nadzieja – transcendencja – paideia. O perspektywach nadziei i pedagogii nadziei w kontekście (przekraczania) ludzkiej niedoskonałości.” *Świat i Słowo* 1 (2016): 13–38.
- Rembierz, Marek. “Spór o koncepcję społeczeństwa i wartość jednostki jako kontekst i wyzwanie dla polskiej myśli pedagogicznej.” *Polska Myśl Pedagogiczna* 4 (2018): 59–90.

<sup>38</sup> Władysław Zuziak, “W poszukiwaniu wolności – między J. Nabertem i J. Tischnerem,” *Pytając o człowieka*, ed. Władysław Zuziak (Kraków: Znak, 2001), 43.

<sup>39</sup> Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 13–14.

- Stawrowski, Zbigniew. "O pewnej fundamentalnej iluzji. Polemiczny komentarz do myślenia politycznego Józefa Tischnera." In *Bądź wolność twoja. Józefa Tischnera refleksja nad życiem publicznym*, edited by Jarosław Jagiełło and Władysław Zuziak, 67–70. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2005.
- Stawrowski, Zbigniew. "Solidarity Means a Bond." Accessed December 16, 2022. [http://www.tischner.org.pl/Content/Images/tischner\\_12\\_stawrowski.pdf](http://www.tischner.org.pl/Content/Images/tischner_12_stawrowski.pdf).
- Taylor, Charles. "Several Reflections on the Theme of Solidarity." Translated by Artur Rosman. *Znak* 543 (2000), 24–34.
- Tarnowski, Karol. *Józef Tischner – niezastąpiony filozof nadziei*. Accessed July 13, 2020. <http://www.tischner.org.pl/karol-tarnowski/tischner-niezastapiony-filozof-nadziei>.
- Tarnowski, Karol. "Ziemia obiecana, ziemia odmówiona." In *Pytając o człowieka*, edited by Władysław Zuziak, 85–98. Kraków: Znak, 2001.
- Tischner, Józef. *Etyka solidarności*. Kraków: Znak, 1981.
- Tischner, Józef. "Solidarność sumień. Kazanie wygłoszone na Wawelu dnia 19 X 1980 r." *Tygodnik Powszechny* 43 (1980): 1.
- Tischner, Józef. "Solidaryzacja i problem ewolucji świadomości." In *Studia z teorii poznania i filozofii wartości*, edited by Władysław Stróżewski, 91–102. Wrocław: Zakł. Nar. im. Ossolińskich, 1978.
- Tischner, Józef. *Myślenie według wartości*. Kraków: Znak, 2000.
- Tischner, Józef. *Świat ludzkiej nadziei*. Kraków: Znak, 1994.
- Tischner, Józef, and Jacek Żakowski. *Tischner czyta Katechizm*. Kraków: Znak, 1997.
- Zuziak, Władysław. "W poszukiwaniu wolności – między J. Nabertem i J. Tischnerem." In *Pytając o człowieka*, edited by Władysław Zuziak, 43–60. Kraków: Znak, 2001.

Pavol Dancák

## Éthique et Solidarité comme espérance dans la philosophie de Józef Tischner

### Résumé

Dans cette étude, le concept de solidarité sera introduit en tant que cohésion volontaire, entraide et soutien non seulement au sein d'un groupe, mais aussi et surtout au sein de l'ensemble de la race humaine. Tischner veut aider l'homme moderne, car il est conscient que l'homme moderne est entré dans une période de crise profonde de l'espérance. La réflexion sur la solidarité et l'espérance représentent un point névralgique dans la philosophie de Józef Tischner, un point qui trouve sa justification dans la pensée chrétienne. L'espérance est la perspective de quelque chose de mieux qui, associé à un soutien mutuel, supprime la peur et l'isolement pour conduire au développement de l'individu et de la communauté. La solidarité la plus profonde est la solidarité de conscience. La communauté de solidarité se distingue de beaucoup d'autres communautés précisément parce que son fondement est «pour lui». Ce n'est que sur ce fondement que se développe la communauté du «nous».

Mots-clés: solidarité, espérance, homme, dialogue, communauté

Pavol Dancák

## Etica e solidarietà come speranza nella filosofia di Józef Tischner

### Sommario

In questo studio verrà introdotto il concetto di solidarietà come coesione volontaria, aiuto reciproco e sostegno non solo all'interno di un gruppo, ma soprattutto all'interno dell'intero genere umano. Consapevole della profonda crisi della speranza in cui si trova l'uomo moderno, Tischner si sforza di aiutarlo. La riflessione del presente articolo si concentra sulla solidarietà e sulla speranza nella filosofia di Józef Tischner, concetti che costituiscono un punto spinoso, ma giustificabili grazie al pensiero cristiano. La speranza è la prospettiva di qualcosa di meglio che, insieme al sostegno reciproco, rimuove la paura e l'isolamento e conduce allo sviluppo dell'individuo e della comunità. La solidarietà più profonda è la solidarietà della coscienza. La comunità di solidarietà si distingue da tante altre comunità proprio perché il suo fondamento è "per lui". È solo su questa base che cresce la comunità di "noi".

Parole chiave: solidarietà, speranza, uomo, dialogo, comunità





## Krzysztof Wielecki

Pontifical Academy of Social Science, Roma, Italy

University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Warsaw, Poland

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6532-8491>

# The Concept of Subjectivity in the Light of Józef Tischner's Thought

**Abstract:** Reverend Józef Tischner was undoubtedly one of the most outstanding Polish philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century. What we owe to this student of Roman Ingarden is the flourishing of phenomenology and the philosophy of dialog not only in our domestic philosophical, but also sociological, psychological, and anthropological thought. His philosophy of drama is an original and very important current, which is enriched not only by the “Queen of the Sciences” but also offers great support to the related sciences, particularly sociological sciences. Within them, subjectivity is an extremely important subject of contemplation. This article is a sketch of the analysis of the benefits that a sociologist, researcher of subjectivity, can derive from reading Józef Tischner's works.

**Keywords:** Józef Tischner, person, subjectivity, agency, the agathological horizon, the drama of subjectivity, the metaphor of the face

## A Brief Introduction to the Concept of Subjectivity

The process of subjectification, as I understand it, is the process of achieving full humanity, realizing human potential, and subjectivity itself is a state of such fullness. However, it is not agency, which is often assumed in the scientific, sociological, psychological, and philosophical literature.<sup>1</sup> What I have

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Krzysztof Wielecki, “Person, Subjectivity and Agency from the Perspective of Critical Realism,” *Journal of Critical Realism*, vol. 20 (4) (2021): 202; Krzysztof Wielecki, “Subjec-

in mind when I write about the fullness of humanity is that with birth each person has certain developmental potential. (Developmental) psychologists are concerned with something like a *schedule* for such development, which includes psychological and social characteristics and the time they typically appear in the course of life of the absolute majority of people. Such attempts by Erik Erikson<sup>2</sup> or Abraham Maslow are well known. The latter is especially known for introducing the so-called Maslow's pyramid. At its top, he placed the development of self-fulfillment needs, which is experienced by only 1% of people.<sup>3</sup> Above, there is only the phase of domination of the transcendent needs. We can guess that they are even less common. Therefore, not all people, or even a decisive minority, achieve the fullness of humanity, not in some completely abstract sense, but as human developmental potential (implicitly) given to them. What is particularly shocking is the news about the negligible percentage of people that fulfill themselves, namely, the developmental opportunities they were born with. We can probably point towards some demanding philosophical and psychological, but, above all, I suppose, sociological understanding of this mass drama of subjectivity.

There is no space here to develop the concept of subjectivity. This paper is dedicated to Józef Tischner's thought and the help that a sociologist, philosopher or psychologist who deals with subjectivity could derive from it.

As I understand it, subjectivity is a process and state that requires understanding one's own existence as *being-in* (obviously, I am referring to Heidegger and his *being-in*, as well as *being-toward*, and in fact *being-toward-death*),<sup>4</sup> of being limited in our existence and in the possibilities of own cognition, of being *immersed in conscious life*. However, subjectivity, in the shape that emerges from reading many of its concepts, also requires understanding oneself as—yes—*being-toward*, but toward good, truth, freedom, and subjectivity, and also, according to some philosophers, toward God and *the Other*. Subjectivity, as I interpret it, is being toward all that man cannot understand nor achieve enough to have a certain basis for his existence. Nevertheless, subjectivity is a certain feature and condition of life within the practice of life understanding its meaning as living towards the incomprehensible Good. Subjectivity, as *being-toward-*

---

tivity vs. Agency: The Meaning of Karol Wojtyła's The Acting Person," *Philosophy and Canon Law*, vol. 7 (1) (2021): 1/12; Krzysztof Wielecki, *Podmiotowość w dobie kryzysu postindustrializmu. Między indywidualizmem a kolektywizmem* [Subjectivity in the Times of Post-Industrialism Crisis. Between Individualism and Collectivism] (Warszawa: Centrum Europejskie Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Erik Erikson and Joan Erikson, *Life Cycle, Completed* (extended version) (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Abraham Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (New York: Start Publishing LLC, 2012), 151.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

*Good*, by the will of the subject and owing to *transcendent support*, can become the basis of an ontically separate, emergent, and causative being. What is important here is the will, the free choice of subjective life, thus life, understood as a process of self-direction towards subjectivity understood as a state. It is a function of the consciously practiced idea of the Good. Because of this Good and because it can never be fully understood, a man takes up the challenge of a difficult, creative, never fully satisfying, searching existence.

The Good for which the subject lives is multi-argumentative, I believe. It has a certain pattern in which individual features and components mean, get meaning only in combination with one another.<sup>5</sup> This meaning is the result of what creates it and something qualitatively different from its components. We can argue that it is ontically something new and that it is emergent, but that would require a longer development, which I cannot do here. I believe that only subjective actions (*agency*), directed by subjective features, directed at subjective values, together create a full pattern of subjectivity.

Subjectivity exists when it is chosen and being realized. This means that it is primarily a relational feature and an attribute of action. Subjectivity actualizes the subjective potential of man and enables him to act. Let us add that these are activities (*agency*) that place an individual in certain relationships, mainly with other people, but also with nature, culture, social environment, and the sphere of transcendence. It is also about activities aimed at fulfilling the subjective pattern of the Good.

So far, I have only mentioned *the narcissistic structure of subjectivity*. However, along with the claim that subjectivity equals action, we point towards the fact that it means transcending oneself, transcending the subject owing to its reflectivity, and entering into a relationship with what is beyond it. Since it is what is complex in the concept of action.<sup>6</sup> Now it begins to be interesting for a sociologist. If subjectivity means duty, then of course it is towards oneself, but towards others as well, that is, from the perspective of Emmanuel Lévinas—through the face of *the Other*,<sup>7</sup> really close ones. If it is a choice, it is a certain kind of own social participation and affection for a certain type of society. Society, others, in a subjective society are not a factor that degrades the individual, but, on the contrary, they strengthen the individual's developmental opportunities. It is not little. However, we understand that

---

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, trans. Andrzej Potocki, <https://www.scribd.com/doc/57487848/TheActing-Person>, accessed October 28, 2020; see also: Krzysztof Wielecki, "Subjectivity vs. Agency: The Meaning of Karol Wojtyła's *The Acting Person*," *Philosophy and Canon Law*, vol. 7 (1) (2021): 1/12, <https://doi.org/10.31261/PaCL.2021.07.1.05>.

<sup>7</sup> See: Emanuel Lévinas, *Time and the Other*, trans. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987).

it is a contractual, relational, dialogical value, and behind it, there are other values—*stronger ones*.

