

SHAME

ABSTRACTS

From the Editors – “...and they realized that they were naked” (M.Ch.)

The man and his wife were both naked,  
yet they felt no shame.

Gen 2:25

Then the eyes of both of them were opened,  
and they realized that they were naked;  
so they sewed fig leaves together  
and made loincloths for themselves.

Gen 3:7

The description of the creation and fall of man included in the Book of Genesis shows that the sense of shame did not accompany mankind from its beginning, but emerged as the first symptom of the corruption of human nature. Shame entered the history of humanity after Adam and Eve had eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: then “the eyes of both of them were opened,” and they realized their guilt.

This genealogy of shame is the essential theme of John Paul II’s theology of the body, expounded in his work *Man and Woman He Created Them*<sup>1</sup>, in which the Pope draws anthropological consequences from the biblical narrative. Although the thoughts presented in the first part of the work are set in the perspective of the sacramentality of marriage, they also belong to the broader context of adequate anthropology proposed by John Paul II.<sup>2</sup> In the ‘primary’ experience of man, described in the Yahwist account of creation (Gen 2), the Pope finds the elements that constitute the foundations of all human experiences, in particular of the experience of the body, i.e., an experience conducive to the discovery of the depth of humanness. According to this interpretation, the emergence of

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<sup>1</sup> See J o h n P a u l I I, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, transl. by Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> See Jarosław M e r e c k i, SDS, “Doświadczenie wstydu,” transl. by Patrycja Mikulska, *Ethos* 28: 2015 no. 1(109): 307-319; Marian G r a b o w s k i, *Symbol „nagości” w historii upadku: fragment „antropologii adekwatnej*, in *Wstyd i nagość*, ed. by Marian Grabowski (Toruń: Wydawnictwo UMK, 2003), 219-245.

shame is a boundary experience indicative of the change that occurred in the awareness of man after he had lost his primary innocence. The change affected the perception of the meaning of the body and, in consequence, the perception of oneself and the other (the perception of woman by man and of man by woman). The initial absence of shame is connected with, as John Paul II writes, the fullness of interpersonal communication available to man before his breaking the covenant with his Creator, while the experience of shame results from losing this fullness. The original nakedness in which Adam and Eve appeared to each other does not refer merely to an external image of the body, but reveals the human being as person, discloses his or her inner value. In consequence of sin, the body ceased to be a transparent sign of the person: nakedness veiled, as it were, the subjectivity of man. The gaze of the first human beings, deprived of its original innocence, was no longer capable of reaching the depth of “what is inherent in the person,”<sup>3</sup> but stopped at what is external: Adam and Eve began to see the body in the same way as one perceives objects that may be used. Shame has been born in response to this radical change: to indicate the truth about man and to guard his subjectivity.<sup>4</sup> “In the experience of shame—John Paul II writes—the human being experiences fear in the face of the ‘second I’ ... and this is substantially fear for one’s own ‘I.’ With shame, the human being manifests ‘instinctively,’ as it were, the need for affirmation and acceptance of this ‘I’ according to its proper value.”<sup>5</sup>

The cited fragment suggests that shame and fear inherent in it are signals of a threat to a fundamental value: that of personal dignity, at the same time expressing an appeal for approaching it with respect. Therefore “shame has a fundamental significance for the formation of ethos in the relations between human beings who live together.”<sup>6</sup>

A somewhat different view on the emergence of shame can be found in an analysis by the theologian Erik Peterson who interprets the narrative of creation in metaphysical terms.<sup>7</sup> He claims that shame appeared not as a result of a change in the manner of ‘seeing’ the body, but in the way man possessed it. Before the fall man was covered, as if with a robe, with the glory of God—and it was God’s glory that constituted the fullness of his humanness. The human body, though unclothed, was not actually naked: it lost its supernatural robe and dignity only in consequence of sin. According to Petersen, the spiritual ‘opening of the eyes’ is also, in a sense, a boundary act that marks a change in the ontological structure of man caused by sin. Adam and Eve realized their nakedness through shame: they experienced the ontological change, seeing their bodies reduced to the biological dimension. Deprived of the protecting mantle of grace, human nature yielded to corruption; man lost the justice, innocence and immortality that were his share when the Glory of God had enveloped him.

