

DIALOGUE AND HUMANISM — DIALOGUE AND UNIVERSALISM

We would like to appeal to authors and readers to participate in the creation of a new stage in our activities. Upon the basis of our experience and, above all, the new, exceptional theoretical and social situation our journal has a chance to become a centre of information about global research, a means of mediation between various philosophical orientations, and a source of truly new thinking which is capable of solving the key problems of contemporary reality and knowledge.

We address representatives of all philosophical currents, of the humanities and natural sciences, theoreticians of culture and civilization, as well as all interested intellectuals.

We invite you to take part in an international cooperation in research and publication, conducted in the spirit of dialogue and with the hope of creating universalism as a metaphilosophy and a general metatheory. The fundamental and decisive criterion for publication will continue to be the high level of the proposed studies. We shall also include and enter into discussions with critical dissertations dealing with universalism. Above all, we invite you to develop universalism itself which, if it is to fulfill its great theoretical and practical mission, must become the object of interest and investigation for the widest possible international philosophical and scholarly milieu.

THE JOURNAL: INFORMATION, INSPIRATION, INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH

We are proud that of all Polish foreign-language periodicals, our publication has taken the first place as regards the number of copies sold and subscribed, selling twice as much as the runner-up. The number of high-quality articles is also growing.

The International Society for Universalism, established in 1989, contributes increasingly towards this progress. It includes such outstanding scholars as prof. Venant Cauchy (Canada), honorary president of FISP, prof. Alice Ehr-Soon Tay (Australia), president of the International Association for Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy, prof. R. Baine Harris (USA), head of the International Society for Neoplatonic Studies, prof. Gert Hummel (FRG), president of the Association of the Chairmen of Philosophical Faculties in the Federal Republic of Germany, prof. Vladislav Lektorskiy (USSR), edi-

tor-in-chief of *Voprosy Filosofii*, prof. Mourad Wahba, president of Afro-Asiatic Philosophical Society, and many other well-known scholars from 17 countries (the number of Polish members of the Society has already exceeded 90).

For many years, we have cooperated with the United Nations University and Unesco, by means of joint conferences and special editions of our journal, sponsored by those organizations.

All these facts, and in particular the exceptional current events which affect above all Poland, inclined us to summarize our 17 years of activity and, in the course of the expansion of its programme, to modify the title of the journal to "Dialogue and Humanism: The Universalist Quarterly".

DIALOGUE AS A METHOD FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

The first word introduced into the new version of the title is "dialogue" since it sums up one of the basic experiences of the environment in which our journal emerged in 1973. At the same time, it constitutes one of the fundamental achievements of the journal. Only outside evaluations, e.g. those formulated from the American Christian perspective, can objectively indicate the importance of our experience.

"...Poland provides the earliest instance of Christian-Marxist dialogue in the world! This comes as a surprise because heretofore my conclusion, as well as other researchers, have pointed to Italy, France, Czechoslovakia, and the Paulus-Gesellschaft dialogues as the earliest instances, dating back to 1964. It is now obvious that the dialogue started in Poland as early as 1956, but certainly by 1962 it reached a developed form. However, the Poles did not announce these dialogues with great fanfare to the international community, and thus their pioneering efforts were known largely only to themselves. This may well be the place, then, to draw attention to this distinctive quality of quiet pioneering in a difficult endeavour. Poland provides for the world not merely an interesting encounter, the experience of which now influences world Christianity through the election of the Polish Karol Cardinal Wojtyla as Pope John Paul II, but also the single longest sustained experience of dialogue. While the example of the Polish dialogue may not shine brilliantly in the sky, its light is like that of a reliable and persistent orientation star which is increasingly being noticed by the world community...". (see P. Mojzes, *Christian-Marxist Dialogue in Eastern Europe*, Minneapolis 1981, p. 73.).

James Will commented on that statement: "The claim to be 'earliest in the world' is somewhat exaggerated. Certainly the work of Christoph Blumhardt, Leonhard Ragaz, Paul Tillich and other 'religious socialists' done prior to World War II must be recognized as earlier forms of Christian-Marxist dialogue. But the Polish dialogue is the earliest in post-World War II Europe" (*Three Worlds of Christian-Marxist Encounters*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia 1985, p. 96).

