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## DIALECTICS OF THE GENIUS

### Abstract

A man tirelessly looks for answers to numerous questions about deep ontological problems concerning the meaning of life, fundamental reasons or the last things. The aim of the article is to build a theoretical base, on the basis of which one will have opportunity to ask yet further questions, which are relevant in relation to human existence especially for philosophers. The genius requires a huge commitment to get to it. It also involves an internal declaration of continuous self-improvement. Contrary to the philosophers of the era of modernism, I believe that to a greater or lesser extent, every person can potentially be genuine and great. After all in the mechanism and in the specific rhythm of tape improvement of the product as well as in the fiery ideas contemplated by the people of philosophy and art we can find passion for life and creativity

People as such do not live in strictly defined internal boundaries and therefore they can constantly develop. If a wider group of philosophers can be interested in the concept of philosophy which is open to current human problems, interested primarily in other people (also in the sense of their huge diversity), then the goal of this essay will eventually be achieved. From the perspective of the possibility of a sense of job satisfaction it does not matter whether someone cooks well or paints beautifully. Everybody can equally develop in the essential sense of self-improvement.

The scientific aspirations of the approach to this philosophical problem are fortunately unable to hide the values of human work in general, and especially the work done on oneself, overcoming one's own prejudices and going beyond the previously established conventions. It is only the acquisition of the ability to play freely with what is given to an existence that gives a man the chance to free himself from the shackles of restrictions existing on many levels of culture, religion or art.

**Keywords:** the genius, creativity, human possibilities, meaning of life.

*Ab ovo usque ad mala.*

Horacy



my illustration: *The Circle of Life – Dialectics of the Genius*

There are unanswered questions in the life of every human being. These are usually deep ontological problems concerning the meaning of life, fundamental reasons or the eschatology of existence. The aim of this article is to build a theoretical base, on the basis of which one will have opportunity to ask yet further questions, which are relevant in relation to human existence especially for philosophers. Avoiding the situation of suspension of similar dilemmas is an opportunity not only to preserve the species weight of human, who takes the problems in their reflection, but also it creates the new opportunity to think thoroughly about the problems generated by the present. For such issues I consider, for example, the necessity of appreciation of human effort put into work, which even barely reaches the art, as well as the necessary skill of self-discipline, especially in a social environment that does not expect much from individuals.

The genius requires a huge commitment to get to it. It also involves an internal declaration of continuous self-improvement. Contrary to the philosophers of the era of modernism, I believe that to a greater or lesser extent, every person can potentially be genuine and great, although the realization of this potential is associated with the huge responsibility of rejecting one's subjective claims for the objective sense (such an unusual opportunity – although only in the case of outstanding people – was indicated, for example, by Arthur Schopenhauer, 1788–1860), hidden – in my opinion – in the mechanism and in the specific rhythm of tape improvement of the product as well as in the fiery ideas contemplated by the people of philosophy and art. The true genius seems to depend on cooperation with the inspiration, taking the beginning from work at base to get to the top of human skills, which are devoted to discovering and tireless exploring the truth we are asking for.

The goal of this reflection will be achieved if people who are particularly interested in philosophical problems can be inspired by the openness to multifaceted recognition of human problems as such in more or less conscious pursuit of developing. The process of this inevitable emancipation is necessarily connected with suffering. The awareness of the severity of crises that must be crossed to reach agreement with one's own individual nature is a key issue in the understanding of *the essence of individual existence* and its unique potential, which, however, can only be developed through arduous work in the spirit of the mission gradually discovered in life. The scientific aspirations of the approach to this philosophical problem are fortunately unable to hide the values of human work in general, and especially the work done on oneself, overcoming one's own prejudices and going beyond the previously established conventions. It is only the acquisition of the ability to play freely with what is given to an existence that gives a man the chance to free himself from the shackles of restrictions existing on many levels of culture, religion or art.