In the pattern of *the narcissistic structure of subjectivity*, we discover that the individual, individuality is the strongest. The relational nature of subjectivity means that the Other and his subjectivity are also good. Subjectivity is, therefore, a model that includes all the above-mentioned components in the order that regulates relations between people, but also relations of people with nature, culture, society and what is transcendent. This pattern states that for me the subjective value is myself, but I am self-limiting, due to the equivalent and complementary good for me—the Other (but also the aforementioned nature, culture, etc.), behind which stands the transcendent Good, the fourth dimension of subjectivity (next to the pre-subject, narcissistic and altruistic). We can also mention the phases of subjectivity. So, let us call the first one *pre-subjective*. It is characteristic of the so-called primary narcissism, typical of a child. In the second one, the narcissistic structure of subjectivity is developed. Based on Lévinas, it could be called *the state of intoxication with one's own identity*.<sup>8</sup> The third, higher, subsequent in development, possible thanks to the practices of reflective reconciliation of reference horizons with the existential order and framework of action, possible but not necessary, would be the phase of socialized or *altruistic subjectivity*. A fourth phase can also be included—let us call it *transcendentally motivated*.

Of course, one may choose to *be-toward-Good* and, on the contrary, they may be incapable of such a choice, and rather *be-toward-Evil*, which also, as it seems, exist transcendentally and causes horror.<sup>9</sup> Heidegger argues that anxiety, using psychological language, horror, is the result of the eschatological epiphany of *being-toward-death* as the only real perspective of man and humanity.<sup>10</sup>

## Tischner and the Concept of Subjectivity

I have already mentioned that subjective existence is associated with a certain difficulty. Its nature is easier to understand thanks to Tischner, who in this

---

<sup>8</sup> Emanuel Lévinas, *Totalité et Infini: Essais sur l'Extériorité*, [Phänomenologica 8] (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961); Emanuel Lévinas, *Humanisme de l'Autre Homme* (Montpellier: Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1972).

<sup>9</sup> See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 179–182.

<sup>10</sup> See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 304–311; see also: Krzysztof Wielecki, “Concerns, Horror and Instrumental Rationality,” in *The Relational Theory of Society* [Archerian Studies, 2], ed. Klaudia Śledzińska and Krzysztof Wielecki (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2020).

area continued the ideas of Blaise Pascal and Søren Aabye Kierkegaard. Man, this *thinking reed*, as the French philosopher wrote, constantly facing the difficult choice “either, or,” as the Danish thinker claimed, according to the Polish scholar, is doomed to constantly *overcome radical uncertainty*, inseparable from human life, constantly under the pressure of *illusions*. For “the visible world is an illusion of the world,”<sup>11</sup> he wrote. The aforementioned thinkers meant two varieties of faith in God: easy and difficult, and the attitude of atheism. For Tischner, of course, it was also an important issue. He pointed out that atheism does not have to be comfortable, and a certain type of religiousness may be a false escape, a source of too simple and untrue hope. This thread, present in the works of the Polish philosopher, was noticed by Marek Rembierz. He wrote that Tischner “juxtaposes the existential experience of the one who believes and one who does not believe. On the one hand, there is the believer who protects himself in a cocoon of faith that protects him, and, at the same time, is secured by institutional religion.”<sup>12</sup> Rembierz refers to an excerpt from an interview given by the Cracow based thinker: “Faith is pampering to some extent. Man goes to church, imagines that God is looking at him, that he is listening to him, that he forgives his guilt. When leaving, he has a better mood. [...] It is very dangerous. We are at risk of feeling like “the only children of God.” The ‘only children of God’ are the calamity of pastoral service.”<sup>13</sup> However, as Rembierz writes: “On the other hand, there is an atheist, that is, one who does not hide in a religious cocoon to protect himself from dangers.”<sup>14</sup> The human drama is exacerbated by the fact that the dilemma of faith cannot be resolved definitively and indisputably. Nor is the believer free from suffering, but he does not seek easy refuge in his devotion.

It is where an essential premise of the suffering inherent in human existence is located. According to the Polish philosopher, it has a cognitive character. The world is unknowable enough, he argued, to make the inevitable decisions making process devoid of some foundation in knowledge. The ability to discover ourselves and the world, on which we depend very much, is a matter of being or not being, it is a matter of survival. However, it is also a sense of the meaning of one’s own existence and this world. Cognition is the search for truth. And “is man able not to seek? Is it possible to have faith that would

<sup>11</sup> Józef Tischner, *Myślenie według wartości* (Kraków: Znak, 1982), 490.

<sup>12</sup> Marek Rembierz, “Tropy transcendencji... Współczesne myślenie religijne wobec pluralizmu światopoglądowego i relacji międzykulturowych” [Trails of Transcendence... Contemporary Religious Thinking in the Face of Ideological Pluralism and Intercultural Relations], *Świat i Słowo*, vol. 2 (23) (2014): 32.

<sup>13</sup> “Przekonać Pana Boga. Z ks. Józefem Tischnerem rozmawiają Dorota Zańko i Jarosław Gowin” [To Convince God. Józef Tischner Interviewed by Dorota Zańko i Jarosław Gowin] (Kraków: Znak, 2002), 36. Unless stated otherwise, translations done by Szymon Bukal.

<sup>14</sup> Rembierz, “Tropy transcendencji”, 32.

purge itself of the longing to understand? Is it possible to think without wanting to use one more light [...]. The search is not only a matter of this or that doctrine, a doctrine can always be adapted to the needs—it is a matter of man’s existential truth.”<sup>15</sup>

It is an important premise, but not the only one. Another one is the loneliness of man. Admittedly, it allows one *to have oneself to oneself*, yet it is also unbearable. It applies both to loneliness in relation to other people and to the completely *Other*. “The other is a suffering, which does not allow one to have oneself to oneself. We cannot live without the Other, but we cannot live with the Other either,”<sup>16</sup> we read. In this way, man appears to us as the persona of *the drama*. It applies to its very essence, which

is of a dramatic type. [...] It means that man is a participant in a drama, and to understand man is to understand what kind of drama it is. [...] There is not a moment when he is not involved in some drama. Drama is an essential dimension of human existence. It means that man has a different attitude to the outside world and a different attitude to the people around him. The first relation is the relation of man to a stage. The stage is what a person has under his feet, on which he walks, or on which he can walk. The second relation is a dialogical relation to another human being—a relation in which a conversation dominates. The dialogical relation is born when man utters the word “you” to another man. The word “you” is the discovery of some drama that arises at this moment between man and man.<sup>17</sup>

Returning to the question of subjectivity, we could probably say that drama (a sociologist would add, also a collective one) is a dramatically (sic!) important context of subjectivity. Its most important aspect is probably the previously mentioned *Good*, towards which man *exists*. As Tischner himself wrote: “What does it mean that man is a tragic being? It means that in man’s life it is always about realizing some good, and not realizing some evil.”<sup>18</sup>

It is necessary to explain the fact that sometimes the word *good* is written by Tischner and in this text, with a lowercase letter, at other times with a capital

<sup>15</sup> Tischner, *Myślenie według wartości*, 341–342.

<sup>16</sup> Józef Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka* [Controversy over the Existence of Man] (Kraków: Znak, 2002), 226.

<sup>17</sup> Józef Tischner, *Filozofia człowieka. Wykłady* [Philosophy of Man. Lectures], scientific elaboration Zbigniew Stawrowski and Adam Workowski (Kraków: Instytut Myśli Józefa Tischnera, 2019), 34. Tischner clearly refers here to Martin Buber, but also to Edith Stein. See Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1937); Edith Stein, *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, trans. Mary Catharine Baseheart and Marianne Sawicki (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2000); see also: Wielecki, “Person, Subjectivity and Agency,” 368–380.

<sup>18</sup> Tischner, *Filozofia człowieka*, 34.

letter. What kind of goods are we talking about? How do they differ? Of course, the scholar sometimes meant other people, and sometimes God. Thus, the opinion about the existence or non-existence of God is crucial here. Does disbelief exclude a serious treatment of this philosopher's concept of man? I do not think so. After all, if we do not identify the Good with God, with that completely *Other*, then we can always identify it with the idea of good as such. If it were about some specific goods related to the needs and concerns of people, we would have to stay with a lowercase letter. The choice of the transcendent good, from *the outside world*, as we might say after Heidegger, requires, admittedly, the adoption of other assumptions, but it does not exclude such an attitude. Tischner himself explained this doubt as follows: "This above which nothing greater can be conceived is the absolute Good. Is it possible that the absolute Good does not exist? The good demands, as it were, its own existence. The Absolute Good demands to exist in an absolute way. What demands existence in an absolute way, cannot fail to exist. Its existence must be such as its demand for existence. God—as the absolute Good—exists."<sup>19</sup>

We can now return to Tischner's dramatic view that "*the Other* is pain." Pain is both *the Other* and like *the others* because they limit our *self-possession*. We could say that they are a hard barrier to our selfishness and freedom, especially understood as satisfying our egoism. However, as we remember, the drama of man is that he cannot live with *the Other* and *the others*, but he also cannot live without them. Our freedom consists in the possibility and even necessity (so enslavement) of choice. The consequences of which are always difficult and painful. The key, however, is this *completely Other*. Since as we read: "Man is a being, who needs grace above all else and is capable of receiving it."<sup>20</sup>

The situation in which a person finds himself in relation to God, but also towards other people, is therefore tragic. Also, in connection with the inevitable feeling of separateness and loneliness, of one's own separateness, which, as Tischner repeated, not without inspiration from Lévinas: "Most generally saying: it must be a being-for-self—an internally mediated being—it must constitute itself through another being-for-self. Being-for-self becomes itself through another being-for-self. I am for-myself through you. And you are for-yourself through me."<sup>21</sup>

Let us concentrate on this duality of man in the face of which, *the authenticity*, often linked to subjectivity, raises great doubts. It would be a condition, sometimes a being, and sometimes the subjectivity itself. Many authors even write about the obligation of authenticity in this connection. The linking of sub-

<sup>19</sup> Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka*, 270.

<sup>20</sup> Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka*, 132.

<sup>21</sup> Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka*, 219.

jectivity and authenticity with freedom is especially intriguing. Man has to be authentic—but with whom or with what? With which self, is it the self-in-itself, someone completely separate who exercising freedom becomes being-in-itself, or with the Other and others in us, through whom we become that being-in-itself, we become subject?

I believe the starting point for subjectivity is issue of choice. Also, the choice of what authenticity is important to us. Is it authenticity with one who chooses selfishness, or rather altruism? When do we also have more freedom, when we choose the *Good*, or when we choose *Bad*? We see how, apart from the issue of the *Good* and *Bad*, it is absurd to reflect upon authenticity, freedom and subjectivity. It is one of the many remarks in which the reflection on Tischner's thought enriches and deepens the concept of subjectivity. It is worth recalling the philosopher's statement that "The good that is free does not want to take away the freedom of another good; it cannot want not to acknowledge the good of other. Freedom is as much a means of existence for my goodness as for your goodness."<sup>22</sup> Freedom, I do not think so. It is rather about choosing without being limited by anything other than our own will. But subjectivity, yes.

It is about this choice that we can say, following Tischner, that it is a matter of *grace*, which, as we have read, man needs so much. Grace, as I understand it, consists in the ability to make the right choice between the Good and Evil, or rather, between Hope and Despair. I believe that the Polish philosopher would not mind using capital letters here. Since he wrote about the metaphysical nature of experiencing the Good. He wrote: "The good in Greek is called *agathon*. The experience we are attempting to describe is a radical agathological experience. This experience is also a radical metaphysical experience [...]"<sup>23</sup> But perhaps the experience of evil is of the same nature. Perhaps this word should also be capitalized in this case.

Here, I do believe, we need to briefly introduce the concepts of fear, dread, anxiety, and horror. It will enable a deeper understanding of the peculiarities of hope and despair, as well as of Evil, especially distinguished from evil in general, and of the Good, irreducible to any good. Martin Heidegger distinguished anxiety from fear in the following way: "We are not entirely unprepared for the analysis of anxiety. Of course it still remains obscure how this is connected ontologically with fear. Obviously these are kindred phenomena."<sup>24</sup> For the purposes of this paper, this distinction is very important. The essence is the following: "That in the face of which one has anxiety is not an entity within-the word. Thus it is essentially incapable of having an involvement. This threatening does

---

<sup>22</sup> Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka*, 318.

<sup>23</sup> Józef Tischner, *Thinking in Values*, trans. Theresa Sandok (Kraków: Znak, 2002), 54.