The dialogue was actually inaugurated in 1956, in a period of anti-Stalinist revolution, during the famous Polish October. Its earliest symptoms were developed in *Po prostu* (a student weekly) in 1955, and its first realizations date from encounters which took place in the Lublin Catholic University, the Jagiellonian University and Warsaw University.

On the pages of *Dialectics and Humanism*, the dialogue between Marxists and Christians reached its maximum intensity and an international dimension. In issue no 1, 1987, devoted to John Paul II, we presented a list of our publications which realized and discussed the dialogue, including works by such known authors as: McGovern, Gregorios, Hummel, Langan, Michaud, Moutsopoulos, Peperzak, Schmitz, Sölle, Shalom, Valverde, and from Poland: Krąpiec (the founder of the school of existentialist Thomism), Swieżawski, Bartnik, Kowalczyk, Kondziela and Majka (most of them representing the Catholic University in Lublin), to mention only Christians.

At the same time, we intensified the dialogue in a planned interaction with social transformations, and in a striving towards their acceleration. Till the end of 1989, the number of publications exceeded 120(!), together with a special issue (guest editor — Paul Mojzes), entitled “Reinvigorating the International Christian-Marxist Dialogue”.

This dialogue essentially altered the prevalent intellectual climate and paved the way for compromise and understanding; it even created precedence for political solutions of significant social questions. During the conference held in honour of the seventieth anniversary of Poland’s independence, organized by *Dialectics and Humanism* at the beginning of November 1988, the co-chairman of one of the sessions dealing with dialogue was prof. Andrzej Stelmachowski, and a number of future ministers of the Solidarity government presented papers. Only several months after our conference, which was held in a spirit of complete freedom and uncompromising discussions, did the famous “round table” talks take place.

Most important for *Dialectics and Humanism* were the transformations of philosophy itself, attained thanks to dialogue. In our publications we extensively documented the thesis that on a global scale development of the Marxist-Christian dialogue and the growth of dialogical philosophy preceded Vatican II by several years, and probably constituted one of the factors which inspired it. The Council itself, its enormously significant contents and the idea of dialogue with non-believers which developed at that time, indubitably influenced changes in socialism.

The first pilgrimage made by John Paul II to Poland in 1979 considerably contributed to producing an atmosphere in which a year later Solidarity could emerge. It undoubtedly influenced many from both of the parties which signed the historic agreements of 1980. We should also mention the discussions concerning a suitable welcome for the Pope in 1987, discussions conducted by a Consultative Board working with the Chairman of the Council of State. Those

debates gathered more representatives of Christianity than Marxists. They helped to prepare a psychological atmosphere for the great compromise of 1989 and, subsequently, for full democracy.

DIALOGUE: A PATH TOWARDS UNIVERSALISM AS METAPHILOSOPHY

There can be no doubt that dialogue both promoted social transformations, and furthered development of each of the philosophies which took part in it. Authentic dialogue cannot be reconciled with any sort of dogmatism, or authoritarianism, and even less so with totalitarianism. It is not surprising that representatives of the dialogue were attacked vehemently by dogmatists from both sides, sometimes to an extent which made all public activity impossible. Charges of revisionism, formulated on an international scale, have been made against the *Dialectics and Humanism* group for many years. In Poland, however, the current of open, dialogue-oriented Marxism was sufficiently strong to survive.

Dialogue was, and remains, a verifier of authentic values. In his most recent encyclical letter *Redemptoris missio...* (December 7, 1990), John Paul II wrote: "Dialogue does not originate from tactical concerns or self-interest, but is an activity with its own guiding principles, requirements and dignity... dialogue is based on hope and love..., dialogue can enrich each side" (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, p. 96—97). Dialogue is also the multiplication of values, a path, open and accessible to all, for the creation of culture. One could say that dialogue is a symptom and a method for the strengthening of democracy, the moulding of joint social existence by all the participating subjects, and not by means of decrees issued at the top.