In searching for one's own way, human must give up his trends many times; they must also constantly learn to use various tools in their work on themselves. When they experience the insufficiency of matter, he or she opens themselves to spiritual sources of creativity. When, however, the power of the spirit, which can no longer be more spiritual, is exhausted, subtle matter can become a way of expressing it, like a glorious body or transformed grain (see the Bible). The impulse to think about genius dynamics comes with the understanding that all significant changes begin within the concrete being and originates from it, like waves from the interior of the ocean. Of course, the winds al-

so have their courses, but the tectonic movements are responsible for the current continental system, and the causes are responsible for them even deeper. The external is in harmony with the internal as the latter one is the ultimate answer to the former one. Here, however, where the road reaches its final, it inevitably ends what has started somewhere before. The seed that yields the crop is not the same seed it had been before it died (see the Bible).

As present in the temporal world, we are predominantly guided by the light of an eyes, but – realizing our extraterrestrial origin, by anchoring in what is eternal – we are also able to anticipate the future. We know the history, and when we touch its spirit, this one penetrates us. The works of art can be considered as special representations of the world, which, while grasping a given space-time, are at the same time something much more than just a frame from life, because they already contain a story. They tell us, for example, about their author and their moods; they also say something about us, concrete recipients of art, about our moods and longings which find their embodiment everywhere.

Talking about moving from some effort to more and fuller realization of our potential results from the conviction that in human individual life it is impossible to realize the fullness of humanity. Only in the relations, especially these intergenerational, in which it is possible to inspire each other with a passion for life and a particular way of its implementation, that what is essential shows its true character. Just as a teacher is necessary for a child, an adult needs the child's ability to be amazed, what in turn inspires creativity in a more and more mature expression of the idea, as well as the specialization of tools necessary in this matter. After all, real creativity requires a frame and strict discipline. If there were no boundaries, a man would aimlessly seek ways to express his spiritual nature. For example, how could a painter paint without a tool which has a specific efficiency, but also resists? How could a person live without a body? They would not have had any opportunities for development if they had not been condemned to suffering, if they had not been restricted by the conventions they were working on, which they were biting or otherwise trying to cross.

Raising the mind to the Infinite requires a lot of rigor and hard school, but ultimately it is something very simple, because it only needs our declaration. From this perspective, however, it turns out that in fact a human deserves much more than what comes into their strict possession, and that all our concerns are only shadows of our true internal afflictions which we have to deal with. Only then we rule over nature, which we are a part of, when we courageously face ourselves in truth. We are free when we have a strict law in ourselves and this is

only possible because of the love of good and truth, thanks to the passion for promoting in the world of faith in true value of the soul. We are really free only when we are able to reject all prostheses to which we are accustomed and to face the world. I intend to explore how aware we are, aware as people of these biblical truths in our real life and in our actions.

I would like to treat the genius as a particularly understood spirituality, in which individuals participate, or in which they can just participate, because this possibility is available to everyone, although of course not everyone is aware of it. The overtone of this text is therefore optimistic. I also do not think that we can talk about better and worse talents. There are various talents (culinary talent or talent for art). When the low cooperates with the high, without the auction of the ultimate low and high value, harmony prevails in nature and also human development proceeds harmoniously. It must be taken into account that if not matter, no idea could be embodied (as Max Scheler, 1874–1928, points out in his philosophical anthropology).

Discovering spirituality in art (and through it also in oneself – after all, the producer/artist, as well as the viewer are looking through the work as in the mirror) can bring human closer to God and to the truth. In this context, a postulate of internal overcoming of the border between elitist and egalitarian creativity may also be important. Perhaps this delimiting principle should be abolished on the basis of the Hegelian *Aufhebung* (while maintaining its external weight) to prevent any suppression of the creative spirit in people. Rigor is needed for every creativity, but within the real possibilities of every human. The case concerns the development of individuality, which is a gift of every human being, not just the products they made, because the value of artefacts is only relative.