<sup>24</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 230.

not have the character of a definite detrimentality which reaches what is threatened, and which reaches it with definite regard to a special factual potentiality-for-Being. [...] In anxiety one does not encounter this thing or that thing which, as something threatening, must have an involvement.”<sup>25</sup> Anxiety, therefore, as can be guessed, is of a transcendent character in relation to the being *within the world*, and terror—contrariwise.

Perhaps, anxiety understood in this way has to do with the psychological concept of horror. Horror is not a feeling, but, on the contrary, a state of paralysis of feelings, their disconnection in the human psyche. Alexander Lowen writes:

According to the definition, “terror” denotes an intense fear, which is somewhat prolonged and may refer to imagined future dangers. ‘Horror’ implies a sense of shock and dread. The danger to which it refers contains an element of evil and may threaten others rather than the self. Although there may be an element of fear in horror (the Latin root of the word means “great fear”), it is not dominant.<sup>26</sup>

Let us be clear: “Horror is not an emotion. It mostly impacts the mind. It is stunning.”<sup>27</sup> Man in the state of horror “is frozen with terror,” as Lowen in the same place writes. Although on the outside we do not have to see clear symptoms of horror, it acts as *local anaesthesia*. Horror is the result of an encounter with evil, as if not of this world, *non-inner world*, if we are allowed to transpose Heidegger’s saying. It is transcendent, in this sense at least, that it is a state of paralysis, something that is incomprehensible to man, something that transcends him, that is outside the world, that could be considered human, that somehow has the character of an eschatological experience. I understand this character as the opening of the subject to what is so bad and frightening that it has the characteristics of an experience of evil as such, the absolute evil that stands behind the experienced, concrete, and occasional evil “of this world.” Such evil overpowers the subject, makes him completely weak and helpless, it is like an extreme encounter that pushes the pole of the moral horizon of reference.

It is not my role to present Heidegger’s thought more broadly in this article. It is enough for us to conclude that anxiety can be a special case of care, just as terror is the extreme of fear, and horror is the extreme of terror. In turn, we can understand horror as anxiety. I would like to bring this topic to an end with a sentence from the German philosopher in which he argues that

---

<sup>25</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 231.

<sup>26</sup> Alexander Lowen, *Narcissim: Denial of the True Self* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1997), 132.

<sup>27</sup> Lowen, *Narcissim: Denial of the True Self*, 133.

“Anxiety makes manifest in Dasein its *Being towards* its ownmost potentiality-for-Being—that is, its *Being-free for* the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself.”<sup>28</sup>

As we can see, the concepts of freedom in Heidegger and Tischner differ fundamentally, although the Polish thinker knew and highly valued the works of the German scholar. But why, we may ask, should man even take the perspective of Evil into account? Certainly, because it is universally present, it is the object of every human being, directly or indirectly. As Tischner wrote, “the visible world is an illusion of the world.”<sup>29</sup> Each person more or less frequently encounters suffering, sometimes it comes *from the outside of the world*, and he cannot help but ask about the sources of evil. And to this question, the philosopher answers not directly, but emphatically: “This question has one simple origin—the light coming from good.”<sup>30</sup> So here we have a peculiar variation on the concept of evil by St. Augustine: the belief in the absurdity and extraordinary nature of evil has its source in the feeling of the Good. It can liberate us from despair and direct us towards hope.

Thus, the stimulus and the force necessary to choose subjectivity would be the hope for the Good. However, to have hope is not easy. Tischner wrote a lot about the present day as a time of crisis. In *Thinking in Values* we can read: “We are undoubtedly in a state of crisis. The crisis has reached the very foundation of our humanity: it has shaken our relationships with one another and with God.”<sup>31</sup> As can be inferred from the reading of the thinker, this negative state is the result of civilization processes, including cultural ones. These include the unfulfilled promises of Enlightenment. It reads: “The Enlightenment did not overcome the evil of history, but replaced the crimes of the ‘superstitious’ with the crimes of the ‘enlightened.’”<sup>32</sup> The philosopher, when considering this crisis, pointed to “a deep crisis of interpersonal communication” “despite the technological achievements, despite the radio, television, film,” the effect of which is, among others, “the growing loneliness of man in the crowd.”<sup>33</sup> He even wrote about *the horizon of betrayal* as a growing awareness of “loneliness and powerlessness.” He explained this concept more closely: “The horizon of betrayal is nowadays a component of the world view (or perhaps ideology) of man who has already abandoned the old cultural environment, and is still not fully rooted in the new one. Rapid social and political changes, migrations of populations and the disappearance of the existing stereotypes of

<sup>28</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 232.

<sup>29</sup> Tischner, *Thinking in Values*, 54.

<sup>30</sup> Tischner, *Thinking in Values*, 54.

<sup>31</sup> Tischner, *Thinking in Values*, 59.

<sup>32</sup> Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka*, 35.

<sup>33</sup> Józef Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei* (Kraków: Znak, 2014), 102.

behavior create a feeling of insecurity and loneliness.”<sup>34</sup> We read it and immediately remember José Ortega y Gasset’s words<sup>35</sup> about the rebellion of the masses. But contemporary civilization processes come to mind even more, with their migrations, secularization, and the disintegration of a culture. They undermine the foundations of individual and collective identity. As we read: “The boundaries between what is constant and what is variable are blurring. Since nothing in the world is certain, there is no basis for stability in it.”<sup>36</sup> It is the basis of the fairly widespread confusion of people and the resulting disorientation, the choice of Evil.

In ideologies that respond to these ailments of the world and of man, there is a more and more common belief that the betrayal in question is inevitable, that it is even something necessary. As we read: “It is even said that it is simply a necessity: do we not have to constantly betray what is passing in order to be able to commune with what is to come? Whoever is afraid of betrayal ossifies in conservatism [...] The whole man is changeability and passing; the obligations of youth cannot be fulfilled in old age, because those who made them are long gone. Sometimes a betrayal is introduced in being with the other quite consciously. It is said: we will be together as long as we share happiness; when this is over, each of us will go and look for new happiness. Betrayal is an expression of freedom and the price to be paid for momentary happiness since non-momentary happiness is beyond all hope.”<sup>37</sup> Here again I will slightly protest to add that betrayal is as much an expression of freedom as fidelity is. For freedom is a choice. On the other hand, the choice of good is a subjective choice, and the choice of evil—is the opposite.

Tischner seems to be extremely accurate in describing the contemporary transformations of morality, which feed on many varieties of humanistic reflection, with postmodern philosophy at the forefront, which have “strayed under the thatched roofs” to such an extent that they sometimes reach the cobblestones of mass culture. But what drives me here is primarily the question of human subjectivity, as well as hope and the Good, the importance of which for subjectivity was the subject of earlier reflection. Tischner has no good news for us. He writes:

This contemporary “uprooted” and “being uprooted” man is still struggling to free himself from the obsession of loneliness and to feel next to a loved one who would not abandon him in the moment of test. [...] The aim is, therefore, to bind one’s neighbor with the kind of attachment that exists between

<sup>34</sup> Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei*, 103–104.

<sup>35</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*, trans. authorized by Sr. Ortega y Gasset (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1957).

<sup>36</sup> Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei*, 104.

<sup>37</sup> Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei*, 104.

creatures incapable of hope, an almost animal attachment. To this end, it is necessary [...] to undercut the awareness of independence and freedom in the neighbor. Being unable to comprehend neither the mystery of the trust of hope nor the act of accepting someone else's hope, one strives to become the sole object of one's neighbor's hope. [...] The aim becomes to capture one's neighbor completely."<sup>38</sup>

Krzysztof Wieczorek wrote about this thread of Tischner's thoughts and about his philosophy of meeting which would help to understand the mentioned phenomena and processes:

Philosophy's response to this tragic nature is the search for a foundation in the lasting values, in mature, strong hope and in building a community around these values and around this hope. [...] The philosophy of encounter [...] sees a deep crisis in the motivation of human actions, and in the search for ways out, it is not content with suggesting ad-hoc solutions but acquires a universal dimension by pointing to the need to implement the highest values available to man.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, we were again directed to the issue of values, and in particular to the category of the Good, the key category, as we already know, for human subjectivity. As Pavol Dancák aptly writes:

According to Tischner, man is an agathological being, he is someone directed towards good and capable of overcoming evil. Goodness is visible not only in individual actions but most of all in the whole way of being a person. It radiates through his speech, his way of thinking and relating to others. Even if this man does nothing, we can all sense: he is a good man. There is one thing that draws attention to this behavior: a good man "allows everyone to be." You talk and he listens, letting you be. He speaks, and you know: he lets you be. It is different with bad people. You feel that they would gladly chase you off. A good person discovers goodness in you. When working on your own goodness, you need to see the good around you. Who sees evil at every turn thinks to himself: am I going to fool myself? Well, no. The world is full of goodness, the evil ones rather fool around.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Tischner, *Świat ludzkiej nadziei*, 104–105.

<sup>39</sup> Krzysztof Wieczorek, *Dwie filozofie spotkania. Konfrontacja myśli Józefa Tischnera i Andrzeja Nowickiego* [Two Philosophies of Encounter. Confrontation of the Thought of Józef Tischner and Andrzej Nowicki] (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 1990), 95.

<sup>40</sup> Pavol Dancák, "Człowiek – wolność – dobro – prawda jako horyzont myślenia o wychowaniu w filozofii Józefa Tischnera" [Man – Freedom – Good – Truth as a Horizon for Reflecting on Education in Józef Tischner's philosophy], *Polska Myśl Pedagogiczna*, vol. 5 (2019): 111–112.

I think that Dancák very accurately characterized the essence of Tischner's view of man, pointing to good, but dialogical good, not devoid of tension, which is the dimension of the drama. For Tischner's predilections to *encounter*, to *dialog*, to *the drama*, which takes place between *personae dramatis*, point to other people as those who betray or not, isolate us or accompany us, subjectify us or on the contrary—they objectify us. The Good is a source of hope, even, perhaps especially, in suffering. As Tischner wrote while explaining his understanding of the metaphor of *face*:

The face is the expression of an existential movement in which man tries to justify the fact that he is, placing his existence under the protection of the good that brings him hope. Because man believes: only the good is capable of saving. So, there is no revelation of a face without some crucifix in its background. But the face is not a reflection of the crucifix, but rather an incarnation of the glory that comes from the way in which a person addresses his crucifix.<sup>41</sup>

Tischner, referring to Husserl, wrote about the experience of the face as *the basic experience*. Its *revelation* is the source of the drama. Tischner also uses the term *introductory description*, “Introductory description, as opposed to the pointing description, directs our attention to the horizon, that is, to the background, thanks to which the face can reveal itself, then to the subject that is able to receive such a revelation, then again on the bond it creates between the revealer and the revelator. [...] The first horizon is the agathological horizon. Lévinas wrote about it in more detail, emphasizing that it is constituted by an infinite good that ‘is’ beyond being and non-being. As for the subjective aspect, I left it as Lévinas put it: the subjective condition of the experience of the face is desire, as opposed to desires, and the bond between me and others is the bond of responsibility, which includes both thinking and freedom.”<sup>42</sup>

Here we come to the essence of Tischner's view, which, I believe, brings us to the question of subjectivity, as I have presented it in this text. *The face* is the key. For “the face reveals itself as a gift of an agathological horizon, a horizon in which good and evil take the form of a drama, and the drama heralds the possibility of a tragedy or a human victory.”<sup>43</sup> This victory, I believe, opens up the perspective of subjectivity. It is the result of a choice that Heidegger rather refused us, and which possibility was firmly confirmed by Józef Tischner. But the face is also a bridge between what is individual and what is collective. Also between intrinsic motivation (desires, needs, cares and drives), various indi-

---

<sup>41</sup> Józef Tischner, *Filozofia dialogu* [Philosophy of Dialogue] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2006), 64.

<sup>42</sup> Tischner, *Filozofia dialogu*, 63.

