

CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDENTITY

ABSTRACTS

FROM THE EDITORS – Sisyphus Facing Neurophysiology (D.Ch)

Albert Camus wrote that if the myth of Sisyphus is tragic, it is so because its hero is conscious. The particular time when his consciousness surfaces is the time when he descends the slope in order to get his stone and roll it up again to the top of the mountain. It is then, in these moments of going back down to the plain, that Sisyphus fully realizes his fate and becomes deeply aware that there is no hope for him to overcome his plight. Yet the consciousness of this circumstance, “the lucidity that was to constitute his torture,”<sup>1</sup> turns out his victory. In this time of lucidity, Sisyphus is “superior to his fate.”<sup>2</sup> Using the language of philosophy, one might say that through the consciousness of his fate Sisyphus discovers his own subjectivity, the fact that, in his being, he infinitely transcends the fate to which his existence has been reduced – indeed, he realizes that no fate may ever encompass or exhaust the entirety of a human existence, that “something” will always be left out, that there will always be “something” that surpasses the limitations the fate imposes and that prevails over any determinants. This “something” is consciousness. It is from his consciousness that Sisyphus draws the power that makes him capable of going beyond his condition, the power to surmount his fate with the attitude of scorn which pervades it with individuality and uniqueness, even if it be shared by entire human masses.

While Camus observes that his consciousness gives Sisyphus the power to overcome his enslavement, he stops this line of thought with the statement that “there is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn.”<sup>3</sup> However, the attitude of scorn is not the only way to discover subjectivity. Consciousness may guide the subject – in the cognitive sense as well as in the moral one – also in other directions, and find its concretization when it surfaces as experiences, emotions, reflections, vacillations, resolutions, and not infrequently as dramatic choices. In each of such cases, the human being, in one way or another – yet always

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<sup>1</sup> A. C a m u s, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, translated by J. O’Brien (New York–Toronto: Vintage Books 1991, 121.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

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owing to her consciousness – acquires a vision of her fate, finds herself «above» it, and in some sense assumes a relation to it by adopting a particular attitude. While the world of the myth of Sisyphus is a closed and lonely one, as it is populated by Sisyphus alone, the real world in which a human subject lives is open, changeable, it happens to be discontinuous, and even the monotony and uniformity of life does not render it unchangeable. Thus a human consciousness in it is even more deeply motivated to seek the categories by means of which to grasp the fate, to properly relate to it. A particular manifestation of the movement of consciousness triggered by the desire to grasp the sense of human experience can be seen in culture, which, through literary works, art or film expresses, in the global sense, the human concern to name the fate and so to become superior to it, to reach a higher vantage point.

One might say that the consciousness of one's fate, the self-reference on the part of a human subject actually determines the identity of the human being. It is true about the identity of a human being in time (conscious experience in a way builds up within the human being and its successive layers inform one another in an individual life) as well as about the identity of the human being in the sense of the genus-differentia definition.

The question about the constitution of subjectivity or, to come back to the insight offered by Camus, the question “What makes Sisyphus capable of consciousness?,” in various ways animates arts and humanities, and recently it has become the focus of cognitive sciences conceived of as an interdisciplinary effort to reconstruct the functioning of the human mind, which is seen as the specific environment in which the phenomenon of consciousness emerges. Thus cognitivists and neurocognitivists: biologists, neurobiologists, neurophysiologists, psychologists, philosophers (above all epistemologists), linguists, anthropologists, as well as specialists in computer science, focus their research efforts on understanding the structure and the function of cognitive processes based on the mechanisms of the brain. Within the field of cognitive sciences, the mind is compared to a computer, an information processing unit, and there are attempts to model cognitive processes by means of artificial neural networks. The particular cognitive disciplines develop rapidly and their advancements are frequently used in new technologies since the results of the latter are based on accurate information processing. The research in question must not be rebutted and its results may not be refuted; it would be impossible to justify the claim that it does not explain the functioning of the human mind or that it fails to reconstruct the mechanisms which determine the emergence of conscious mental processes. Yet an epistemological want remains, accompanied by disbelief, or even by a metaphysical fear in the face of the question: Is it really a fact that the basis of our consciousness, self-consciousness and subjectivity is something extremely complex and difficult to reconstruct, and yet something ultimately so banal, incommensurate in the existential sense to the experience of the drama of the human fate, of which Sisyphus provides a paradigm?