### 1. Research methodology

The subject which I take is one of the philosophical issues. In addition I chose areas of philosophy which, despite the efforts of many thinkers, are still quite mysterious. Whoever asks about the meaning of life, must prepare themselves for difficult and committed research. The method used by me at the first moment may seem quite unobvious. The talk about *the phenomenology of existence*. This problem was indicated by William A. Luijpen (1922–1980) in the book entitled *Existential phenomenology*. He pointed out that existential featured

texts are intertwined with an analytical approach in the works of philosophers. Though a man is a life-endowed being who simultaneously touches the meaning of the contemplated truth. The similar message is given to a psychiatrist, Kazimierz Dąbrowski (1902–1980), from Kierkegaard's *Diary*, in which he discovers and sustains a deep thought for us that if a human being lives in his or her existence in truth, it means that they live the essence of their beings. However, it is not easy, because sacrificing of life for the truth is associated with the inevitable suffering which is a consequence of this courage. This particular phenomenology will be a method of analyzing and developing results.

## 2. The concept of the genius

The closer to the present day, the more the attitude of philosophers to art and its creators seems to be more and more favorable, and over time it even begins to be subject to the primacy of something unfinished in this issue. Of course, we cannot generalize. However, it is worth noting that from the time of Aristotle (384BC–322BC), who included art to merely productive activities (*poiesis*), a lot of things has changed and is still changing. Since the nimbus of art has achieved gigantic proportions, it seems to even replace what it originally floated on. Thus, the measurement of genius began to depend on such subtle factors that, in essence, they remain unverifiable. Perhaps it is time and place to start research to determine what we are really looking for in art, in philosophy or in science, in people who make them prosper and in ourselves, regardless of who we are and what we do. I think that we should try to answer the question about it, thanks to what aspects of reality, which we can also generate ourselves, we can become the center of our lives and live in a full way. I will present now selected examples of philosophical thought developing the concept of the genius.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) is the author of a significant thesis that concepts and sensual impressions only make sense when they go hand in hand<sup>1</sup>. The role of experience in deepening the truth turns out to be significant. However, it should be taken into account that the aesthetic judgments described by Kant in *The Critique of Judgement* are not cognitive judgments, but are characterized by a certain disinterestedness. According to Kant, the genius is a work of nature. Explaining the concept of the genius in the context of domain it refers

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<sup>1</sup> I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. P. Guyer and A. W. Wood, Cambridge 1998, A51/ B75.

to, the thinker said only about art. In his opinion, a genius man has not only a sense of taste, but also a gift for creating art. Alexander Gerard (1728–1725), who responded to Kant's philosophy, perceived the problem of the genius a bit differently. Most of all, he did not limit genius to the artistic spheres, but he saw for it wider fields of influence in various areas of human outstanding activity.

In *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, F. Schiller (1759–1805) presented his position, the interpretation of which seems to be expressed in the maxim that "the path to freedom leads only through beauty"<sup>2</sup>. In the thought of this philosopher one can see a significant inspiration of the Kantian *Critique of Judgement*, but all possible references to that philosophy find a second bottom and lead to completely new interpretations. Schiller in his letters criticized contemporary culture and even before Marxism was born, he pointed to the fact that modern life leads to alienation. He assumed that human does not fully develop their various abilities and therefore they can be alienated by themselves. The structural process of socialization, which in his opinion hides the true human nature, has been opposed to the myth of ancient Greece. In this ancient world, human lived in harmony with themselves, they did not omit the needs of the body or the spirit. Schiller opposes two drives (the sensual impulse and the drive of form), between which there is sparking in a world derived from Antiquity. He notes that beautiful life is the result of aesthetic education and it is possible only by overcoming both indicated opposing forces in the drive of the game, which will be connecting them, opens a new dimension for human. This ideal world is not to be modeled on the Greek one anymore, but it should be the result of the development which a person takes in his or her life.

Writing about naive and sentimental poetry, Schiller points out to the amazing simplicity of the former and the idealism and infinity of the latter. He speaks of the genius and inspiration, which are especially manifested in the way of being in attitudes of men and women. An interesting issue in his work is the theme of poetry as the essence or the afterlife of human nature. Schiller's look finds an intriguing reflection in the Romantic Manifesto by Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829), who calls artists specific works of art and instructs them to "go their own way" in order to be able to find themselves by drawing from a deep of spirit full of individuality.

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<sup>2</sup> F. Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters: Parallel-text Edition*, Oxford 2000, *Letter II*.