The most important at this stage is the fact that for *Dialectics and Humanism* dialogue was a thoroughfare leading towards universalism, a destination concretely and extensively confirmed by our publications in the International Library of Universalism, a supplement of our journal. Dialogue revealed, after all, the specific limits of each philosophy, verified their authentic attainments and, at the same time, disclosed the indubitably growing crisis. This is a structural crisis which affects philosophical thought itself. We see more and more clearly that no single philosophy is capable of solving global problems. What is even worse — they are incapable of describing contemporary reality, indicating the perspectives of its further development, or of predicting the future. In the coming issues, we shall publish studies concerning the philosophical premises and consequences of the contemporary socio-historical breakthrough, perhaps the most important in history.

We shall also include new complete studies on dialectics which refer predominantly to its great tradition — Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Hegel, Marx, and Sartre. After all, it is necessary to distinguish this traditions together with the explanatory-inspirational potential of dialectics, from the intellectual and

pseudo-scientific abuses which were committed in its name. NB. contrary to its title, our journal published only several works dealing with dialectics over its entire existence. This has truly been a mistake.

There come to mind at this stage numerous and fascinating problems which we would like to encourage our authors to examine, such as the relation between dialogue, dialectics and universalism. We wrote in the past that “dialogue is the younger brother of dialectics.” Now we would like to express a conviction, which probably will not be shared by many other adherents of universalism, that dialectics can become a vastly useful instrument for the examination and co-creation of a wider and truly great structure of knowledge, which in the near future will take on the form of metaphilosophy. Gurvitch wrote that the facade of the future Palace of the Humanities will bear the motto “Nul n’entre ici, s’il n’est dialecticien”, patterned after the famous inscription about mathematics on the Platonian Academy (*Dialectique et sociologie*, Paris 1962, p. 9).

UNIVERSALISM: FROM METAPHILOSOPHY TO METATHEORY

Universalism most prominently indicates the rank of dialogue as an area “between” philosophies, that great “in between” described by Buber, and a borderline whose invigorating force was analyzed by Bakhtin. Scholars once searched fields between disciplines; now they can search for fertile fields between philosophies. For this reason, although this is not the exclusive cause, universalism will probably progress towards an even more general form of metatheory. Brian Fay unconvincingly criticises efforts aimed at “...constructing a sound metatheory to guide the theorizing of social scientists. For them, an a priori metatheory, if an adequate one were to be articulated, would clearly and unequivocally provide the firm foundation on which to build a theoretically solvent account of human life” (*Metaphilosophy*, no 2/1985, p. 150). Of course, we still do not have at our disposal decisive arguments “pro”, but even the very presentation of *the hypothesis of metatheory*, and its testing, could prove to be a source of knowledge and seems to be indispensable in order to have, at the very least, a cognitive horizon.

One can accept initially that universalism must be a metatheory so that it could embrace not only philosophy but also other domains of knowledge, as well as reality itself. If it is to be really an all-embracing metatheory, then universalism must include the history and contemporaneity of all theories, including philosophy, science as well as wisdom which is so greatly needed today; at the same time, it must contain entire being, which is penetrated in the course of direct, possibly intuitive, and universalistic cognition. Furthermore, it must, upon the basis of the already known laws of transformation, construe an a priori synthesis, one which is obviously temporary but indispensable for further activity. By no means will this lead to a new utopia, for we assume varieties of developmental tendencies and the co-decisive role of all subjects.

This conclusion forces us to take the next step: universalism as an a priori synthesis justifies the path towards scientific, or at any rate, rational social engineering (which, after all, was not rejected even by Popper), the cocreation of a new reality. Universalism assumes and implies maximum responsibility; by embracing all, it could become the Truth of reality (Hegel wrote that truth is the whole). However, unable to come to terms with the existing social, natural and technological existence, it must follow the principle of Creation. We wrote some time ago that universalism is the theoretical correlate of the most important and all-embracing contemporary process — the transition from mankind in itself, as a collection of nations and states, to mankind for itself, as a free and self-creating global community. A correlate means here reflection and an imperative.