It seems that such fears resemble, in their essence, the anxiety about the consequences of physicalism advanced in the philosophy of the turn of the 20th century, except that the modern day theory no longer deconstructs an existing, metaphysical vision of the reality, but supported by the apparatus of the scien-

ces, renders such a vision impossible, replacing it with a “closed,” reductionist, functional explanation proposed within the framework of ontological materialist monism which may assume the shape of an infinite regress. There is no hope that, at some stage of this explanation, there will appear a novelty and the further results will disclose other than functional nature of our experiences. One may, however, put forward the objection that the cognitivist theories of the mind do not account for the experiences for the explanation of which they were initially produced, as they do not account for the move from microstructure to macrostructure or from explanation to explanandum, and thus they do not “save the phenomena.” Yet, if the reply to this objection is that the phenomena in question are illusory, we lose the basis for further queries.

However, the issues concerning consciousness and identity are considered in modern philosophy also irrespectively of cognitive research, above all by analytic philosophy. It seems though that the experience of subjectivity, with its core in the concurrence of a conscious experience and a sense of existential identity, cannot be grasped even within this discipline, as it focuses on an analysis of concepts and the relations obtaining among them, and does not attempt a study of the nature of beings. Moreover, even if analytic philosophers assume that consciousness is an irreducible phenomenon, the initial definitions of the concepts which they subject to analysis, as well as the accepted rules of their use, inevitably determine the research field and the research results as such.

In the articles collected in the present volume, the readers will find a survey of contemporary thought on consciousness and identity, pointing to its main pillars: functionalism, the concept of *qualia* and that of emergence. Some of the authors argue with the philosophers whose views they analyze: Marcin Miłkowski, the translator of David Chalmers’s *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory* into Polish, points to the difficulties inherent in the theory of mind developed by the Australian philosopher, while Witold M. Hensel analyzes some paradoxical consequences of the account of personal identity proposed by Sydney Shoemaker and simultaneously shows the limitations of philosophical argument which draws above all on thought experiments. Mariusz Grygianiec analyzes the so-called simple view of personal identity, pointing that it is coherent with the animalist standpoint and asserting that the concept of person, due to its vague sense, is insignificant to ontology. Renata Ziemińska explores the understanding of consciousness and subject in modern philosophy, showing that they ultimately remain a mystery. Robert Poczobut discusses paradoxes in three types of the explanation of consciousness, referring, respectively, to its neural correlates, to causal laws and to the fundamental mental and physical laws. Jakub Gomułka presents a short history of the development of the issues related to consciousness in the analytic philosophy of mind and in cognitive sciences, referring, in particular, to the standpoint of mysterianism held by Colin McGinn and proposing its reformulation so that it might be situated between physicalist reductionism and antireductionism. Jarosław Merecki, SDS, describes the significance of consciousness in the constitution of subjectivity and transcendence in Karol Wojtyła’s philosophy.

Although consciousness and identity, as well as human subjectivity occurring as their result, are principally philosophical concepts, they function also in other

contexts, in which their aspects essentially overlooked in the philosophical and cognitivist analyses are brought to light. Drawing upon postcolonial conceptual framework, Dariusz Skórczewski offers a reflection on the consciousness and identity of the nations of East Central Europe which are overcoming the trauma of communism, and focuses on the alleged inferiority of their historical experience, as implied by the analyses made by Western scholars. Andrzej Gniazdowski discusses the issue of political identity in reference to the person of Edith Stein and analyzes the evolution of her attitude to the German State. Mariusz Bryl combines the post-colonial perspective and the political one, and describes the gradual decline of the national consciousness and identity of the Poles after 1989, pointing to the oversimplification of the symbolic sphere in Poland, which has paradoxically coincided, in the public space, with the ubiquity of myth-creating works of Artur Grottger. Katarzyna Gurczyńska-Sady engages in polemics with Ewa Domańska and discusses the concept of subject in the post-postmodern humanities, postulating the necessity to return to the «strong» subject. Mordecai Roshwald writes about the clash between «might» and «right» in the Biblical narrative, pointing to the way the consciousness of their protagonists is shaped, as well as to the process in which the imperative of conscience comes to being.