<sup>43</sup> Tischner, *Filozofia dialogu*, 64.

vidual *specific goods* and the common good in binary and plural relationships (including relationships with collective abstract entities where there is no direct communication). The face is also the medium of the relationship between man and people in their communities with *the Face* of this completely *the Other*, and through it, also with culture and nature. The metaphor of the face defines *the space* of meeting all those dimensions in which the issue of individual subjectivity and—what sociologists are more interested in—different communities is contained and resolved. It defines *the space* of the drama of subjectivity and the choices that are decisive for it.

To summarize, one of the most important axes along which the drama of subjectivity unfolds, and the subject of one of the most dramatic choices is the orientation towards the *Good* or *Evil*, and what this entails, the choice between hope and despair. As Tischner wrote: “Despair is a chosen state. It does not come to man without his consent. However, man does not choose despair for himself. Despair comes when man chooses evil and does so against the Good which has chosen him [...] Living his curse, man consents to be in despair—despair is his breath.”<sup>44</sup>

## Bibliography

- Buber, Martin. *I and Thou*. Trans. Ronald Gregor Smith. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1937.
- Dancák, Pavol. “Człowiek – wolność – dobro – prawda jako horyzont myślenia o wychowaniu w filozofii Józefa Tischnera” [Man – Freedom – Good – Truth as a Horizon for Reflecting on Education in Józef Tischner’s Philosophy]. *Polska Myśl Pedagogiczna*, vol. 5 (2019): 109–122.
- Erikson Erik, Erikson Joan. *Life Cycle, Completed* (extended version). New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.
- Lévinas, Emanuel. *Humanisme de l’Autre Homme*. Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1972.
- Lévinas, Emanuel. *Time and the Other*. Translated by Richard A. Cohen. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987.
- Lévinas, Emanuel. *Totalité et Infini: Essais sur l’Extériorité* [Phänomenologica 8]. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961.
- Lowen, Alexander. *Narcissim: Denial of the True Self*. New York: Touchstone Books, 1997.
- Maslow, Abraham. *Toward a Psychology of Being*. New York: Start Publishing LLC, 2012.
- Ortega y Gasset, José. *The Revolt of the Masses*. Translation authorized by Sr. Ortega y Gasset. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1957.

<sup>44</sup> Tischner, *Filozofia dialogu*, 246.

- “Przekonać Pana Boga. Z ks. Józefem Tischnerem rozmawiają Dorota Zańko i Jarosław Gowin” [To Convince God. Józef Tischner Interviewed by Dorota Zańko and Jarosław Gowin]. Kraków: Znak, 2002.
- Rembierz, Marek. “Tropy transcendencji... Współczesne myślenie religijne wobec pluralizmu światopoglądowego i relacji międzykulturowych” [Trails of Transcendence... Contemporary Religious Thinking in the Face of Ideological Pluralism and Intercultural Relations]. *Świat i Słowo*, vol. 2 (23) (2014): 17–50.
- Stein, Edith. *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*. Trans. Mary Catharine Baseheart and Marianne Sawicki. Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2000.
- Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Tischner, Józef. *Filozofia człowieka. Wykłady* [Philosophy of Man. Lectures]. Scientific elaboration
- Zbigniew Stawrowski and Adam Workowski. Kraków: Instytut Myśli Józefa Tischnera, 2019.
- Tischner, Józef. *Filozofia dialogu* [Philosophy of Dialogue]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2006.
- Tischner, Józef. *Myślenie według wartości*. Kraków: Znak, 1982.
- Tischner, Józef. *Thinking in Values*. Translated by Theresa Sandok. Kraków: Znak, 2002.
- Tischner, Józef. *Spór o istnienie człowieka* [Controversy over the Existence of Man]. Kraków: Znak, 2002.
- Tischner, Józef. *Świat ludzkiej nadziei* [The World of Human Hope]. Kraków: Znak, 2014.
- Wieczorek, Krzysztof. *Dwie filozofie spotkania. Konfrontacja myśli Józefa Tischnera i Andrzeja Nowickiego* [Two Philosophies of Encounter. Confrontation of the Thought of Józef Tischner and Andrzej Nowicki]. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 1990).
- Wielecki, Krzysztof. “Concerns, Horror and Instrumental Rationality.” In *The Relational Theory of Society* [Archerian Studies, 2], edited by Klaudia Śledzińska and Krzysztof Wielecki, 93–111. Berlin: Peter Lang, 2020.
- Wielecki, Krzysztof. “Person, Subjectivity and Agency from the Perspective of Critical Realism.” *Journal of Critical Realism*, vol. 20 (4) (2021): 368–380.
- Wielecki, Krzysztof. *Podmiotowość w dobie kryzysu postindustrializmu. Między indywidualizmem a kolektywizmem* [Subjectivity in the Times of Post-Industrialism Crisis. Between Individualism and Collectivism]. Warszawa: Centrum Europejskie Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2003.
- Wielecki, Krzysztof. “Subjectivity vs. Agency: The Meaning of Karol Wojtyła’s The Acting Person.” *Philosophy and Canon Law*, vol. 7 (1) (2021): 1/12. <https://doi.org/10.31261/PaCL.2021.07.1.05>.
- Wojtyła, Karol. *The Acting Person*. Trans. Andrzej Potocki. <https://www.scribd.com/doc/57487848/TheActing-Person>. Accessed October 28, 2020.

Krzysztof Wielecki

## Le concept de subjectivité à la lumière de la pensée de Józef Tischner

### Résumé

Le père Józef Tischner était sans aucun doute l’un des philosophes polonais les plus remarquables de la seconde moitié du XXème siècle. On lui doit en grande partie (il fut un élève de

Roman Ingarden) l'épanouissement de la phénoménologie et de la philosophie du dialogue dans la pensée philosophique polonaise, mais ses oeuvres ont également marqué la pensée sociologique, psychologique et anthropologique. Sa philosophie du théâtre est une tendance originale et très importante qui non seulement enrichit la « reine des sciences » elle-même, mais en même temps offre un grand soutien aux sciences connexes. Ici, en particulier, je pense aux sciences sociologiques. En leur sein, un sujet de réflexion extrêmement important est la subjectivité. Le présent article est une esquisse de l'analyse des bénéfices qu'un sociologue, chercheur de la subjectivité, peut se procurer grâce à la lecture des travaux de Józef Tischner.

Mots-clés: Józef Tischner, personne, subjectivité, agence, l'horizon agathologique, le drame de la subjectivité, la métaphore du visage

Krzysztof Wielecki

## Il concetto di soggettività alla luce del pensiero di Józef Tischner

### Sommario

Il padre Józef Tischner è stato senza dubbio uno dei più illustri filosofi polacchi della seconda metà del XX secolo. A lui, allievo di Roman Ingarden, dobbiamo in gran parte (fu allievo di) lo sviluppo della fenomenologia e della filosofia del dialogo nel pensiero filosofico polacco, ma le sue opere segnarono anche il pensiero sociologico, psicologico e antropologico. La sua filosofia teatrale è una tendenza originale e molto importante che non solo arricchisce la “regina delle scienze”, ma allo stesso tempo fornisce un grande supporto alle scienze correlate. Si pensa in particolare alle scienze sociologiche. Al loro interno, un tema di riflessione estremamente importante è la soggettività. Questo articolo è uno schizzo di analisi dei benefici che un sociologo, ricercatore della soggettività, può trarre dalla lettura dell'opera di Józef Tischner.

Parole chiave: Józef Tischner, persona, soggettività, agency, l'orizzonte agatologico, il dramma della soggettività, la metafora del volto



**Radovan Šoltés**

University of Prešov, Slovak Republic

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0497-2152>

# Philosophical Reflection on Ideology against the Backdrop of Józef Tischner's Thinking

**Abstract:** Since its beginnings, philosophy has been associated with a critical quest for answers and has rejected biased and uncritical a priori interpretations. Methodic doubt has thus become not only the ever-present method of philosophy, but also a symbol of defiance against every kind of closed-minded and ideological thinking that has a tendency to simplify explanations and adapt reality to its own projections about the said reality. This type of thinking has always been linked to truth claims made by individual power entities. In the past, we have witnessed twists and abuses of ideology with far-reaching political consequences and yet the problem still persists. Each and every situation affected by crisis is a breeding ground for quick, clear and black and white explanations which attract attention and gain support, since they are generally easy to comprehend. This paper introduces a philosophical context of ideological thinking, in which the “will to power” is typical, as reflected upon by many thinkers, among them Józef Tischner who draws from his personal experience with the Communist regime in Poland.

**Keywords:** philosophy, ideology, power, Józef Tischner, ethics

## Critical Role of Philosophy

The notion of ideological thinking has always been present in the philosophical discourse. The philosophical criticism of ideological thinking stems from the very nature of philosophy. Although there is no one rigid definition of philosophy as such, we can say that there is a certain consensus that sees philosophy

as a systematic thinking effort that is open to a permanent search for truth as well as to admitting possible errors. Methodic doubt is a philosophical method critically scrutinising all knowledge claims. Without this methodological scepticism, demanded firmly by René Descartes, there is no true philosophy. Decisive is, however, how and where one would be able to get on that proverbial “safe ground” through doubt itself.

Philosophy can teach us how to think and, at the same time, it teaches us to understand why we think the way we do. In this respect, Karl R. Popper regards critical examination as a necessary instrument of philosophy:

All men and all women are philosophers. If they are not conscious of having philosophical problems, they have, at any rate, philosophical prejudices. Most of these are theories which they take for granted: they have absorbed them from their intellectual environment or from tradition. Since few of these theories are consciously held, they are prejudices in the sense that they are held without critical examination, even though they may be of great importance for the practical actions of people, and for their whole life. It is an apology for the existence of professional philosophy that men are needed to examine critically these widespread and influential theories.<sup>1</sup>

Today, we are facing a question whether the critical role of philosophy has not become its greatest challenge that eventually leads to its fragmentation into different philosophical schools of thought and perspectives that are often in opposition to one another. Current postmodern pluralism throws us into many ethical, epistemological, and cultural discourses. Can we still talk about philosophy? Or is it only subjectivism and arbitrariness of thinking wrapped in the philosophical concepts?

With that in mind, Wolfgang Ivers speaks about two problems endangering the postmodernism: *superficiality* and *arbitrariness*. Superficiality requires plurality only as some comfort zone. “What I have in mind,” maintains Ivers, “are scientific discourses and behaviour of those who start every of their sentences with ‘I suppose,’ ‘from my point of view,’ or ‘I believe,’ and so they think that they rid themselves of obligation to engage in more detailed argumentation oriented mostly at assumptions.”<sup>2</sup> Arbitrariness is an expression of *dissolution* and not of serious acceptance of plurality. It is then indifferentism, which is grounded in *thoughtlessness*. For Ivers, the solution is in the practice in which clear articulation is typical. Therefore, postmodernism needs to master the strictness, since it is a challenging concept rather than a scenario for relaxa-

---

<sup>1</sup> Karl Popper, *In Search of a Better World. Lectures and Essays from Thirty Years* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), 179.

<sup>2</sup> Wolfgang Ivers, *Naše postmoderní moderna*, trans. Miroslav Petříček and Ivan Ozarčuk (Praha: Zvon, 1994), 164.

tion. It does not mean that every discourse will always lead to a statement that everybody agrees with. Postmodernism aims to expose plurality of codes that make up our forms of rationality. The practice of transition is introduced while taking the existence of such codes under consideration.

It does not put these codes on the same level, neither does it synthesize them; it allows them to enter into relationships that are full of tension. Superficiality and arbitrariness are manifestations of wrongly interpreted postmodernism. The strictness of postmodernism lies in the clarity of arguments and pluralistic discourse. Welsch maintains that “this can provoke too, but productively.”<sup>3</sup>

The foundation for contemporary philosophy is the need to derive its validity from factuality and not from the a priori basis. In this context, philosophy can contribute to protection against totalitarian demands that elevate particular opinions to the alleged absolute. Postmodernism emphasises the need for freedom in plurality, but, at the same time, it contributes to us being more sensitive to different problems. Postmodernism does not ignore the real differences, nor does it lower its demands for communication. It shows the limits of various forms of rationality and allows transitions between them.<sup>4</sup>

In a similar vein, Józef Tischner (1931–2000) asks about the foundation of philosophy and about the type of philosophy. His philosophical reflection is closely linked with the suffering of the nation caused by the Communist ideological regime. For Tischner, the starting point of any philosophical reflection is the face of the human anxious for his or her destiny.<sup>5</sup> We can say that Tischner’s thinking is, in its essence, a part of the phenomenological and personalistic philosophic tradition.<sup>6</sup> Primarily, human person is a free being. Yet, freedom is not to be taken for granted. One must interiorize his or her freedom. Otherwise, one may succumb to temptation of power that substitutes philosophical questioning for ideological possession of the truth.