<sup>3</sup> John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them*, 176.

<sup>4</sup> See M e r e c k i, “Doświadczenie wstydu”: 310.

<sup>5</sup> John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them*, 173.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, 174.

<sup>7</sup> See E. P e t e r s o n, “Theologie des Kleides,” *Benediktinische Monatsschrift* 16 (1934): 347-356.

The feeling of shame implied the need to conceal the deficiency: thus Adam and Eve hid behind the loincloths of fig leaves; likewise, all human beings cover their nakedness with various kinds of clothes. However, Peterson claims, no clothing, not even the robe of virtue, can cover metaphysical shame, i.e., the nakedness of our fallen nature<sup>8</sup>. John Milton in his *Paradise Lost* expressed it in a more radical way, speaking of Adam and Eve: "... naked left / To guilty Shame; he covered, but his robe / Uncovered more."<sup>9</sup>

In both cited interpretations of the excerpts from the Book of Genesis, shame seems to be perceived as a reminder of the state man enjoyed before the fall. According to Peterson, shame reveals the desire to return to the condition of ontological completeness, to regain the lost robe of glory which expressed the essence of man and his dignity. According to John Paul II, shame is "a distant echo"<sup>10</sup> of the lost mode of perception "through the very mystery of creation, as it were."<sup>11</sup>

Reflecting on the theme of the present volume of *Ethos*, it is worthwhile considering to what extent the shame experienced by contemporary man is rooted in the primary shame. It is also worthwhile asking whether 'the blush of shame' appearing on the faces of men and women might be a vestige of the innocence destroyed by sin. We hope that the papers collected in this volume, focusing on various aspects of the phenomenon of shame, will become an inspiration also for similar discussions.

It seems that the very essence of the experience of shame discloses its relationship to the effect of the exposure, as Peterson understood it, of the deficiency of the human nature. Man is ashamed of the revelation (to himself or to others) of who he is, or perhaps—of who he is not, but who he should be, or would like to be (in his own view). However, if the phenomenon of shame is considered as an 'alarm bell' that signals infringement of an important value or demands respect for it, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the situations when this bell rings change together with cultural transformations. For instance, honor, which once used to be a value specially protected by shame, today seems to have been superseded by image, the picture of oneself created for others. As the authors of some of the articles point out, contemporary man is ashamed of shame as such. However, the fact that admitting shame considerably weakens self-image is not the only reason for a widespread tendency to consider shame a taboo emotion. Perhaps a deeper reason for the tendency in question may be in the difficulty of meeting the challenge posed by the truth about man, i.e., the truth that lies at the source of shame.

The expression "you should be ashamed of yourself" relates shame to a failure to meet an obligation. However, the connection between these two phenomena can hardly be considered direct, as shame emerges spontaneously. On the other hand, the experience of shame is closely linked to the response to values

<sup>8</sup> See *ibidem*: 148.

<sup>9</sup> John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book IX, 1336f. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 236.

<sup>10</sup> M e r e c k i, "Doświadczenie wstydu": 310.

<sup>11</sup> John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them*, 177.

—including the fundamental value of human dignity—and such response can be—and should be—formed and developed.

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The present year marks the seventieth anniversary of the beginning of Operation Vistula: a mass forced resettlement of the Ukrainian population from the south-eastern provinces of Poland. The editors of *Ethos* would like to thank Professor Przemysław Rotengruber for the inspiration to commemorate this anniversary. We are also grateful for his invaluable assistance in preparing the section of this volume of *Ethos* devoted to the difficult relations between Poland and Ukraine—the relations burdened with the history of mutual wrongdoing. May this recollection of a discreditable chapter of our history contribute to the reflection on the role of shame in creating a dialogue between nations.