The intention of the editors of *Ethos* was that the spirit of the present volume should resemble that of the seminars hosted by Pope John Paul II in Castel Gandolfo. They provided an opportunity for researchers and scientists representing various domains of human knowledge and various outlooks on life to meet and reflect together on issues which demand combined perspectives of view. The objective of those meetings was not original conclusions as such, but above all an exchange of ideas and points of view for the sake of cognitive openness: so that the intuitions others cherish may become an inspiration. The editors of *Ethos* hope that the volume on the issues of consciousness and identity will be received by the readers in this very spirit.

#### JOHN PAUL II – Metaphysics of the Person

In both East and West, we may trace a journey which has led humanity down the centuries to meet and engage truth more and more deeply. It is a journey which has unfolded – as it must – within the horizon of personal self-consciousness: the more human beings know reality and the world, the more they know themselves in their uniqueness, with the question of the meaning of things and of their very existence becoming ever more pressing. This is why all that is the object of our knowledge becomes a part of our life. The admonition «Know yourself» was carved on the temple portal at Delphi, as testimony to a basic truth to be adopted as a minimal norm by those who seek to set themselves apart from the rest of creation as “human beings,” that is as those who «know themselves.»

Moreover, a cursory glance at ancient history shows clearly how in different parts of the world, with their different cultures, there arise at the same time the fundamental questions which pervade human life: Who am I? Where have

I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life? These are the questions which we find in the sacred writings of Israel, as also in the Veda and the Avesta; we find them in the writings of Confucius and Lao-Tze, and in the preaching of Tirthankara and Buddha; they appear in the poetry of Homer and in the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles, as they do in the philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle. They are questions which have their common source in the quest for meaning which has always compelled the human heart. In fact, the answer given to these questions decides the direction which people seek to give to their lives.

[...]

Men and women have at their disposal an array of resources for generating greater knowledge of truth so that their lives may be ever more human. Among these is philosophy, which is directly concerned with asking the question of life's meaning and sketching an answer to it. Philosophy emerges, then, as one of noblest of human tasks. According to its Greek etymology, the term philosophy means "love of wisdom." Born and nurtured when the human being first asked questions about the reason for things and their purpose, philosophy shows in different modes and forms that the desire for truth is part of human nature itself. It is an innate property of human reason to ask why things are as they are, even though the answers which gradually emerge are set within a horizon which reveals how the different human cultures are complementary.

Philosophy's powerful influence on the formation and development of the cultures of the West should not obscure the influence it has also had upon the ways of understanding existence found in the East. Every people has its own native and seminal wisdom which, as a true cultural treasure, tends to find voice and develop in forms which are genuinely philosophical. One example of this is the basic form of philosophical knowledge which is evident to this day in the postulates which inspire national and international legal systems in regulating the life of society.

Nonetheless, it is true that a single term conceals a variety of meanings. Hence the need for a preliminary clarification. Driven by the desire to discover the ultimate truth of existence, human beings seek to acquire those universal elements of knowledge which enable them to understand themselves better and to advance in their own self-realization. These fundamental elements of knowledge spring from the wonder awakened in them by the contemplation of creation: human beings are astonished to discover themselves as part of the world, in a relationship with others like them, all sharing a common destiny. Here begins, then, the journey which will lead them to discover ever new frontiers of knowledge. Without wonder, men and women would lapse into deadening routine and little by little would become incapable of a life which is genuinely personal.

[...]

One of the most significant aspects of our current situation, it should be noted, is the "crisis of meaning." Perspectives on life and the world, often of a scientific temper, have so proliferated that we face an increasing fragmentation of knowledge. This makes the search for meaning difficult and often fruitless. Indeed, still more dramatically, in this maelstrom of data and facts in which we live and

which seem to comprise the very fabric of life, many people wonder whether it still makes sense to ask about meaning. The array of theories which vie to give an answer, and the different ways of viewing and of interpreting the world and human life, serve only to aggravate this radical doubt, which can easily lead to skepticism, indifference or to various forms of nihilism.