## Perpetual Return of Ideology

In philosophy, the concept of ideology is often mentioned in association with the reflection on the conditions in society in which ideological thinking and struc-

---

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Welsch, *Naše postmoderní moderna*, 164–165.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Welsch, *Naše postmoderní moderna*, 13–16.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Pavol Dancák, “Concreteness of Life as the Context of Thinking in the Philosophy of Jozef Tischner,” *European Journal of Science and Theology* 12 (2): 213–221.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Józef Tischner, *Medzi slobodou a porobou*, trans. Jozef Marušiak (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2001), 11.

tures have manifested themselves. Francis Bacon criticized false knowledge determined by social prejudices in his teaching about idols.<sup>7</sup> These prejudices are the opinions, notions, and concepts that are expressed in various forms of social consciousness that is oftentimes thought to be superior to other opinions. In ideological thinking, there is always certain theoretical foundation and uncritical or even idolatrous attitude towards it, which results in many different forms of totalitarianism. François Rouleau speaks about the ideological ideas being regarded as scientifically justifiable but, in reality, all we can do is believe in them. It is a “science” which demands blind “faith” and a “quasi-religion” which claims to be “science.”<sup>8</sup> This fusion of “science” and “religion” is at the centre of ideology.

Fundamentally, the ideological certainty comes from the certainty, which is often compared to the scientific certainty. In reality, this certainty comes from the “religious” character of ideology—ideology is always presented as a teaching about “salvation.”<sup>9</sup> Theory and objective research is frequently replaced with emotional approach, which searches for scientific justifications only retrospectively. The impact of a certain idea does not depend on content and rational arguments. It is rather dependent on the way in which it is presented and accepted at the level of imagination and affectivity. In such a way, the philosophical background of ideology that similarly to a myth claims uncritical acceptance is created. People do not question the value of such a myth, so it is very difficult to hold a dialogue with a person who was ideologically manipulated. It is even worse when such a person assumes power and uses it to enforce the “correct” worldview that he or she holds.

Ideology claims to determine the direction of thinking processes and life of a person and presents itself as the only alternative. The “religious” character of ideology seems credible and salvific and presents the possibility of building “a new world”—the realization of the ideal world here on Earth. The very essence of such approach to life and thinking is uncritical and creates space for totalitarianism and tyranny of both spirit and body. Many concentration and labour camps in the former Eastern Bloc countries are evidence of it. Rouleau says: “Those who hesitate to accept such offer or even reject it disqualify themselves. And this is the moment when they must be either forced to accept it or destroyed for the common good of the future generations.”<sup>10</sup> It is evident that ideology cares not only about the truth, but also about power that is used to enforce this truth.

---

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Walter Bruggen, *Filosofický slovník*, trans. Ladislav Benyovszky et al. (Praha: Naše vojsko, 1994), 176.

<sup>8</sup> François Rouleau, “Ideológia – choroba ducha,” in *Antológia štúdií k sociálnej morálke* (Trnava: Dobrá kniha, 1995), 85.

<sup>9</sup> Rouleau, “Ideológia – choroba ducha,” 85.

<sup>10</sup> Rouleau, “Ideológia – choroba ducha,” 87.

Ideology exploits the fact that people tend to assign to systems built within the society their own existence and authority that goes beyond the scope of human ability. In certain situations, the limits of free judgement vanish in favour of passive obedience, symbolic thoughts or ideas. This illusion is then materialised and assumes the form of individuals and structures.<sup>11</sup> As a result, people give preference to what is emotionally more appealing in comparison to what is more rational, moral, or fairer. People tend to be easily influenced through what they like or believe in. This then affects the patterns of behaviour and action of those in power who, when seeking people's support, justify and hide their claims behind the common good. When they assume power, however, they learn that they can hold their posts even after the promised services are no longer provided.<sup>12</sup>

This type of people Tischner likens to the character of the inquisitor from Dostoevsky's acclaimed work *The Brothers Karamazov*. The inquisitor does not make any effort to seek the truth. He observes the other person from a position of power to decide what is and what is not the truth.<sup>13</sup>

Today, in the complicated world, such a clear way of thinking about the present and future may be very appealing. It especially appeals to people who feel that they are on the periphery of society and those who are socially excluded or endangered. People living in insecurity caused by the constant flow of information about risks and problems will want to change their reality. They will have a tendency to fight against this negativity, face it and it is only natural for them to seek hope in this uncertain situation. It is understandable, but also tricky. Psychological studies show that in the environment full of uncertainty in which it is very difficult to find one's bearings and where one chronically lacks the feeling of his or her personal control over the situation, people search for authorities<sup>14</sup> whom they want to trust. One's willingness to accept authority increases with the feelings that one can no longer protect himself or herself. Paradoxically, the lack of information and knowledge about a particular social and political problem does not motivate a person to seek information more in-

---

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Jean-Marie Abgrall, *Mechanismus sekt*, trans. Tomáš Suchomel and Martin Palouš (Praha: Karolinum, 1999), 110.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Marian Balázs, *Sloboda a pamät'* (Dunajská streda: Valeur, 2010), 132, 185.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Józef Tischner, *Filozofia ľudskej drámy*, trans. Ján Matyáš (Bratislava: Serafin, 2007), 84, 193.

<sup>14</sup> Hannah Arendt differentiates authority from violence and power. She says that "since authority always demands obedience, it is commonly mistaken for some form of power or violence. Yet authority precludes the use of external means of coercion; where force is used, authority itself has failed." Hannah Arendtová, *Mezi minulostí a budoucností*, trans. Tomáš Suchomel and Martin Palouš (Brno: CDK, 2002), 88. She distinguishes between the formal and institutionalized authority, which is open to freedom. "Its hallmark is unquestioning recognition by those who are asked to obey: neither coercion nor persuasion is needed." Hannah Arendtová, *O násilí*, trans. Jiří Příbáň and Petr Fantys (Praha: Oikoymenth, 2004), 35.

tensively, but it reinforces the sense of dependence and trust in legitimacy of particular political party, politician, or authority. Thus, the politician's *lifespan* is not determined by the quality of his or her service, but by the illusion of authority and competency, that he or she manages to maintain.

In this context, Tischner speaks about the charm of the “political reason” that accepts only its own truth. A question “Who is with me and who is against me?” comes to the foreground here. Then comes withdrawal, distrust, and fear. Asking about the essence of being and the meaning of existence is subordinate to the power of the political truth that is enforced by (1) promises—if you accept this truth you can participate in the exercise of power and demand obedience from others, or (2) threats—if you do not give in, you are wasting your life.<sup>15</sup>

The effectiveness of an ideological doctrine does not come from its meaning, but from its certitude. Therefore, no doctrine can be effective unless it is presented as an embodiment of the only truth.<sup>16</sup> To develop critical thinking one must adhere to one principle: what is presented as the only, unambiguous, and general solution, which is easy to understand and is often charged with emotions and special vocabulary tolerating no other alternative is, to say the least, suspicious. More often, it is a manifestation of ideology and not that of healthy critical rationality that is conscious of the fact that complexity of life often transcends our explanations.<sup>17</sup> Many dictators started at this point and many times successfully.

## Black and White Way of Thinking

By Milan Nakonečný ideology can be described as a closed way of thinking. In the field of social psychology, Milton Rokeach conducted a research into dogmatism and developed a theory of open and closed mind. Rokeach defines dogmatism as a relatively closed cognitive organization of conforming and contrary thinking about reality. Regarding beliefs, dogmatism is centred on authority and it creates a framework for intolerant and partially tolerant behavioural patterns towards others. Typical for dogmatism is a limited space for freedom and emphasis on value uniformity. On the other side of the spectrum, there is the acceptance of freedom and openness to pluralism. Rokeach hence defines dogmatism as the generalized authoritarianism.<sup>18</sup> For the “closed mind” typical

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Tischner, *Filozofia ľudskej drámy*, 148–149.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Eric Hoffer, *Pravoverný: Úvahy o podstate masových hnutí*, trans. Ivana Chudíková (Bratislava: Európa, 2009), 62.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Rouleau, “Ideológia – choroba ducha,” 86, 92.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Milan Nakonečný, *Sociální psychologie* (Praha: Academia, 1999), 264–266.

is the “black and white” thinking which ignores the fact that an object can be looked at from many different angles. The closed mind assumes the right to decide about others. The person for whom the closed mind thinking is typical feels entitled to determine the truths and norms. They are convinced that they “know” better what is “good” for others. When such persons lose the critical perspective on themselves and their status, they can, while exercising their power, inflict suffering on others without even realizing it. The power approach does not enable us to know the truth. From a position of power we assume that we have the right to decide what is good and what is evil. Karl Jaspers says, “For the most devastating threat to truth in the world is the overweening claim to absolutely true. In the certainty of the moment the humility of the enduring question is indispensable.”<sup>19</sup>

Ideological way of thinking leaves no room for otherness, which is perceived by the person, hungry for power, as a threat. That person does not accept other people in their uniqueness and originality but tries to reduce them to mechanisms whose movements he can easily control and manage as he pleases.<sup>20</sup>

Such a person can sink into illusion about his or her irreplaceability and infallibility. Vladimir Solovyov described it aptly as the temptation of reason, which prompts thinking: “You alone are the chosen one who has the right to this exclusive status. If the truth becomes your own dignity and virtue, your thoughts and opinions are also true; and others must accept that. If you govern by the truth, you cannot err—you are infallible.”<sup>21</sup> Gabriel Marcel described similar intellectual craziness when he referred to a narrow-minded perception of “the truth” from the position of a person whose relation to others was defined by his attitude of superiority. Such a person declares that “your good is not the true good [...], but as far as I am concerned I claim to be able to see the lights which are now concealed from you and can illuminate the darkness in which you are writhing. You who do not even realize that you are in the darkness, so perfect is your blindness.”<sup>22</sup> We can apply Trotsky’s principle here: “One cannot be right against ‘the party’. It is only possible to be right with ‘the party.’” And by the party he means its leader acting in accordance with the known truth to which he solely has the monopoly.<sup>23</sup> According to Arendt, “infallibility” of those in power is the chief qualification of a leader. “Leaders must never admit

---

<sup>19</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Way to Wisdom. An Introduction to Philosophy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), 70.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Gabriel Marcel, *K filosofii naděje*, trans. Věra Dvořáková and Miloslav Žilina (Praha: Vyšehrad, 1971), 71.

<sup>21</sup> Vladimír Solovjov, *Duchovní základy života* (Velehrad: Refugium, 1996), 45.

<sup>22</sup> Gabriel Marcel, “Nebezpečná situace etických hodnot,” in Peluška Bendlová, *Hodnoty v existenciální filosofii Gabriela Marcela* (Praha: Academia, 2003), 142.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Tomáš Zalešák, *Diablova práca – úvahy o totalitarizme* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2005), 62.

to an error.”<sup>24</sup> They identify their own power with their own truth treating those subordinate to them arrogantly. Paradoxically, they view their arrogance as fair strictness. If somebody points out their inappropriate behaviour, they become suspects of a hostile attitude.

This brings us to yet another attribute of people with ideological thinking and that is their inability and reluctance to be confronted with criticism. They mostly see faults in others, never their own. They often generalise their own experience and make themselves role models for others. This implies that any objection or different opinion is a priori interpreted as a hostile attitude or a destructive criticism, which needs to be, in the name of the truth of the person in power, eliminated. It might not always mean a liquidation of others because their existence is a prerequisite for domination and control. “They are given the status which does not allow dialogue; it allows only the acceptance of the will, feelings, and thoughts of the person in power.”<sup>25</sup>

In addition, the person who succumbs to the ideological thinking is always suspicious and hostile towards others. Solovyov warns us not to yearn for power because we never know how we might behave once we have it.