The language of Schlegel is pure poetry, it seems to play with itself, with the subject of freedom and beauty. When one reads about the need to move chaos through love, one gets the impression that in the depths of every, even the most broken human being, there is a spark of splendor and some sublimity that simply suffices. An amazing aspect is a responsibility which Schlegel imposes on all kinds of artists and touched by the mark of the true genius in order not to give up their ideals and to realize their untapped talents fully. In order to save the myth, they have to find it in themselves and create it as if again on their own terms.

Georg W. F. Hegel (1770–1831) in his dialectics, in the foreground, put the spirit forward, the spirit as a hero, as the consciousness developing in subsequent phases, making use of errors and experiences, then returns to himself fuller and closer to the truth (see *The Phenomenology of Spirit*). This thinker seems to abstract from concreteness and individuality in his approach, but on the other hand introduces the concept of heroes of history, individuals who – thanks to their particular passions, which correspond with the spirit of history – perform a historical role (eg Napoleon).

Fryderyk Nietzsche (1844–1900) puts in the mouth of Zarathustra a message to a solitary creator who encourages fidelity to his own light, to an invincible effort to overcome his own weaknesses, and above all to freedom, understood as a voluntary agreement to serve values. It may turn out that each of us will eventually have to choose whether to serve life or death. As servants of life, we can make dreams come true.

The dreams are our aspirations inherent in our nature, resulting from the potential inherent in us. The eternal need for a myth, a meeting of safe limitations with infinite fantasies in oneself and in other people, remain something elusive and enthusiastically awaited. Just as a joke can be an attribute of the truth, so full its pretense is what we are actually looking for. We need humor, for example in the fight against fear. The Genius permeates from depth and to depth, becoming a general truth in a single person. Every time I hear how young people (students) discover the greatest wisdom in the discussion, when in older people's balancing their lives I see a youthful glint in their eyes and steadfast faith in the future, I discover how exceptional and beautiful gift is in people their genius. An additional ally is the awareness of one's own opportunities, as long as it does not deprive human of the aura of trust, and it gives freedom in the sphere of imagination to something what is hidden. It concerns especially the conviction that we can do aesthetic welfare without making any efforts to



please to someone. We must still shape our lives; regardless of our subjective limitations, we should remain free and faithful to the truth.

However, it is extremely difficult to "touch the spirit", the Spirit which – dispersed in units – is at the same time indivisible. We can talk in this way about the spirit of human fate, "the spirit of history" or – why not the simplest? – about the Spirit of God. What can no longer be more spiritual becomes material (and vice versa). The Good also uses its own "opposite" (see Scheler), but in the context of God's permission, is best seen in the crisis of human development. However, as Emil Cioran (1911–1995) admitted, only a man who have experienced suffering can deeply appreciate the value of life. I would like to point out that every person should have the right to a better life, even if they are not innocent. The present, although it is elusive in its essence, is, therefore, a unique chance for us whenever, as long as we live.

### 3. Accomplishing the mission

As a recipe for the feeling of being entangled in the clamor of existence, one can present a unique ethical philosophy of humility, love and contemplation of wisdom which, in a straight line, constitute: the road, spiritual confirmation and sense of finding the purpose, and meaning of life. In the treatise *The Twelve Degrees of Humility and Pride* Bernard of Clairvaux depicts Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, according to the biblical interpretation. He proclaims the sense of biblical lessons of humility and points to Jesus' words: "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children" (Mt 11:25). We are therefore to develop talents and serve God without falling into pride. The foundation of true greatness is humility.

Only because of this, maintaining the cause of improvement, the genius who knows his or her potential is also extremely modest. Only reasonable approach to building everything what presents value for us (on the rock, not on the sand) can ensure the success of the ventures. However, it's all about building up as such, so as not to be discouraged by difficulties, to keep loving the truth. Just the perseverance in the field of adversity makes a man the winner (see Augustine of Hippo). What is the end of our effort? After all, even a ruin can found a new life. Our knowledge is limited. Respect for true, unfathomable knowledge is also humility. The question arises in connection with the human

aspiration for huge successes without proper preparation and without sensitivity to other people. For example, the biblical tower of Babel, which is a symbol of human pride, illustrates it perfectly. God's retaliation in the form of the confusion of languages made a man gain his disloyal participation in the "creation" of nations. How effective was this action? Is not there one lesson for everyone: try to hear God's voice and do not jam It at any price?