In consequence, the human spirit is often invaded by a kind of ambiguous thinking which leads it to an ever deepening introversion, locked within the confines of its own immanence without reference of any kind to the transcendent. A philosophy which no longer asks the question of the meaning of life would be in grave danger of reducing reason to merely accessory functions, with no real passion for the search for truth.

To be consonant with the word of God, philosophy needs first of all to recover its sapiential dimension as a search for the ultimate and overarching meaning of life. This first requirement is in fact most helpful in stimulating philosophy to conform to its proper nature. In doing so, it will be not only the decisive critical factor which determines the foundations and limits of the different fields of scientific learning, but will also take its place as the ultimate framework of the unity of human knowledge and action, leading them to converge towards a final goal and meaning. This sapiential dimension is all the more necessary today, because the immense expansion of humanity's technical capability demands a renewed and sharpened sense of ultimate values. If this technology is not ordered to something greater than a merely utilitarian end, then it could soon prove inhuman and even become potential destroyer of the human race.

The word of God reveals the final destiny of men and women and provides a unifying explanation of all that they do in the world. This is why it invites philosophy to engage in the search for the natural foundation of this meaning, which corresponds to the religious impulse innate in every person. A philosophy denying the possibility of an ultimate and overarching meaning would be not only ill-adapted to its task, but false.

Yet this sapiential function could not be performed by a philosophy which was not itself a true and authentic knowledge, addressed, that is, not only to particular and subordinate aspects of reality – functional, formal or utilitarian – but to its total and definitive truth, to the very being of the object which is known. This prompts a second requirement: that philosophy verify the human capacity to know the truth, to come to a knowledge which can reach objective truth by means of that *adaequatio rei et intellectus* to which the Scholastic Doctors referred. This requirement, proper to faith, was explicitly reaffirmed by the Second Vatican Council: "Intelligence is not confined to observable data alone. It can with genuine certitude attain to reality itself as knowable, though in consequence of sin that certitude is partially obscured and weakened" (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, Section 15).

A radically phenomenalist or relativist philosophy would be ill-adapted to help in the deeper exploration of the riches found in the word of God. Sacred Scripture always assumes that the individual, even if guilty of duplicity and mendacity, can know and grasp the clear and simple truth. The Bible, and the New Testament in particular, contains texts and statements which have a ge-

nuinely ontological content. The inspired authors intended to formulate true statements, capable, that is, of expressing objective reality. It cannot be said that the Catholic tradition erred when it took certain texts of Saint John and Saint Paul to be statements about the very being of Christ. In seeking to understand and explain these statements, theology needs therefore the contribution of a philosophy which does not disavow the possibility of a knowledge which is objectively true, even if not perfect. This applies equally to the judgements of moral conscience, which Sacred Scripture considers capable of being objectively true.

The two requirements already stipulated imply a third: the need for a philosophy of genuinely metaphysical range, capable, that is, of transcending empirical data in order to attain something absolute, ultimate and foundational in its search for truth. This requirement is implicit in sapiential and analytical knowledge alike; and in particular it is a requirement for knowing the moral good, which has its ultimate foundation in the Supreme Good, God himself. Here I do not mean to speak of metaphysics in the sense of a specific school or a particular historical current of thought. I want only to state that reality and truth do transcend the factual and the empirical, and to vindicate the human being's capacity to know this transcendent and metaphysical dimension in a way that is true and certain, albeit imperfect and analogical. In this sense, metaphysics should not be seen as an alternative to anthropology, since it is metaphysics which makes it possible to ground the concept of personal dignity in virtue of their spiritual nature. In a special way, the person constitutes a privileged locus for the encounter with being, and hence with metaphysical enquiry.

Wherever men and women discover a call to the absolute and transcendent, the metaphysical dimension of reality opens up before them: in truth, in beauty, in moral values, in other persons, in being itself, in God. We face a great challenge at the end of this millennium to move from phenomenon to foundation, a step as necessary as it is urgent. We cannot stop short at experience alone; even if experience does reveal the human being's interiority and spirituality, speculative thinking must penetrate to the spiritual core and the ground from which it rises. Therefore, a philosophy which shuns metaphysics would be radically unsuited to the task of mediation in the understanding of Revelation.