Translated by *Patrycja Mikulska*

#### JOHN PAUL II – Shame: A Borderline Experience

What is shame and how can we explain its absence in the state of original innocence, in the depth of the mystery of the creation of man as male and female? From contemporary analyses of shame—and in particular of sexual modesty—we can deduce the complexity of this fundamental experience, in which man expresses himself as a person according to his own specific structure. In the experience of shame, the human being experiences fear with regard to his ‘second self’ (for example, woman before man). This is substantially fear for one’s own ‘self.’ With shame, the human being manifests almost instinctively the need of affirmation and acceptance of this ‘self,’ according to its rightful value. He experiences it at the same time both within himself, and externally, before the ‘other.’ Shame is a complex experience. Almost keeping one human being away from the other (woman from man), it seeks at the same time to draw them closer personally, creating a suitable basis and level to do so.

For the same reason, it has a fundamental significance as regards the formation of ethos in human society, and especially in the man–woman relationship. The analysis of shame clearly indicates how deeply it is rooted precisely in mutual relations, how exactly it expresses the essential rules for the ‘communion of persons,’ and likewise how deeply it touches the dimension of man’s original ‘solitude.’ The appearance of shame in the subsequent biblical narration of chapter 3 of Genesis has a pluri-dimensional significance. It will be opportune to resume the analysis in due time.

On the other hand, what does its original absence mean in Genesis 2:25: “They were both naked and were not ashamed”?

It is necessary to establish in the first place that it is a question of a real non-presence of shame, and not a lack of underdevelopment of it. We cannot in any way sustain here a ‘primitivization’ of its meaning. Therefore the text of Gen-

esis 2:25 does not only exclude decisively the possibility of thinking of a 'lack of shame' or immodesty. Even more, it excludes the possibility of explaining it by analogy with some positive human experiences, such as those of childhood or of the life of so-called primitive peoples. These analogies are insufficient and can even be misleading. The words of Genesis 2:25: "They were not ashamed," do not express a lack, but, on the contrary, serve to indicate a particular fullness of consciousness and experience. Above all they indicate a full understanding of the meaning of the body, bound up with the fact that they were naked.

The continuation of the Yahwist narrative testifies that this is how the text quoted is to be understood and interpreted. In it, the appearance of shame, and in particular of sexual modesty, is connected with the loss of that original fullness. Taking the experience of shame as a 'borderline' experience, we must ask ourselves what does the meaning of the original nakedness, which Genesis 2:25 speaks of, correspond to? To what fullness of conscience and experience, and in particular to what full understanding of the meaning of the body, does the meaning of original nakedness correspond?

To answer this question, we must keep in mind the analytical process carried out so far, which has its basis in the Yahwist passage as a whole. In this context, man's original solitude was manifested as 'non-identification' of his own humanity with the world of living beings (*animalia*) that surround him.

This non-identification, following upon the creation of man as male and female, made way for the happy discovery of one's own humanity with the help of the other human being. Thus the man recognized and found again his own humanity with the help of the woman (cf. Gn 2:25). At the same time, this act of theirs realized a perception of the world, which was carried out directly through the body ("flesh of my flesh"). It was the direct and visible source of the experience that arrived at establishing their unity in humanity. It is easy to understand that nakedness corresponds to that fullness of consciousness of the meaning of the body, deriving from the typical perception of the senses.

One can think of this fullness in categories of truth of being or of reality, and it can be said that man and woman were originally given to each other precisely according to this truth, since they were naked. In analyzing the meaning of original nakedness, this dimension absolutely cannot be disregarded. This participating in perception of the world—in its 'exterior' aspect—is a direct and almost spontaneous fact. It is prior to any 'critical' complication of knowledge and of human experience and is seen as closely connected with the experience of the meaning of the human body. The original innocence of 'knowledge' could already be perceived in this way.

However, it is not possible to determine the meaning of original nakedness considering only man's participation in exterior perception of the world. It is not possible to establish it without going into the depths of man. Genesis 2:25 introduces us specifically to this level and wants us to seek there the original innocence of knowing. The dimension of human interiority is necessary to explain and measure that particular fullness of interpersonal communication thanks to which man and woman were naked and were not ashamed.