A loving attitude, assuming the presence of divine mediation in relationships among people unquestionably broadens human horizons and makes people set themselves to the highest values<sup>3</sup>. One needs to follow the trail of S. Kierkegaard (1813–1855), who also asked in his *Diary* about the sense of coexistence of predestination and freedom, so as not to ignore the dictate of basic questions about our sense on earth. The pioneer of Protestantism was Jan Hus (1369–1415), the author of, among others work entitled *The Church*. He played a significant role in the Czech Republic and then – thanks to Marcin Luther – in the world. He died a martyr's death. It seems that the real mission is always beyond human. Nevertheless, a man endowed with a mission becomes capable of fulfilling it, when he is ready to deny even himself, to overcome his own limits, following the inspiration of the Spirit.

#### 4. Value of work

The Protestant philosophy is interesting for us especially because of the particular perception of the ethos of work, which is described as one of the fundamental virtues. Max Weber (1864–1920) wrote many significant remarks on this topic. This thinker presents the internal, spiritual relationship between capitalism and Protestantism. According to Weber, it is the evangelical confession together with the rational approach to life which determines the attitude of the spiritual capitalist, manifested in the apotheosis of work and in the deep pursuit of asceticism despite the real possibilities of living in abundance from the fruits of his work. Weber also explains why – in his opinion – the renewal of life in the Protestant spirit may be more durable than in confessions full of pathos, which include Catholicism, but also Chinese Confucianism.

Various philosophers recognize the most important human values in different aspects of reality. Let us remind that for example for F. Schiller such values

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<sup>3</sup> See in: S. Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, Harper Perennial Modern Classics 2009.

were play and fun. In M. Weber's view apart from the specific rationalism such a significant value is undoubtedly the work and this work constituting a kind of vocation even a mission. Stanisław Brzozowski (1878–1911) was a Polish thinker who paid a special homage to the ethos of work. He perceived work as the chief value, constitutive of man. He believed that without this *inner gesture which consumes the soft matter of our effort*, man has no chance to truly emerge from the world of soulless nature. That is why, by devoting themselves to work without the promise of being appreciated humans sacrifice themselves for generations and sees that what is truly human cannot be forgotten. A different attitude, albeit in the subjective spirit, is presented by John Paul II (1920–2005), who in the *Encyclica Laborem Exercens* refers to the "seven-day" creation of the world by God, which finds its reflection in the man's week of work. The seventh day is to be devoted to rest, which guarantees the necessary renewal, the chance to conceive itself again as a new one. It is good to believe that there is one Great Creator. As Władysław Tatarkiewicz (1886–1980) noticed people can follow God, although they are not able to create anything from nothing<sup>4</sup>; Humans can also try to renew the image of God in themselves through sincere commitment to work and the ability to rest.

Georg Simmel (1858–1918) drew attention to the idea that people need to cultivate themselves, which seems much more valuable than for example cultivating a pear tree to its fruitfulness. In the cultivation of the own self lies the whole of humanity and development. As a philosopher of culture Simmel also emphasized that by grassroot work or by engaging in art we are all involved in an endless process of production whose ultimate purpose is not revealed to us. Leonard E. Read mentions a similar problem in a neat text titled *I, pencil*. He points out that in order to produce something seemingly as obvious as a small pencil, it takes engagement of wide variety of competences and activities of a huge number of people, and even then nobody is able to precisely explain how this object arises. Only so-called "the great of this world" seem not to take part in the constant process of creating and constituting human culture; they are also the phenomena of their era (eg the direction in art).

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<sup>4</sup> W. Tatarkiewicz, *Dzieje sześciu pojęć (History of six concepts)*, Warsaw 1975, pp. 300–302.