[...]

Insisting on the importance and true range of philosophical thought, the Church promotes both the defence of human dignity and the proclamation of the Gospel message. There is today no more urgent preparation for the performance of these tasks than this: to lead people to discover both their capacity to know the truth and their yearning for the ultimate and definitive meaning of life. In the light of these profound needs, inscribed by God in human nature, the human and humanizing meaning of God's word also emerges more clearly. Through the mediation of a philosophy which is also true wisdom, people today will come to realize that their humanity is all the more affirmed the more they entrust themselves to the Gospel and open themselves to Christ.

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The Polish Edition, 19(1998) No. 11, p. 4f., 31f., 38. The title comes from the editors. © Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

Mordecai ROSHWALD – “Might” and “Right” in the Biblical Narrative (trans. P. Mikulska)

The confrontation of Might and Right is one of the basic themes of the Bible. Indeed, the imperative of commitment to Right and the belief in its vindication can be considered to be a major contribution of the Israelite civilization to the Western creed. The present essay explores this theme in some Biblical stories – such as that of Joseph and the tale of the exodus from Egypt – where it is not obvious. The paper also highlights this major theme in some other narratives, where the issue is explicitly articulated.

Yet, the belief in the vindication of Right is challenged in the Bible itself, as well as in post-Biblical literature, in the face of Israelite (Jewish) and universal human experience. An indirect response to such challenge is implied in eschatological prophecy and in messianic beliefs, which envisage a perfect world of universal peace and justice.

Keywords: Biblical studies, the Bible, law, conscience, Biblical narratives, Abraham, Joseph, David, Ahab, Moses

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Jakub GOMUŁKA – The Issue of Consciousness in the Contemporary Analytic Philosophy of Mind

My article deals with the problem of consciousness in the contemporary analytic philosophy of mind. In its first part I present the historical background of the problem, namely the Cartesian dualism, and the rise and development of cognitive sciences and neurosciences. I explain Ned Block’s «phenomenal consciousness» / «access consciousness» dichotomy, the concept of «explanatory gap» and, of course, the famous concept of *qualia*.

The second part concerns the arguments for and against the irreducibility of (phenomenal) consciousness and *qualia* like Frank Jackson’s Knowledge Argument and its critique by David Lewis and Daniel Dennett.

The third part is devoted to the idea of so-called “new mysterians” (e.g. Colin McGinn). In my opinion McGinn’s standpoint offers a tempting «middle way» between reductionism and anti-reductionism. However, I find his solution unacceptable due to its rampant idealistic assumption that there can be a physical theory unavailable for our cognitive abilities. Such a position can be dubbed «*an sich* physicalism» – after Kantian concept of *Ding an sich* – and it must be rejected for any thinker who rejects the possibility that the latter concept can be intelligible.

Therefore at the end of my paper I introduce an idea of «meta-mysterianism,» another conception of the «third way» avoiding both reductionism and anti-reductionism in the analytic philosophy of mind.

Keywords: philosophy of mind, *qualia*, consciousness, explanatory gap, mysterianism

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### Robert POCZOBUT – Paradoxes in Explaining Consciousness

There is a widely held and deeply rooted conviction that consciousness is something mysterious and paradoxical. Yet despite this belief interdisciplinary research is conducted nowadays with the objective to explain the origin, structure and function of consciousness. Throughout the process, the following questions arise: Are mysterians right in claiming that consciousness will always remain outside the explanatory capabilities of science? Or should we rather put faith in the assertions of the scientists and philosophers who hold that the puzzle of consciousness will soon be solved and the paradoxes related to it rendered merely ostensible?