We shall have to construe from the above mentioned premises a great moral programme for universalism. By including therein all the authentic and universal values, regardless of when and where they were produced, the programme should be based this time on the solidarity of all men (the history of the Polish Solidarity could, in a sociological analysis, which we plan to commence soon, become an instructive experience). Although there will probably be no great difficulties with establishing a NEW TABLE, which will certainly include the Decalogue, it will by no means be easy to indicate the paths of its realization, or to free oneself from particular contexts. Possibly, this new Table will be headed by such indispensable values as diligence, innovation, existential earnestness and honesty.

In a summary of the above outlined successive attempts at describing universalism, we shall propose, as an inspiration for further research, the following persuasive definition which also includes projects of its own: *universalism is a metatheory, an a priori synthesis and cocreation of the divergence, codependencies and unity of the components of an ontical-ontological and ethical order of the world, including, above all, the meaning of history and the meaning of life.*

Exemplification is to be found in the already rather numerous publications of the International Library of Universalism, the Polish-language Biblioteka Dialogu (Library of Dialogue), in a special issue of *Dialectics and Humanism* (3/1990), entitled “Universalism Today: Beginnings of a Critical Discussion”, and in Proceedings of the Second Symposium of Universalism (Berlin, August 1990).

**DIALOGUE AND HUMANISM AS A JOURNAL OF UNIVERSALISM,
PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE**

Our group has also produced a successful Polish-language periodical *Sztuka i Filozofia* (Art and Philosophy) which offers artists direct possibilities for publishing and exerting an impact of their own. Altogether, two periodicals and two libraries — the ILU series (in English) and the Library of Dialogue (in Polish) — are at the disposal of our authors and readers.

The International Society for Universalism, which from 1990 has acted as a cosponsor of our journal, will certainly play an ever greater role in increasingly wide circles of philosophers and scientists.

Plans of research, which we shall publish in the next issue, will demonstrate concrete perspectives and projects. Today, universalism can be cocreated as undoubtedly the most suitable answer to the “challenges of the ideological vacuum” (the title of a colloquium which is to take place in Oxford, on August 15—18, 1991). Already at this time, universalism can become a barrier against individualism and egoism, the ideology of post-modernism and all sorts of fundamentalisms and totalitarianisms.

Universalism will also be capable of examining and solving the problems of nationalisms while retaining the most authentic values of national cultures. The traditions of European Romanticism have provided an especially valuable inspiration. In order to develop an intermingling of differences and unity, constitutive for universalism, and their complementariness, we shall be able, for instance, to expand Trentowski’s conception of “*roźnojednia*” (“...an untranslatable Polish term, by which he meant ‘uniting but not dissolving, preserving the difference but making it relative’”, A. Walicki, *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism*, Clarendon Press 1982, pp. 156—157). We shall also refer to his great praise of divergence in *Foundations of Universal Philosophy* (Warszawa 1978, p. 655, in Polish).

Finally, let us explain the change of the subtitle from “The Polish Philosophical Quarterly” to “The Universalist Quarterly”. An increasing number of our readers come from very distant parts of the world, and their interests concern predominantly that which is universal, or which originates from a Polish foundation but aspires to universalism. In the book entitled *Sens polskiej historii* (The Meaning of Polish History) as well as in *Dialectics and Humanism* (2/1990), Aleksander Gieysztor, the president of the Polish Academy of Sciences, wrote that “Polish culture cultivated universalism through its membership in Europe, an entity perceived as a cohesive collection of values”. In the course of a discussion conducted by our Universalist Forum, on “Universalism and the Specificity of Polish Culture”, a book published by the Lublin Catholic University, we mentioned that thanks to the principle of multilevel identification, we are able to preserve authentic national qualities, by linking them first with European and subsequently with universal values. The same could be probably said about various American, Asian or African national cultures which strive towards the retention of their identities, to be followed by the cocreation of continental culture and, finally, by participation in universal global cultures and, most distinctly of all, in global civilization.

There are great tasks which face all of us, representatives of so many countries. *Dialogue and Humanism: The Universalist Quarterly* will serve all scholars and philosophers, regardless of differences of opinion, in a realization of those tasks. They are so great that we should quickly change our periodical into

a bimonthly or even a monthly. This decision will certainly be made, and the date depends only on the number of the authors and subscribers. With joint effort, we can turn *Dialogue and Humanism* into a publication indispensable for individual scholars and academic institutions.

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