In our conventional language, the concept of communication has been practically alienated from its deepest, original semantic matrix. It is connected mainly

with the sphere of the media, that is, for the most part, products that serve for understanding, exchange, and bringing closer together. On the other hand, it can be supposed that, in its original and deeper meaning, communication was and is directly connected with subjects. They communicate precisely on the basis of the common union that exists between them, both to reach and to express a reality that is peculiar and pertinent only to the sphere of person-subjects.

In this way, the human body acquires a completely new meaning, which cannot be placed on the plane of the remaining 'external' perception of the world. It expresses the person in his ontological and existential concreteness, which is something more than the individual. Therefore the body expresses the personal human 'self,' which derives its exterior perception from within.

The whole biblical narrative, and in particular the Yahwist text, shows that the body through its own visibility manifests man. In manifesting him, it acts as intermediary, that is, it enables man and woman, right from the beginning, to communicate with each other according to that *communio personarum* willed by the Creator precisely for them. It seems that only this dimension enables us to rightly understand the meaning of original nakedness. In this connection, any 'naturalistic' criterion is bound to fail, while, on the contrary, the 'personalistic' criterion can be of great help. Genesis 2:25 certainly speaks of something extraordinary, which is outside the limits of the shame known through human experience. At the same time it decides the particular fullness of interpersonal communication, rooted at the very heart of that *communio*, which is thus revealed and developed. In this connection, the words "they were not ashamed" can mean *in sensu obliquo* only an original depth in affirming what is inherent in the person, what is 'visibly' female and male, through which the personal intimacy of mutual communication in all its radical simplicity and purity is constituted. To this fullness of exterior perception, expressed by means of physical nakedness, there corresponds the interior fullness of man's vision in God, that is, according to the measure of the 'image of God' (cf. Gn 1:17). According to this measure, man "is" really naked ("They were naked"—Gn 2:25)<sup>12</sup> even before realizing it (cf. Gn 3:7-10).

Keywords: original innocence of man, original nakedness of man, shame, philosophy of 'self,' borderline experience, philosophy of the body, essence of humanity, communication, *communio personarum*

Address delivered during the General Audience of Wednesday, Vatican, 19 December 1979.

<sup>12</sup> According to the words of Holy Scripture, God penetrates the creature, who is completely "naked" before him. "And before him no creature is hidden, but all are open (*panta gymn*) and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb 4,13). This characteristic belongs in particular to divine Wisdom: "Wisdom ... because of her pureness pervades and penetrates all things" (Wis 7:24).

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Barbara CHYROWICZ – The Discreet Charm of Shame

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This article seeks to analyze the category of shame, leaving aside some specific areas of human activity attendant upon shame. It seems that the problem of shame is most often found in the area of human sexuality, a fact that impoverishes the category of shame. I treat moral shame as an existential category, which means that it is directly connected with the internal discernment of the person that is ashamed. Understood in such a manner, it is impossible to persuade a person to be ashamed; even the social and cultural contexts that identify concrete types of misbehavior as shameful turn out to be insufficient. We are ashamed when we ourselves believe that a particular situation should not have taken place. Meanwhile, when we tell someone “you should be ashamed,” it will bring about no effect if the person we are reprimanding does not think in the same way. Shame indeed is an emotion we would like to avoid, if possible, nevertheless it plays an extremely important role in our moral lives.

Keywords: shame, guilt, embarrassment, observer, moral standard

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Fr. Kazimierz M. WOLSZA – Axiological Aspects of Shame

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The article describes the experience of shame as related to the experience of value. Shame may be experienced within the horizon of values accepted by the person in question. Shame is caused either by the feeling of guilt or by the feeling of failure to meet the person's standards of behavior, or it is experienced as shame for others. Shame is also a guardian of values. It protects the most intimate sphere of the human being, namely, that of personal beliefs, personal actions and sexuality. In contradistinction to shame, one may speak of shamelessness. The present culture of the media has generated new forms of shamelessness. The dif-



ferences between the private and intimate spheres on the one hand, and the public sphere on the other, are being gradually obliterated, which results in the so-called oversharing of private and personal content. The modern culture of shamelessness undermines the approach to the human being as a person and subject.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: shame, guilt, values, shamelessness, oversharing

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Mateusz SZUBERT – Shame in Cultural Discourse

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Shame is an extremely dynamic emotion, but also a functional one. It grows in a human as a result of the internalization of moral and social norms. The article addresses the question of the timeliness of shame (and emotions related to it, such as confusion, embarrassment, awkwardness, and infamy) in contemporary culture and discusses the boundaries between shamelessness and prudishness. The author analyzes the language used to describe shame in the past as well as in the present, pointing out to certain research problems it entails, such as how to talk about shame without transgressing the taboo.