In the present article, I scrutinize some theoretical difficulties engendered by four different projects developed with the goal to explain consciousness. The first one seeks neural correlates of consciousness, the second stresses the need to construct a causal explanation; the third postulates that consciousness should be explained by means of the fundamental mental and physical laws, and the fourth refers to the mechanistic model of explanation accepted within neuro-cognitivism.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: consciousness, explanation, paradox, naturalism, emergence, mind, cognitive neuroscience

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**Renata ZIEMIŃSKA – Two Concepts of Consciousness and Subject**

In contemporary research on the nature of mind there are two basic notions of consciousness: first-person (phenomenal) consciousness and third-person awareness. The first one is the feeling qualities, the second one is reacting to stimuli and processing information. Similarly, we have two concepts of the subject. The subject of phenomenal consciousness is the centre of the stream of consciousness, the agent and owner of all feelings. The subject of awareness is a conscious system, usually a biological organism, carrying on the conscious processes. The naturalistic approach cannot successfully explain how the binding of different data is going on to become the one stream of consciousness with identical I as its centre. The first-person approach cannot successfully explain the identity of consciousness and body. The two perspectives complement each other.

Keywords: consciousness, subject, I, personal identity

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**Jarosław MERECKI, SDS – Subjectivity and Transcendence: Consciousness in the Philosophy of Karol Wojtyła and in John Paul II's Theology of the Body**

The paper presents the understanding of the essence and the functions of consciousness in the philosophical writings of Karol Wojtyła and in the theology of the body developed by John Paul II. In his philosophy, Wojtyła uses the phenomenological method, but tries to go beyond phenomenology, combining it with metaphysics of the Aristotelian origin. In contrast to the phenomenological tradition, Wojtyła maintains that consciousness is not intentional. In this context he distinguishes between knowing something and being conscious of something. An act of knowledge puts the subject in contact with the reality that exists independently of it, whereas consciousness has two functions: it reflects the content of knowledge (reflective function) and interiorizes it (reflexive function). According to Wojtyła, this twofold process allows the subject to arrive at the knowledge of the objective truth and at the same time reveals the normative power of truth.

Keywords: Karol Wojtyła, John Paul II, subjectivity, transcendence, theology of the body, normative power of truth

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Marcin MIŁKOWSKI – David Chalmers' Curious Theory of Consciousness

In this paper, I argue that the supposedly new theory of consciousness proposed recently by David Chalmers is very close to classical functionalism. Indeed, it treats some of the controversial assumptions of functionalism as naturally necessary. This is, however, very unfortunate, as they lead to numerous tensions in his view. In the first part, I analyze the functionalist theory of independence of complex organizations from their material realization. Then, I sketch several functionalist theories of consciousness as a background for Chalmers' own theory. *Pace* Chalmers, some of them are theories of qualities of experience as well. In the third part, I show that Chalmers, instead of rejecting the functionalist independence claims, retains them as "the principle of organizational invariance". This, however, leads to the very problems that made functionalism a bad candidate for a theory of consciousness (at least according to Chalmers' own view). Lastly, I argue that he has to either view the hard problem of consciousness as pseudo-problem or reject his own theory as insufficient, as it is mere rebranding of classical computational functionalism and has no serious answer to the hard problem of consciousness.

Keywords: David Chalmers, theory of consciousness, functionalism

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Mariusz GRYGIANIEC – The Criteria of Personal Identity and the So-Called Simple View

The problem of personal identity over time boils down to the question of an appropriate (constitutive) criterion of numerical identity: what are informative, non-trivial, non-circular necessary and sufficient conditions that determine whether two (temporally indexed) persons are one and the same continuant person. In the philosophical literature these criteria fall standardly into one of the three families: the psychological approach, the somatic approach and the simple view. In my article I try, first, to demonstrate that the third approach – contrary to widespread opinion – can be compatible with some version of animalism, according to which each human person is identical with a biological organism, and second, to deliver some arguments which can be used in support of the view that it is impossible to formulate appropriate criteria of personal identity.