There is no way of knowing whether it will be good for me and for others when I assume the power now. Even though I became a participant in God’s truth, and the spiritual life was revealed in me, it still does not seem to me that I am able to lead people. Perhaps if I assume power, I will show myself incapable not only in directing others in God’s spirit, but I will also lose my own spiritual dignity, and if I seek power, then I have already lost it.<sup>26</sup>

Whenever a person seeks power for oneself, eventually, one will seek refuge in the totalitarian ways because the whole project is based solely on one’s own ideas. Then every effort for justice, if done with power and without love, turns into tyranny.

Neither pleasure, nor the high opinion about oneself has such a devastating effect on the person as giving in to temptation of power does. Desire for power is the greatest temptation for people. It tempts everybody, even those who are against it. Józef Tischner says, “Pleasure from power is the greatest power there is for man. There is no price man would pay to have it.”<sup>27</sup>

Ideological thinking and power are two “communicating vessels.” Surrendering to power is not conditioned by inclination towards lower values. It is not only power over the Earth, but also the power over the truth and lie. This

---

<sup>24</sup> Hannah Arendtová, *Původ totalitarizmu*, trans. Jana Fraňková et al. (Praha: Oikoymenh, 1996), 482.

<sup>25</sup> Jolana Poláková, *Smysl dialógu* (Praha: Vyšehrad, 2008), 14.

<sup>26</sup> Solovyov, *Duchovní základy života*, 47–48.

<sup>27</sup> Tischner, *Medzi slobodou a porobou*, 173.

power brings people pleasure that comes with an opportunity to control and be in charge of the world.<sup>28</sup> Tischner pointed out that religious people too can succumb to the temptation of ideology and power. In a belief that sin has corrupted people, such persons can convince themselves that all problems must be solved using power.

Being conscious of their own limitations, they seek the guarantee for their power in God. Fear of themselves and others sends them to unreserved service to God and, at the same time, they carry in their soul a belief that if all power comes from God, they themselves “do God a service.” The essential meaning of totalitarian temptation in religion is: fear of themselves and others directs them to the slavery of power and makes them believe that God wanted it so.<sup>29</sup>

Solovjov aptly described that temptation:

You are the representative of this higher principle, not according to your own dignity and your strengths, but by the power of God’s grace, which has given you participation in the real truth. Not for yourself, but for the glory of God and for the well-being of the world, for the love of God and the neighbour, you are obliged to make all the effort to surrender the world to the higher truth and bring people to God’s kingdom. To do this, however, you must have the necessary means to influence the world successfully; in particular, you must assume the power and authority over other people, subjugate them in order to lead them to the one and only true salvific truth.<sup>30</sup>

Tischner also says that the basic desire for the absolute power can also be the desire to build a new, better, and ideal world.<sup>31</sup>

## Power and Fear

Power is always linked with fear. Therefore, the power in state, revolutions, religions, family, and other institutions has often been accompanied by violence, which was always excused and justified with the goal. The means has always been ignored when defence of “the truth” was at stake. Every action that has achievement of the goal in mind seems to be permitted and even necessary. Oftentimes, those who suffer the consequences are the innocent ones. Those in power are gripped by fear and have tendencies to generalize. Therefore, they

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Tischner, *Filozofia ľudskej drámy*, 150.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Tischner, *Medzi slobodou a porobou*, 173.

<sup>30</sup> Solovjov, *Duchovní základy života*, 47.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Tischner, *Filozofia ľudskej drámy*, 148.

are overcome with the constant temptation to assume that what concerns an individual person, can concern others too. It is some sort of “preventive totalitarianism.” Elias Canetti wrote that “the fact that in his speed he may crush the innocent does not trouble him [...] What does disturb him profoundly is to let an enemy escape by failing to move fast enough.”<sup>32</sup>

Why is it so? Patočka maintains that a person’s fear has its roots in one’s awareness of one’s own impermanence. One is always bound to the future, which haunts by introducing the perspective of perdition. One fears losing oneself and becoming nothingness. In fear, we fear something and worry about something. We are afraid of losing something. The feeling of fear is the feeling of loss and disorientation. We are worried about ourselves and that exposes us in how we are existentially situated.<sup>33</sup> Power must be constantly amplified and expanded otherwise, it is doomed to weaken.

Tischner called this phenomenon a “hideout.”

People in the hideout believe that they carry some treasure in them. They try to hide their treasure somewhere deep. They themselves stand next to the hideout and guard. They surround the place where they stand with the wall of fear. They are suspicious of all people who approach their hideout and believe that are coming to rob and destroy them. [...] Typical feature of people from the hideout is that they suffer and inflict suffering on others. And what is worst is that their own suffering is intense and worthless.<sup>34</sup>

Fear then leads people to a fight for their own space and their own security. When two fear-enslaved people meet, their communication lingers on the surface. Not only do they ignore what the other person feels and experiences, but they also fear to come out of their defensive shell because they are afraid of getting hurt, of not being accepted and understood, and they fear losing their security. Openness and honesty fade away from relationships. What infiltrates into them instead is a phenomenon of putting on a mask. By putting on a mask, one creates an illusion that is an opposite of what he or she really is. The reason for doing that, according to Tischner, is fear that “moves a person into coexistence whose dominant structure is a structure of the opposite: the other is a priori my enemy. In order to protect myself I must retreat to the prepared hideout. Mask is a person’s view through the window of the hideout.”<sup>35</sup>

People from hideouts “struggle with a disease of hope; their hope is guided by fleeing from people.”<sup>36</sup> Control becomes an essential form of manipulation

<sup>32</sup> Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power* (New York: Continuum, 1978), 284.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Jan Patočka, *Tělo, společenství, jazyk, svět* (Praha: Oikoymenh, 1995), 93.

<sup>34</sup> Tischner, *Medzi slobodou a porobou*, 51.

<sup>35</sup> Tischner, *Filozofia ľudskej drámy*, 70.

<sup>36</sup> Tischner, *Medzi slobodou a porobou*, 52.

of other people and the world. The hideout becomes a place of shy freedom overwhelmed by worries over someone's own salvation. The key driving force here is Nietzsche's concept of the "will to power"—the will to rule, seize the power, take over the world and thus secure one's survival. Tischner maintains that the only cure for this fear is to discover the space of hope that shifts the strategy of "protecting oneself" to "creation."<sup>37</sup> It is not an easy task since creation is necessarily linked to being open to mystery and meaning that cannot be pressed into firm structures and schemes. Therefore, one must rid oneself of an illusion of own securities and discover what is at the very essence of human identity. What Heidegger called "Sein," Tischner relates to God. Nevertheless, the temptation to focus on "worrying" about things that somehow compensates for worrying about finality will always be strong.

## Conclusion

Every manifestation of ideology and the closed way of thinking have a common basis and that is fear. A feeling of endangering oneself or one's own ideas leads to the totalitarian thinking and action. By gaining power, tension is not relieved. As Tischner points out "the power is always in danger. We can never be quite sure of our own ideas."<sup>38</sup> This raises suspicion, distrust, and prevents creativity. Any creative and unique expressions of the other person are perceived as suspicious. Therefore, the stronger the conviction of owning the ultimate knowledge and understanding of the contexts is often associated with an increase of aggression towards others who do not share the beliefs of a person with ideological thinking. Especially in crises, which are ample today, the ultimate and cheap interpretations of problem solving can be very appealing and can even seem easier and simpler. However, any such action has its consequences. History repeats itself, as we say. It is because we forget our past. As historians often remind us—if we forget about the past mistakes, we will keep repeating them.

---

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Tischner, *Medzi slobodou a porobou*, 65.

<sup>38</sup> Tischner, *Filozofia ľudskej drámy*, 152.

## Bibliography

- Abgrall, Jean-Marie. *Mechanismus sekt.* Translated by Milada Horáková. Praha: Karolinum, 1999.
- Arendtová, Hannah. *Mezi minulostí a budoucností.* Translated by Tomáš Suchomel and Martin Palouš. Brno: CDK, 2002.
- Arendtová, Hannah. *O násilí.* Translated by Jiří Přibáň and Petr Fantys. Praha: Oikoymenh, 2004.
- Arendtová, Hannah. *Původ totalitarizmu.* Translated by Jana Fraňková, Jan Rypka, Mario Stretti, Zdenka Strettiová, and Helena Vebrová. Praha: Oikoymenh, 1996.
- Balázs, Marián. *Sloboda a pamät'. Eseje o etike slobody.* Dunajská streda: Valeur, 2010.
- Brugger, Walter. *Filosofický slovník.* Translated by Ladislav Benyovszky, Karel Berka, Ivan Blecha, Martin Hemelík, Ladislav Major, Lenka Mertová, Jiří Pešek, and Milan Váňa. Praha: Naše vojsko, 1994.
- Canetti, Elias. *Crowds and Power.* New York: Continuum, 1978.
- Dancák, Pavol. "Concreteness of Life as the Context of Thinking in the Philosophy of Jozef Tischner." *European Journal of Science and Theology* 12 (2): 213–221.
- Hoffer, Eric. *Pravoverný. Úvahy o podstate masových hnutí.* Translated by Ivana Chudíková. Bratislava: Európa, 2009.
- Jaspers, Karl. *Way to Wisdom. An Introduction to Philosophy.* New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 1954.
- Marcel, Gabriel. *K filozofii naděje.* Translated by Věra Dvořáková and Miloslav Žilina. Praha: Vyšehrad, 1971.
- Marcel, Gabriel. "Nebezpečná situace etických hodnot." In Peluška Bendlová, *Hodnoty v existenciální filozofii Gabriela Marcela.* Praha: Academia, 2003.
- Nakonečný, Milan. *Sociální psychologie.* Praha: Academia, 1999.
- Patočka, Jan. *Tělo, společenství, jazyk, svět.* Praha: Oikoymenh, 1995.
- Poláková, Jolana. *Smysl dialogu.* Praha: Vyšehrad, 2008.
- Popper, Karl R. *In Search of a Better World. Lectures and Essays from Thirty Years.* London, New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Rouleau, François. "Ideológia – choroba ducha." In *Antológia štúdií k sociálnej morálke.* Translated by Bernard Mišovič. Trnava: Dobrá kniha, 1995.
- Solovjov, Vladimír. *Duchovní základy života.* Translated by Ivan Ondavan. Velehrad: Refugium, 1996.
- Tischner, Józef. *Filozofia ľudskej drámy.* Translated by Ján Matyáš. Bratislava: Serafín, 2007.
- Tischner, Józef. *Medzi slobodou a porobou.* Translated by Jozef Marušiak. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2001.
- Welsch, Wolfgang. *Naše postmoderní moderna.* Translated by Miroslav Petříček and Ivan Ozarčuk. Praha: Zvon, 1994.
- Zalešák, Tomáš. *Diablova práca – úvahy o totalitarizme.* Bratislava: Kalligram, 2005.

Radovan Šoltés

## Réflexion philosophique sur l'idéologie dans le contexte de la pensée de Józef Tischner

### Résumé

La philosophie a toujours été associée à une quête critique de réponses et a rejeté les interprétations a priori qui étaient biaisées et non critiques. Le doute méthodique est ainsi devenu non seulement une méthode de philosophie constamment présente, mais aussi un symbole de méfiance contre toute forme de pensée étroite et idéologique qui a tendance à simplifier les explications et à adapter la réalité à ses propres projections sur ladite réalité. Ce type de pensée a toujours été lié aux affirmations de vérité formulées par des entités de pouvoir individuelles. Dans le passé, nous avons été témoins de rebondissements et d'abus d'idéologie avec des conséquences politiques profondes, et pourtant le problème persiste. Chaque situation touchée par une crise devient un terrain fertile pour des explications rapides, claires et en noires et blanc qui attirent l'attention et gagnent du soutien, car elles sont généralement faciles à comprendre. Cet article présente un contexte philosophique de pensée idéologique, pour lequel la "volonté de puissance" est typique, comme en témoignent de nombreux penseurs, parmi lesquels Józef Tischner qui s'inspire de sa propre expérience en rapport avec le régime communiste en Pologne.