The article encompasses an analysis of the practices employed in modern culture that result in destabilizing the human body and human corporeality. In the late 1950's, the concept of shame, which was traditionally associated with the areas of morality and ethics, began to refer to the state of embarrassment associated with the body, and since that time the tendency to perceive shame in this way has been increasing. As such, shame is tantamount to a state of mental disharmony resulting from non-conformity to specific patterns, ideals or expectations. Today, a frequent reason for shame is one's own conviction of one's unattractiveness.

The contemporary Western culture, which perceives itself as 'revolutionary,' abolishes all sorts of taboo and tends to get rid of shame as a social phenomenon. The media significantly stretch the borders of the content that can be displayed to spectators or to readers. Exposition of intimate details of human life, resulting in a violation of the good taste, has become a norm in the case of not only tabloids, but also the mainstream media, thus generating an increase in the viewing figures and sales.

Another factor causing the feeling of shame in the modern society is gerontophobia. Today's culture of the West equates old age with a frightening time of the triumph of biology over the human spirit. In the popular perception, old age is now reduced to the level of somatic and mental disorders associated with the period in a person's life which is as much embarrassing as unwanted.



Keywords: shame, stigma, taboo, intimacy, ageing, illness, exclusion

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Elżbieta CZYKWIN – Between the Realities of Old Age and the ‘New Gospel of Health’: Shame and Disgust Experienced by Family Caregivers for Their Senile Sick Relatives

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The article is based on an analysis of interviews with persons who provided care for their senile sick relatives at home. The caregivers’ experience is presented against the background of extensive scholarly literature concerning the emotions of shame and disgust. The first part of the paper shows a wide spectrum of attitudes towards assuming obligation of care over elderly sick relative and points to the fact that family caregivers are regarded with less social compassion than old and sick persons themselves. As a result, the knowledge of the difficulties of caregiving is not sufficiently widespread. The second part describes the relationships between shame and disgust, indicating that the former is a more fundamental emotion than the latter. Part three presents the following sources of shame experienced by caretakers: (1) The ‘new gospel of health,’ i.e., a model of healthy life that has replaced the traditional religious model. The paper shows an intellectual bankruptcy of the new model in the face of actual, shame-generating challenges related to death and dying. (2) An increase in the significance of aesthetic values in contemporary societies (especially in the metropolitan communities of the West), which leads to intensified feelings of disgust towards senile sick relatives, and of the related shame. (3) An experience of the transformation of the anticipation of the sick relative’s death into the wish the sick relative was dead, which appears both radically inconsistent with the role of caregiver and morally wrong and, as such, evokes shame. (4) Hypocrisy, duplicity in the caregivers’ behavior, based on the belief that one cannot be sincere in a conversation with the sick, which infringes equality and results in manipulation, causing shame, especially in the inexperienced and simultaneously morally sensitive caregivers who remember the old and sick relative as a healthy individual. Shame may be either brought to consciousness and worked through by the caregiver (it may then play a positive, morally elevating role), or denied (leading to aggression). The fourth part of the paper focuses on the syndrome of resistance to shame and on its denial, describing the consequences of those phenomena for the culture of the home and mutual social relationships. The concluding part discusses the logic of shame: from the emergence of shame (its source), through its experience, to denial and repression, to violence, as the process was presented by Thomas Scheff. The motif of aggression towards the elderly is described on the basis of a literature review, confirming and complementing Scheff’s view.