Keywords: identity, criteria, person, organism, animalism, simple view

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Witold M. HENSEL – A Long Road to Nowhere: On Sydney Shoemaker's Functionalism Theory of Personal Identity

The paper presents and criticizes Sydney Shoemaker's account of personal identity. Briefly stated, Shoemaker's theory says that personal identity over time consists in psychological continuity, unless there has been branching involved. The first three sections describe the standard construal of the problem and recount how Shoemaker developed his theory from Locke's memory theory. Section 4 discusses how functionalism is supposed to shed light on the notion of personal identity, and section 5 gives a short summary of the theory's shortcomings. I argue that: (1) Shoemaker's definition of psychological continuity is elliptical and, thus, has no bearing on the puzzling borderline cases most theories of personal identity attempt to handle; (2) Shoemaker's theory lacks explanatory value, because its functionalist framework relies for content on a non-existent psychological theory; (3) the functionalist framework is at odds with the formal constraint of transitivity Shoemaker, like most authors, sets on the notion of personal identity; and (4), appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, Shoemaker's theory is not concerned with the nature of personal identity, but with one of its several concepts, which is to say that, treated as a metaphysical account, it is simply a collection of unjustified claims about the mind.

Keywords: Sydney Shoemaker, identity, personal identity, theory of identity, Locke's memory theory, functionalism

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Andrzej GNIAZDOWSKI – An Attempt at the Reconstruction of the Political Identity of Edith Stein

The article focuses on the significance of the issue of political identity in the early thought of Edith Stein. The motivation behind this project was the author's belief that the issue in question must have been among Edith Stein's theoretical interests since the central theme of her philosophical investigations was the structure of the human person.

The objective of the present considerations is to demonstrate that Stein's reflections included in her work *An Investigation Concerning the State* are guided by the fundamental question about the meaning of the belonging of the human being in the «world of the spirit» in the sense Husserl attributed to this category in the second volume of his *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*. An attempt at the reading of Stein's *Investigation Concerning the State* with a view to exploring the significance of the problem of political identity in it involves an interpretation of this work in the context of her earlier studies: *On the Problem of Empathy*, *Sentient Causality*, and *Individual and Community*, in which she analyzed the questions of the structure and identity of the human person.

The article demonstrates a twofold attempt: to explore the political identity of Edith Stein herself and to analyze the shaping of her political consciousness on the basis of her autobiographical writings and her letters. In order to bring out the theoretical foundations of Stein's *Investigation Concerning the State*, as well as to describe the relation between the problems she discusses there and the analysis of the human person she advanced elsewhere, the biographical context of her research is characterized.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajka*

Keywords: phenomenology, sciences about the spirit, philosophy of the State, political consciousness, the structure of the human person

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Dariusz SKÓRCZEWSKI – Nation: The strange entity that refuses to disappear from the discourse of the humanities

East Central Europe has for long been dismissed in various ways by Western politicians and scholars, both of which groups continue to perceive it through Hans Kohn's misleading yet prevalent dichotomy between two types of nationalism: a «good» Western and a «bad» Eastern nationalism. Discursive practices resulting from Kohn's reductionist and fundamentally wrong approach, examples of which are briefly discussed in the paper, are considered indicators of Saidean «orientalism» that «failed to identify with human experience» and are held responsible for the duplication of a paternalistic descriptive style predominant in contemporary Western discourses on East Central Europe. Postcolonial theory as developed by Said provides an illuminating explanatory context for the complex phenomena resulting from the current hegemony of the «West» over ECE, such as inferiority complex, subaltern status, incapacitation, and the powerful feeling of dissociation from the community of sovereign political and cultural entities. Drawing upon postcolonial conceptual framework, the paper offers a different perspective on the question of nationalism, one that does

«accept» the concept of nation. Through the analysis of Frantz Fanon's and Leszek Kołakowski's two seminal essays, nation is viewed as a positive factor in the process of recovery of the collective subjectivity of postcolonial society, and by no means as an anachronism in the contemporary world that is supposedly «postnational.» The paper concludes with a proposal that the East Central European historical experience, alongside the emerging postcolonial studies in East Central Europe, be deemed an impulse for a reconsideration of the «anti-nationalist» attitudes of modern humanities, thus aiding the dominant Western discourses in disposing of their pernicious orientalist clichés and stereotypes of ECE.