Mots-clés : philosophie, idéologie, pouvoir, Józef Tischner, éthique

Radovan Šoltés

## Riflessione filosofica sull'ideologia nel contesto del pensiero di Józef Tischner

### Sommario

La filosofia è sempre stata associata a una ricerca critica di risposte e ha rifiutato interpretazioni diffamanti a priori e acritiche. Il dubbio costante è diventato così non solo un metodo onnipresente della filosofia, ma anche un simbolo di sfida contro ogni forma di pensiero chiuso e ideologico che tende a semplificare le spiegazioni e ad adattare la realtà alle proprie proiezioni su di essa. Questo tipo di pensiero è sempre stato legato ad affermazioni di verità fatte da singole entità di potere. In passato abbiamo assistito a colpi di scena e abusi dell'ideologia con profonde conseguenze politiche, eppure il problema persiste. Ogni situazione di crisi diventa terreno fertile per spiegazioni rapide, chiare, nero su bianco che attirano l'attenzione e ottengono consensi, perché di solito sono facili da capire. Questo articolo presenta uno sfondo filosofico del pensiero ideologico, per il quale la "volontà di potenza" è tipica, come evidenziato da molti pensatori, tra cui Józef Tischner che attinge alla propria esperienza in relazione al regime comunista in Polonia.

Parole chiave: filosofia, ideologia, potere, Józef Tischner, etica



Part Two

# Reviews





Mette Lebech, *European Sources  
of Human Dignity. A Commented Anthology*  
Peter Lang Verlag, 2019, 345 pp.

Although many people give no thought to the idea that humans have an intrinsic dignity, Mette Lebech has no place among them. For this, the reader is in her debt. Our time seems to be especially in need of an exploration of the idea of “human dignity,” so that we can understand why black lives and all human lives matter. The notion of our dignity as humans essentially accrues to the inherent value of each person. We may be able to take our worth for granted again after we gain insight into the thought of men and women who wondered about what comprises the specifically human dignity and what our dignity may entail.

The study traces the origins and development of the idea from its beginnings in sources in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. That her sources are European is a function of her languages. Her limited sources, Professor Lebech explains, are not so much tribute to Europe as, “a regrettable lack of linguistic competences” (p. 4). Indeed, what the non-European world thought about human dignity and from what sources they refine the idea would be another fascinating book. What Lebech does accomplish with her remarkable linguistic abilities is to select and present relevant documents in English as well as in their original European languages. The reader’s questions about translations can readily be resolved since the volume includes the texts in their original languages as well as in their translations.

The reader delights in Lebech’s erudition. The depth and range of her references and her mentions present a vast world of major and minor philosophers as well as intellectuals from other fields. This reader particularly rejoiced with her inclusion of obscure women who contributed to the discussion of dignity, “in a different voice.” After all, the notion that some humans were more human (men) must be overcome.

Lebech’s overriding interest in the topic is showing how the notion of human dignity becomes a suitable constitutional principle for grounding human rights.

In order to do so, she organizes four periods in the history of the West around identifying “who counts as citizen in the state” (p. 5). The volume begins with representatives of ancient sources who have first to sort out the intrinsic and extrinsic sources of the fundamental value of human beings. The last entry concludes with the “Declaration on Religious Liberty” from Vatican II in 1965.

During the Middle Ages, the Church bestowed dignity with baptism. All could be included in the citizenship of the Church. Indeed, the Church continues to locate the source of human dignity in our likeness to the God who created us. Modern states emerged from the prevalent kingdoms and the moneyed economy gradually took over from the landed aristocracy. The last stage in Lebech’s telling begins with the French revolution when men other than aristocrats claimed the rights of citizens. The history of the West in the period that follows is a history of emancipation, of redefining inclusion in the ranks of citizens. Eventually after World War II, human dignity came to include members of all races, both female and male. All humans became equal before the law.

Lebech’s scholarship can be turned to contemporaneous themes as well; she says that she writes and collects for the controversies which have arisen since 1965. Secular culture even in its western democratic versions, much less its authoritarian regimes can threaten religious freedom. On the other hand, religious freedom amounts to folly when the rights it ensures are taken as absolute.

Black lives matter? Since race is not a condition for human dignity. That human lives matter is a function of the intrinsic worth of the human, the unique dignity of the human person, formerly universally assumed to be above the animals. Human dignity includes the appreciation of human rationality, which until the 1960s was highly prized. It demands an end to holocausts and genocide. The other is a brother.

Lebech’s study stops with 1965, for notable historical reasons. Maybe 1948 with its claim that religious freedom is entailed by human dignity, as the United Nations in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims, is the apotheosis of the idea of intrinsic human dignity which demands equal and inalienable rights for all humans. The 21st century seems reluctant to support the weight of the mantle of human exceptionalism. Reliance on the physical, the material, the natural truncates the domain of human hope and action. The idea of human dignity, as a constitutional principle, grounds ethics as well as law. The common good functions for the good of all. For Lebech, human dignity is, in addition to the recognition of the worth of the human being, “[a] value that can and has been restored by God’s love for us in the redemption brought by Christ” (p. 309).

*Kathleen Haney*

*University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas, USA*

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0957-0582>



Wiesław Wójcik, *Uniwersalność matematyki  
w ujęciu historycznym*  
Częstochowa:  
Uniwersytet Humanistyczno-Przyrodniczy  
im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie,  
2021, 306 pp.

In his monograph *Uniwersalność matematyki w ujęciu historycznym* [Universality of Mathematics in Historical Perspective], Professor Wiesław Wójcik aims to present the universal quality of mathematics from historical and philosophical research perspective. The author explains various aspects of the universality of mathematics that appeared throughout particular historical periods. Wójcik asserts that the development of mathematics is the foundation of cultural and civilizational changes. In his analyses of selected mathematical discoveries, the author shows that mathematics has enabled civilization to enter a higher stage of its development. Owing to mathematical discoveries, many areas (aspects) of reality have been revealed and made accessible to humanity.

The author's reflection on mathematics goes back to the very beginning of mathematical thinking. The emergence of mathematics was primarily driven by the need to solve practical problems, including various trading tasks, land surveying and division, construction, and measuring time. The history of mathematics traces back as far as the prehistoric times when the first abstract mathematical concepts, the natural numbers, were created. Mathematics saw great development in ancient Greece, where geometry, describing spatial relation was rather advanced.

The earliest traces of geometry can be found in ancient Egypt. From experience or perhaps intuitively, humans describe space using the same properties

that can also be described by the axioms of geometry. From these axioms, and definitions of point, line, curve, surfaces, and solids, the theorems that make up the theory of geometry are then derived. The next stage in the rapid development of mathematics was the early modern period, when the foundations of mathematical analysis were laid, notably by René Descartes. Later, the work of Isaac Newton, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Leonhard Euler, Carl Friedrich Gauss, and other eminent mathematicians presented impressive results in the field of analysis, especially by laying foundations of differential and integral calculus. Another important milestone in the history of mathematics was the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, when the investigation of the provability of propositions gained a firm and formal footing through the discoveries in the field of mathematical logic and the introduction of axiomatic theory of sets. In this period, abstract structures also began to be explored. This allowed to verify mathematical statements for a wide group of mathematical objects using one proof. This trend culminated in the mid-20th century with the emergence of the theory of categories, which is considered the most general and abstract mathematical discipline.

Wójcik emphasizes that the universality of mathematics has been present since the beginning of the development of civilization, and was already recognized by some ancient Greek thinkers. One of the elements of this universality became the necessity of teaching mathematics for the formation of proper intellectual, moral, and social attitudes. The methods of proof used in mathematics became a model of strict and rational argumentation. It also became apparent that contradictions perceived in the natural world and in culture could be resolved by the development of mathematics.

Mathematical discoveries are the basis of many inventions, and technical and economic progress. The discovery of mathematical concepts and skills is linked to the individual's development and the development of human species as a whole. The author defends the thesis that the world of values, such as beauty, order, harmony, precision of thought, accuracy or rationality, as well as various social and ethical values, is constantly enriched and expanded thanks to mathematics. Wójcik argues that without the inspirations of mathematics the European culture as we know it would not have emerged. Mathematics has a special place in culture. It is neither a simple science nor art, but it belongs to both at the same time. Art often provides the motivation for the work of mathematicians. Mathematical constructions, structures, and proofs are largely based on aesthetic criteria. Some advanced mathematical theories find applications in technical, natural or social sciences. These sciences make use of mathematics. However, it is difficult to determine the exact line where these sciences begin and where mathematics ends.

In many cases, this connection between mathematics and other sciences is very close, and therefore it is possible to speak of one group of mathematical-natural or even mathematical-natural-technical sciences. Of course, Wojcik is conscious of the development of mathematical sciences, as well as the mathema-

tization of science and culture being permanent. It is therefore difficult to define mathematics as such as well as the extent of its influence.

The patterns in art, music, architecture and literature were defined using mathematical procedures. Logic has been generated according to the pattern of mathematical method, too. Many fundamental issues and questions concerning the essence and nature of humankind and the world have been inspired by mathematical problems and investigations. Mathematics contributes to the definition and direction of research in various philosophical projects. It demystifies many false ideas within philosophical and religious doctrines, clarifies their foundations, and allows for a better and more complete understanding of them. Mathematics promotes precision in reasoning, emphasizes the value of proof and rationality, and speaks out against unauthorized authority, customs, and superstition. Mathematics induces confidence in human abilities because of the effectiveness of its proofs and methods. The beauty of mathematical constructions has great aesthetic value, like other works of human culture.

The author declares that maintaining an adequate level of mathematical knowledge, even at the cost of great intellectual and organizational effort, is necessary to maintain at least the status quo of civilization. Not everyone needs to know and master mathematical structures and techniques of mathematical proof. However, education should show everyone the meaning and value of mathematical activity and provide an opportunity to understand, at least in a minimal way, the place of mathematics in social and civilizational development. It is about maintaining a mathematical culture in society, which, unfortunately, tends to disappear even today.

The reviewed book is very well balanced in content and its scope meets the demanding qualitative and quantitative criteria of a scientific monograph. It is written in a clear and lucid manner and it is also stylistically attractive. The book is well organized and aesthetically pleasing. It consists of six chapters in which the author presents the development of concrete mathematics in the context of Greek *paideia*, abstract mathematics, the development of mathematics as general algorithmic knowledge, modern mathematics and its new dimensions of universality, and, finally, the formation of research programs in modern mathematics and possible further directions for its development.

Contentwise, the individual chapters of the publication aim to clarify the universality of mathematics. The appropriately designed structure of the volume enhances the natural gradation of the development of the main idea of the monograph. The professional, scientific, and didactic level of the reviewed monograph is high. The publication is suitable for not only experts in mathematics, history of science and philosophy, but also for students in teaching training and those showing interest in mathematics and culture.

Together with the pluralistic paradigm of postmodern culture, the fundamental ethical question of moral justification has resurfaced again. In the postmod-

ern context, it is necessary to rethink the need to interiorize values of a moral nature, especially those concerning the way of life of both the individual and community and consequently also the interpersonal coexistence.

The author concludes by referring to Hugo Steinhaus's core belief that mathematics is part of reality, not only in relation to nature but also to the cultural world and to every human being. Being interested in mathematics increases intellectual prowess and improves the quality of life. The message of Wiesław Wójcik's new book can be summed up in a few sentences: Looking at some of the discoveries in the history of mathematics, we can see that mathematics enables us to eliminate the contradictions that might appear in the process of learning about the world. As a result, it opens up the way to a fuller and more comprehensive knowledge of reality. Mathematics allows us to perceive the rational structures in that reality and introduces its new dimensions. Mathematics thus becomes the primary object of our thinking in relation to all types of reality, both sensory and ideal.