Keywords: shame, disgust, sociology of emotion, gerontology, care, senility

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Agnieszka MIKOŁAJCZUK – Between Words and Feelings: *Wstyd* (‘Shame / Embarrassment’) in Modern Polish

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The main goal of the paper is to present selected results of cognitive and structuralist semantic research into how Polish speakers talk about and understand various feelings from the general category of ‘*wstyd*’ (‘shame / embarrassment’). The lexemes *wstyd* (‘shame / embarrassment’) and *wstydzić się* (‘to feel shame / embarrassment’), and their synonyms constituted the core objects of the investigation. Lexicographic sources as well as texts from the National Corpus of Polish and the Internet, containing these lexemes, were studied in search of the structure of the lexical field of *wstyd* in modern Polish and of important aspects of Polish conceptualization of feelings from the category of ‘shame.’

The field of *wstyd* in modern Polish is organized along two main semantic parameters: ‘lack of self-confidence’ and ‘lack of or diminution of someone’s high self-esteem,’ which are connected to each other by central words: the noun / verb / interjection *wstyd* (in its various meanings and functions) and the verb *wstydzić się*. The parameters provide links to other general categories of emotions: ‘fear’ on the one hand, and ‘sadness’ (‘regret’) on the other. Elements of an emotional situation, such as an experiencer of feelings, their perpetrator, judge and the public, object of comparisons, as well as typical reasons and sources, system of values and evaluation, temporal characteristics, intensity, typical symptoms and expressions, and emotional background were shown in the paper as contributing to the conceptualization of feelings connected with the general complex concept of *wstyd* in modern Polish.

Keywords: semantics, emotion terms, conceptualization of self-conscious emotions, *wstyd*, *nieśmiałość*, ‘shame,’ ‘embarrassment,’ ‘shyness’

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Andrzej KAPUSTA, Halina RAROT – Towards Maturity: An Essay on the Approaches to the Therapy of Shame in Psychological and Philosophical Counseling

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The aim of the article is to present the phenomenon of shame from the perspective of individual psychological and moral experience and in the context of socially difficult situations. Elements of the phenomenological description of the experience of shame and selected philosophical inspirations for struggling with it will be presented. Only some forms of shame will be taken into account, that is, those that appear to be important during psychological therapy and so-called philosophical therapy (philosophical counseling). We consider appropriate ‘therapy’ options dealing with shame associated with professional failure and with social exclusion. In our analyses we pay special attention to positive dimensions of the experience of shame.

Keywords: shame experience, psychology and philosophy of shame, social aspects of shame

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Alicja KEPLINGER – Shame and Its Influence on Action Orientation

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Shame can play a central role in motivating and regulating people’s thoughts, feelings, behaviors, achievements and social adaptation. People can devote much attention and energy to make a good impression in the eyes of others and properly behave in social relationships or task situations because they fear social sanctions and consequences of not keeping up with certain standards of functioning. Despite decades of research into the emotion of shame we still do not have a clear idea of the functions and mechanisms of shame in the life of an individual. The purpose of the article is to discuss the most frequent ways of understanding shame in current psychological literature as well as to describe the two opposing approaches to dealing with emotional shame, namely, the constructive and the destructive ones.

Keywords: shame, constructive and destructive action orientations

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Mateusz SOLIŃSKI – Shameless or Realist? Lucian Freud: A Painter of the Human Body

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The article offers a general description of the artistic profile of Lucian Freud with regard to the ways the presentation of the naked human body is accomplished in his works. As part of the analysis, references were made to paintings by the so-called ‘old masters,’ e.g., Matthias Grünewald, Diego Velázquez, Rembrandt van Rijn, Peter Paul Rubens, Frans Hals, John Constable and, last but not least, Gustave Courbet. The ‘sensual-biological’ character of Freud’s work was studied on the one hand in the context of the painter’s perception of the links between the human being and the animal world, and on the other by pointing to the actual presence of animals in his paintings. In the concluding part of the article, an attempt was made to evaluate Lucian Freud’s work in relation to the category of shame. The analysis was made, among others, by focusing attention on the specificity of the British artist’s creative method and on the reference to the existentialist thought.