Keywords: nation, nationalism, East Central Europe, postcolonialism, orientalism, postnationality, Frantz Fanon, Leszek Kołakowski

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Katarzyna GURCZYŃSKA-SADY – What will Follow Postmodernism, or Nostalgia for a «Strong» Subject: Some Remarks on Ewa Domańska's *Historia egzystencjalna*

The article concerns the problem of the subject of historiography, raised by Ewa Domańska in her recently published book *Historia egzystencjalna. Krytyczne studium narratywizmu i humanistyki zaangażowanej* [„Existential History: Critical Approach to Narrativism and Emancipatory Humanities”] (PWN, Warsaw 2012). Domańska asks about the future of historiography at the time when the impact of the postmodern ideas ceases in the culture in general and provides a critical picture of the narrativist style in history. She focuses on the Anglo-American version of narrativism and attempts to point to the main trends that persisted among modern historians who were influenced by the narrativist approach.

The present article is to be a ground for polemical questions concerning the «strong» subject postulated by Domańska, who constructs its figure in opposition to the «weak» subject, the alter-ego of postmodern subjectivity. The idea of the «new» subject has been criticized by indicating that the task of philosophy is to search for the subject rather than create it, even if the aims Domańska proposed to achieve may be actually valid.

Keywords: postmodernism, the future of humanities, historiography, the narrativist turn, the «weak» subject, the «strong» subject, antiessentialism

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## Mariusz BRYL – Poland Swarming with Grottger...

The author reflects on the poor historical consciousness of contemporary Poles, determined to a large degree by the present condition of the Polish State, which, after 1989, adopted a hybrid political system defined as the Third Republic of Poland. Whereas the communist period in Poland was a time of great value transformation undertaken in order to produce the new Soviet Polish nation, an atomized human mass deprived of a common cultural code, the transformation of the political system after 1989 did not bring a radical change of values. One might see a deep contrast in this respect between the years following 1918, when the Second Republic of Poland came into being after a period of captivity, and 1989. In the Second Republic of Poland, the cult of the January Insurrection of 1863 became part of the official ideology of the State, and the veterans of that event received privileged placed during patriotic celebrations. By contrast, the political elites of the Third Republic of Poland have anathemized the invincible soldiers who fought for the independence of our country in the anti-Soviet insurrection after 1944, having accused them of nationalism and anti-Semitism. It might even seem that a change in this opinion, prevailing among the political elites in today's Poland, might cause their annihilation.

In the second part of the essay the author describes the myth-inspiring influence of Artur Grottger's works, rooted in their heroic visual structure, and referring to his book *Cykle Artura Grottgera. Poetyka i recepcja* ["Artur Grottger's Cycles: The Poetics and the Reception"] of 1994, wonders whether the frequent references to Grottger's works on the 150th anniversary of the January Insurrection proved that they still provide *loci communes* for the Poles, as was the case in 1981 (the author refers to the shocking testimony of a miner from the "Wujek" mine). It seems though that the process of the destruction of Polish national memory and consciousness in the years following the «Round Table Talks» in Poland was much more acute than the similar process that had taken place during the period of communism, and thus it is hard to assume that a common identity of the Poles, based on the *loci communes* provided by Grottger's works, is still possible.

In the concluding part of the essay the author points that film is the medium which opens a possibility for creating works of art of myth-inspiring nature that might contribute to the constitution of the identity of the Polish nation. Since myth is rooted in factual truth, the author holds that documentaries might currently become a field of demystification, stimulating Polish national memory. Only on such «soil,» in favorable political conditions, may feature movies consolidating Polish identity be made in the future.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: January Uprising and Artur Grottger's cycles, "the insurrection myth" in the Second Republic of Poland, "the insurrection myth" in the Third Republic of Poland, image-myth-truth

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#### Robert PIŁAT – The Timelessness of Hegel

Review of Wojciech Chudy's *Refleksje Hegłowskie na początek trzeciego tysiąclecia* ["Hegelian Reflections for the Beginning of the Third Millennium"], ed. M. Chuda, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2012.

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Dorota CHABRAJSKA – Music – Conscience – The Poetics of Being: On William Wordsworth’s Moral Universe

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#### Albert NOWACKI – The Identity of a Nation in the Time of Independence

Report on an international conference “Contemporary Transformations in Ukraine: Culture – Language – Religion”, KUL, Lublin, 11-12 Oct. 2012.

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Patrycja MIKULSKA – Don Juan, or The Identity of a Seducer

Feuilleton on the character of Don Juan.

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