*Pavol Dancák*

*University of Prešov, Slovak Republic*

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8067-5651>



Johan Bouwer, Marco van Leeuwen,  
*Philosophy of Leisure—  
Foundations of the Good Life*  
Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge,  
2017, 242 pp.

Western culture has undergone dramatic changes due to both technological development and economic pressures. As a result of social changes, there has also been a shift in the perception of leisure time. In the contemporary era, in addition to the workload, we are also facing a massive attack of consumerism, which is shifting the work–relaxation contrast to a modern form of devaluation of the “I work in order to be able to relax.”

Leisure time as an integral part of human life plays a significant role in its many aspects. For a person of every age, leisure time is important for regeneration, spirituality, relaxation, entertainment, social contacts, and self-realization of interests. Leisure time thus serves a number of functions as elaborated by experts in the field. However, their opinions differ to some extent. Leisure time is most commonly associated with concepts such as freedom, choice, life satisfaction, and independence.

Such interpretation of leisure time and the attempt to provide a precise definition is likened to a utopia, since the various concepts mentioned here are associated with place, time, and, above all, the activities of others. Philosophers have suggested that a distinction should be made between free time and leisure time. Free time is more typical for ancient and medieval societies, whereastory. In ancient and medieval times, for the majority of population, free time was the time off work, when people mostly relaxed and recharged before they returned to work. They also participated in varied events and festivals,

mostly of a religious, cultic, and communal nature, rather than in leisure activities that could mean self-realization and self-development. In contrast, the free time of the privileged ruling class of population was not complementary to or compensatory of work, but a substitute for work. In fact, it was inactivity and idleness.

Oftentimes, one can encounter an opinion that we can only speak of leisure time as a separate and full-fledged category in industrial and post-industrial societies, when activities in society are no longer regulated as a whole by ritual obligations prescribed by the community. Individuals are supposedly free to decide how to use their leisure time, although their choice is socially determined. Paid work is separated from other activities. Its specific organization clearly separates it from free time, or at least allows this separation to take place. Verdon speaks of the emergence of a civilization of leisure to replace the civilization of work. However, the contemporary world is immensely fascinated by activities classified under the category of leisure time, which is no longer understood as a mere antithesis to work. Today, leisure time is also viewed as a form of social and cultural practice in which work and leisure overlap and influence one another. The discrepancies pointed out with new urgency raise fundamental questions: What is leisure time? How is leisure time related to the quality of life? Who is in charge of leisure time? The book *Philosophy of Leisure—Foundations of the Good Life* critically examines the basic principles of leisure time and shows that these questions are still relevant for today's society. Not only does it examine the traditional philosophical concepts that underpin the study of leisure time, but it also follows new ways of its reconceptualization that have emerged from the recent developments in society, technology, and a broader philosophical discipline.

The authors of the reviewed book, Bower and Van Leeuwen, approach the concept of leisure time from a philosophically inquiring perspective, arguing that leisure time is closely linked to the pursuit of happiness, human flourishing, and well-being, making it a state of mind and a state of being. Leisure time is explored through key issues such as identity, ethics, spirituality, human experience, freedom, technology, embodiment, well-being, fundamental properties of leisure time and the challenge of offering a meaningful definition.

The book consists of three parts and two insertions that thematically link the authors' explorations in a very concise way. The first part of the book offers a clear philosophical and historical reflection on the transformations in the understanding of leisure time. The analysis begins with a description of leisure time as understood by ancient Greek philosophers, with an emphasis on the centrality of human happiness and the good life. A brief survey of conceptualizations and interpretations of leisure time throughout history reveals a rather wide range of different complementary but also contradictory dimensions of leisure time. In this vast historical interval, leisure time is identified with entertainment, pleasure, self-development, fitness, health, luxury, contemplation,

idleness, recreation, leisure, consumption, play, prosperity, welfare, spirituality, inner meaning, worship, and celebration. There are three basic characteristics of leisure time: time, activity, and state of mind/being.

The authors assert that leisure time is significantly linked to a life in freedom. The first insertion provides a brief outline of several contemporary typologies. It serves as a bridge between an evaluation of the idea/ideal of leisure time reception in different historical epochs and reflections on fundamental themes in philosophy such as freedom, meaning, identity, and ethics. To describe the modern spirit, the authors use the terms such as modernity and postmodernity. In the second part, concepts such as freedom, meaning, and experience, identity and ethics are analyzed in the context of contemporary applications of leisure time. Freedom and free will are introduced as constitutive elements of leisure. The meaning of leisure and its contribution to the development of personal identity as well as the relations between leisure and ethics are presented, too.

The second insertion bridges the analysis of the foundations of leisure time with possible future directions in leisure time research. The third part explores virtual space and the use of the Internet and social media in leisure time and the link between leisure time and spirituality. The authors draw on the current position of spirituality in the public discourse and address the potential role of leisure time in enhancing well-being. They then analyze leisure time as a means for self-actualization, for self-improvement, that is, the utilization of leisure time in order to become who one wants to be. Thus, leisure time is not meant to be a balancing act between activity, exertion or work as a social function, and we can touch on its positive manifestations. Leisure time is about quieting down and silence. If I retreat “to myself,” I am able to perceive things, listen, contemplate, rest, for example, by sleeping. Knowing how to fall asleep and sleep soundly are not mere physiological necessities.

Time off and rest refer to the Latin *otium* and the Greek *scholion*, meaning idleness, holidays that are linked neither to passivity nor to any other kind of non-working activity. The definition of time off/leisure is first offered in contrast with its basic antithesis, which is work. Work takes up a considerable amount of our time; it absorbs us or even controls us. It makes a person into a worker. It totalizes reality and leaves no room for an alternative. Work transforms activity into purposefulness and instrumentalizes it. Moreover, work must be useful, beneficial, and hard. At the same time, one becomes more and more internally fused with the work process, which is manifested in the way work encroaches on his/her living space, corporeality, and social sphere. On the one hand, the work initiative in search of constant activity and, on the other hand, the strenuousness that is often associated with work do not allow one to experience leisure or to fathom what it actually means. Bouwer and Van Leeuwen emphasize that adequate leisure time improves personal well-being, mental health and facilitates community well-being and the search for solutions to common

problems. They favor the view that the concept of leisure time will be better grasped if it is emphasized that leisure time is fundamentally concerned with psychological well-being.

Leisure time is of immense value, but it is not a value in and of itself, but as an unlimited opportunity for humans to return to themselves, to their authentic full life, to reflect on values, to be conscious of what threatens them and to safeguard them. Choosing the right use of this time is of the utmost importance, especially for children and young people, as it contributes greatly to the formation of their personality and education. Its improper use can lead to socio-pathological phenomena in children and, consequently, in society. With its original approach, the book *Philosophy of Leisure* deepens the knowledge in the field of leisure time research. It is a fascinating reading for students and scholars in the fields of philosophy, theology, sociology, psychology, ethics, pedagogy, as well as for those interested in the research of leisure time.

*Pavol Dancák*

*University of Prešov, Slovak Republic*

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8067-5651>



## Notes on Contributors

**Pavol Dancák**, Professor, Ph.D., is a priest of the Greek-Catholic Archeparchy of Prešov. He holds degree from the Philosophical Faculty of Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow. On April 27, 2005, he attained habilitation in history of philosophy with a book *Historical and Philosophical Reflections of Paideia in the Works of Karol Wojtyła* at the Faculty of Arts, University of Prešov in Prešov, and on January 29, 2011, he was appointed Professor of History of Philosophy. Currently, he is Head of Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies.

**John P. Hittinger**, the Center for Thomistic Studies at the University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas, USA. He is the founder and director of the Pope John Paul II Forum for the Church in the Modern World. He holds degrees from the University of Notre Dame and the Catholic University of America. Dr. Hittinger has published articles on political philosophy, just war theory, and the thought of Karol Wojtyła. He is an ordinary member of the Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas.

**Marek Petro**, Professor, PhD, ThDr. Born in 1967 in Slovakia. He commenced his university studies in 1986 at the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology of Cyril and Methodius in Bratislava. In 1992, he completed his studies at the Greek Catholic Theological Faculty at the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice. He went to Cracow to continue his education at the Pontificia Academia Theologica Cracoviensis where he received a licentiate in theology (ThLic.) in 2000. In 2004, he received a doctorate in theology (ThDr.) and earned his doctoral degree (PhD). In 2007, he obtained his habilitation (doc.) at the Greek Catholic Theological Faculty of Prešov University. In 2015, the president of Slovakia appointed him as University Professor of Catholic Theology. He has

been a lecturer at the Department of Systematic Theology of the Greek Catholic Theological Faculty in Prešov since 1997. Currently, he is holding a position of a fulltime professor specializing in moral theology and bioethics and is Head of the Department of Systematic Theology. He has written several monographs and dozens of academic papers published at home and abroad. As an investigator, he has completed nine international and sixteen national grant projects. He has participated in many domestic and foreign conferences and symposia; he has reviewed numerous monographs, dissertation and habilitation theses. In 1990, he was ordained a priest for the Greek Catholic rite.

**Radovan Šoltés**, (born 1975) Associate Professor Ph.D., Th.D., works at the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies of the Greek-Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Prešov. He authored numerous books and articles. In his works and teaching activities, he focuses mainly on the field of Christian social ethics, spirituality and the relationship between religion, philosophy, and psychology. He is the author of the monographs: *Basic Concepts of Spirituality in the Context of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola and the Dark Night of John of the Cross*; *Care for the Soul in the Contemporary World*; *Politics and Ethics in the Life of the Christian (Political and Economic Systems in the Reflection of Christian Social Ethics)*.

**Krzysztof T. Wiczorek**, Professor, Ph.D., director of the Unit of Logic and Methodology of the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Silesia in Katowice. Studied mathematics at the University of Silesia in Katowice; two semesters of theology at Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg, and philosophy in Cracow and Lublin. Scientific titles and degrees: 1978 Master of Science in Mathematics MSM; 1986 Doctorate degree in Philosophy; 1994 Habilitation Thesis in Philosophy; 2005 Full professor in Philosophy. Author of four books, co-author of five. Published more than 200 articles. Visiting professor at J. Palacký University, Olomouc; M. Bela University, Banska Bystrica; Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice. Research cooperation, among others, with *Die Wolfsburg* Katholische Akademie des Bistums Essen; *Renovabis* Solidaritätsaktion der Diözese München/Freising, Europäische Akademie für Lebensforschung, Integration und Zivilgesellschaft, Wien.

**Krzysztof Wielecki**, Professor of sociology at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw; interested in human philosophy, social ontology, social psychology, economy, theory of subjectivity, theory of civilizational crisis, mass culture. Member of Pontifical Academy of Social Science, Member of Council of International Associate for Critical Realism, Professor of sociology. Member of Pontifical Academy of Social Science, International Associate for Critical Realism, International Sociological Associate, Polish Sociological Associate,

---

Polish Philosophical Associate. Lectures on contemporary and historical social theory. Counsel's Member of the International Association for Critical Realism. Polish Sociological Associate, Polish Philosophical Associate. Lectures on contemporary and historical social theory, social philosophy, economic sociology and social processes. Author of three books and over 100 articles on sociology, philosophy, psychology, and economy.

The publication is indexed in the following databases:

BazHum  
Central and Eastern European Online Library (CEEOL)  
Index Copernicus  
Worldcat  
Erih Plus

Copy-editing Gabriela Marszołek  
Proofreading Joanna Zwierzyńska  
Cover design Emilia Dajnowicz  
Typesetting Marek Zagniński

Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en>

Electronic version is the original one. The journal was previously published  
in printed form with the ISSN 2450-4955.

The journal is distributed free of charge ISSN 2451-2141.

Published by  
**Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego**  
**ul. Bankowa 12B, 40-007 Katowice**  
www.wydawnictwo@us.edu.pl  
e-mail: wydawnictwo@us.edu.pl

First impression. Printed sheets: 9.0. Publishing sheets: 11.0.

Free copy

ISSN 2451-2141



22



9 772451 214206

About this book