Keywords: Lucian Freud, body, nakedness, shame, sensuality, realist

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Roman DROZD – Truth and Forgiveness: The Meanders of the Polish-Ukrainian Dialogue

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There are two standpoints in the Polish-Ukrainian dialogue. The first might be termed as ‘to forgive and ask forgiveness.’ Its followers, guided by the Christian teaching on love and forgiveness, believe that the border between ‘the executioner’ and ‘the victim’ in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict is vague, in particular in the context of the national groups involved in the controversy. No nation is entirely evil or good. Therefore, the Ukrainians were not only ‘executioners’ of the Poles, but also their ‘victims.’ The Poles simultaneously acted as their ‘torturers’. Considering this mutual detriment, the proponents of this standpoint believe that only mutual apology and forgiveness can lead to the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation and that the act of such reconciliation must not involve harming the dignity of either Ukrainians or Poles, or humiliating either nation.

The alternative position is held by those who believe in 'being released by the truth.' While the supporters of this view also stress the need for the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation, they hold that it may be accomplished on certain conditions only, one of them being the apology from the other side. To them, the border between 'the executioner' and 'the victim' is very clear. Thus, the Poles representing this standpoint believe it was the Ukrainians who were the executioners. Likewise, the Ukrainians holding this view believe the Poles only to have been the murderers. As a result, either party considers itself the victim, the Polish-Ukrainian conflict being seen through this 'singular' lens only. The losses of the respective national group are magnified, while those of the other side are usually underestimated or altogether ignored. The actions of the other party are termed as 'genocide,' while the acts committed one's own party are justified as retaliation even if they involved killing women and children. Throughout the history of the Polish-Ukrainian dialogue, the two standpoints compete with but also affect each other. Nowadays, however, the initiative seems to belong to the proponents of seeing one's own national harm only, which is reflected in the shallowness of the reflection on the historical events in question, as well as in the lack of compassion for the victims of the conflict both on the Polish and the Ukrainian sides. The current situation in the dialogue about the Polish-Ukrainian conflict contributes to strengthening the voice of the opponents of any reconciliation in this matter who express their views by committing acts of profanation and destruction of Polish and Ukrainian memorials in both countries.

Keywords: the Poles, the Ukrainians, dialogue

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Bohdan HALCZAK – Between Nationalism and Retaliation, and Pragmatism:  
Operation Vistula as seen in the Light of the Idea of Polish National Egoism  
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The operation code-named 'Vistula' started in Poland on April 28th, 1947. It aimed at the removal of the Ukrainian minority from Poland. The Polish communist authorities planned to achieve the goal by displacing the Ukrainian population from south-eastern Poland, where the Ukrainians lived in dense communities, and deporting them to the west and north of the country and thus enforce dispersed settlement. During Operation Vistula the army and police forces displaced over 140 thousand Ukrainians and members of mixed families. The communist authorities hoped that the displaced Ukrainian population would be subjected to rapid Polonization. Yet, the Ukrainian minority survived. The primary goal of Operation Vistula was not accomplished.

Keywords: Poland, Ukrainian minority, Operation Vistula, displacement, deportation

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Krzysztof MORACZEWSKI – The Common Lot: Some Reflections on Poland and Ukraine

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The paper offers a short description of the historical lineage of contemporary Polish-Ukrainian relationship. The common geopolitical situation is being deliberated and an interpretation of the common historical experiences is being proposed. A special focus is given to problems connected with the place of Poland and Ukraine within the changing European order, as well as to the issues related to the social history of Middle and Eastern Europe. The paper includes a commentary on the ways in which this common heritage might be dealt with today.

Keywords: Poland, Ukraine, geopolitical situation, social history, collective memory

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Przemysław ROTENGRUBER – History, Memory and Dialogue: On the Obstacles that Stand between the Poles and the Ukrainians

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The purpose of the essay is to discuss the possibility of an agreement between the Polish and the Ukrainian Nations. There are two autonomous problems that should be taken into consideration. On the one hand, there is the history of both nations. The most representative symbols of mutual tensions between them are the Volhynian Massacres (1943-1945) and Operation Vistula (1947-1950). The 70th anniversary of the latter event is a good opportunity to compare its Polish and Ukrainian interpretations. Such a comparison leads to the conclusion that

the main obstacle preventing mutual understanding is the cultural memories of, respectively, Polish and Ukrainian people. The historical facts do not speak for themselves. Rather, they get their importance from the community of interpretation. Such an interpretation is founded on the normative convictions of the community members (called the “social frameworks of memory” by Maurice Halbwachs). On the other hand, the problem of the Polish-Ukrainian relations will remain unsolved if the political partners do not accept the rules of dialogue. However, these rules—at least declaratively—are observed by everyone. Thus it means that the solution must embrace something else, that is to say, the identity of the partners of the dialogue, which, unfortunately, is built on their respective cultural memories, monologic in their structure. Therefore, the final question is: What is most important to them? As long as they are under the influence of sentiments, (self-)stereotypes and myths, there is no chance of reconciliation.

Keywords: Operation Vistula, history, cultural memory, dialogue, reconciliation

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Jarosław MERECKI, SDS – Towards Understanding the Communion of Persons: On the Interpretations of the Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* by Pope Francis

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After the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* was promulgated by pope Francis there emerged many different, and sometimes conflicting, interpretations of the pastoral indications contained within the document. The question regards the admission to the sacrament of Eucharist of the divorced living in new unions. According to some authors, the document changes the sacramental discipline valid till now, while others see its continuity with the previous teaching of the Church on that matter. The essay analyzes in particular the arguments in favor of the change, adding some critical notes, and comes to the conclusion that the problem calls for a further clarification.

Keywords: Eucharist, marriage, divorce, conscience, moral norm

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Mirosława CHUDA – An Errant Text? A Reply to Adam Fitas’s “A Reader Errant and Literature: Some Remarks after Reading Mirosława Chuda’s Essay ‘A Reader-Errant’”

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The present text is a reply to the polemic by Adam Fitas with the essay *A Reader-Errant* (see *Ethos* 29:4(116) (2016); *Ethos* 30:1(117) (2017)). The author explains that it was not her intention to deprecate literary fiction, rather, she intended to point to the harmful effects of being addicted to it. The author also expounds her thesis that new addictions, such as Internet addiction, which are considered as resulting from the civilization based on the advances of technology, in fact have the same source as the various forms of addiction known for ages, namely the same weaknesses of the human nature.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: literary fiction, addiction, modern civilization, human nature

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Adam FITAS – „I who am immersed in the dark rays of the earth”

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The essay includes a reflection on the earthly homeland and its heavenly counterpart put forward in the context of Zbigniew Herbert’s poem “Daedalus and Icarus,” which provided the title of the considerations. The analysis in question refers also to other pieces of Polish poetry (by Cyprian Norwid and Aleksander Wat). The main idea is developed against the background of the opposition between the light and the darkness which surfaces in all the poems taken into account.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: the light, the darkness, Icarus, Daedalus, homeland

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Josef M. SEIFERT – Selige Kinder von Fatima

Review of Jean-François de Louvencourt's *Francisco und Jacinta. Selige Kinder von Fatima*, transl. by Joachim Volkmann (Mainz: Patrimoniumverlag, 2017).

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Books recommended by *Ethos*

*Panorama współczesnej filozofii* ["A Panorama of Modern Philosophy"], ed. by Jacek Hołówka and B. Dziobkowski (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2016).

Barbara Skarga, *Kłopoty intelektu. Między Comte'em a Bergsonem* ["A Troubled Intellect: Between Comte and Bergson"] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2017).

Piotr BIŁGORAJSKI – Shock—Doubt—Astonishment

Report on the 59th Philosophical Week: "The Sources of European Philosophy," John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Lublin, 3-6 April 2017.

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Dorota CHABRAJSKA – Our Daily Shamelessness

A feuilleton on the tendency to associate the emotion of shame with the corporeal aspect of the human being and human life, accompanied by the phenomenon of the disappearance of shame as a regulator of social relations in general.

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Maria FILIPIAK – Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis Speak on Shame  
DOI 10.12887/30-2017-2-118-22

A bibliography of the addresses by John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis from 1978 to 2017.

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