## 5. Passion

However, I must defend the sense of this unconsciousness, the non-knowledge of tomorrow, because I believe that the sense of temporality is important for a human being, even in somehow incomprehensible work, which still fills life with content. Therefore, work is a kind of blessing. Particularly noteworthy in this research is also Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *flow* theory. It leads us to the realization that only one step separates us from the most severe one-sided exhaustion (eg physical or intellectual) to the true spiritual upward, to happy forgetfulness, to losing ourselves completely at work even if we have still to continue our monotonous effort. To gain a sense of contentment and self-fulfillment it is enough to change the way of thinking. After all, it is the sense of purpose of self and the world, in which one lives, that makes us think about ourselves as happy and fulfilled people. One can distinguish several forms of activity in the type of the game depending on the experience that they cause: *agon* (games related to competition, as most sports), *alea* (games of chance, for example, dice or bingo), *ilinx* (activities that change consciousness through deformation of normal perception, eg carousel ride or free parachute jumps) and *mimicry* (creation of alternative realities, eg theater, dance) (see M. Csikszentmihalyi). As we can see, a man needs game and play very much (we are returning to Schiller), which fulfill an extremely important function in adult life too. Let us assume that little Johnnie was playing the wizard. As he grew older, Johnny learned the art of illusion. Now, adult John is among the best illusionists in the world, because he does not forget about the joy that only creative, that is, passionate, work really brings. We could say that he learned it from a little boy whom he never forgets. He learned how to take pleasure in small things, without which it would be impossible to play any special scene. An example of a book inspiring to a variety of creative games is set the exciting position of Stephen Bowkett entitled *Imagine That...* The games described in it may be interested not only for primary school pupils as part of activating classes, but basically for people of all ages. It can be said that a man itself is ultimately nothing more than a mixture of blood and sweat and unused possibilities. However, when he gives himself a chance to make contact with the spirit of time and generations or simply with another human being, he becomes a concrete individual and suddenly begins to believe that he lives a life of purpose.

## 6. Extraordinary opportunities of ordinary people

According to Aborigines people have “three brains”: the smallest is responsible for the logical thinking; middle one is heart and emotions, but the biggest one is instinct<sup>5</sup>. Without some “fourth” area of brain which would collect and process information from those three to establish more holistic decisions, and without internal cooperation between “the three brains”, how could we talk about becoming oneself at all? For example, does a man who as his scout chooses the “smartest” instinct must remain only at the animal level and cannot integrate the benefits of the other “brains”? It seems quite absurd. If we really want to be human, then – in my opinion – we should not only refer to some primary nature, but also let ourselves be guided by the heart and keep thinking. Eventually, we are not internally contradictory entities, because if we were, then we would not even exist. A man should therefore be able to seek to find something. He should also be able to take breaks to be able to receive what he is looking for. It is worth noting that usually we do not find the answers we need when we stubbornly try to reach them, but when we stop our efforts momentarily. We have to be able to look to see what we really want to see. Another noticeable regularity can be expressed in the statement that we only get what we are setting ourselves on. We do not even notice anything else, we do not notice opportunities that we do not consider.

However, we need a lot of forbearance, also for ourselves. It is only when we are patient for ourselves that we can also let great changes in our lives, changes for the better. The moment when we forget about our limitations is the most important moment of human creativity. It decides about new human existence, and at the same time it ignites millions of new lives, all these people, which it inspires. When we lose ourselves in dancing, in singing, in writing, in sport... or in others, even ordinary everyday activities, such as cooking or cleaning, we open ourselves to extraordinary possibilities. By keeping only conscious attention, we would not be able to see them, let alone use them to the zenith, i.e. as it happens when we gain a real jump into the Infinite – when we agree to be a spark which is able to set fire to the whole world...

Animism (contact with nature) and life in the present moment, so obvious to an animal, can be a great art for a man. While rational thinking is the first

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<sup>5</sup> See in: M. Dudzik (about Ed Stafford), *Król dżungli: Na wyprawie przesuwam granice* (*King of the jungle: On the expedition I'm moving the boundaries*), “Dziennik Łódzki”, August 23, 2013.

step to start for example to create technically correct sentences, it is only letting go of the limitations particular for this kind of creativity, that is able to open our eyes to a significant dimension of humanity. For example, when we speak of heroism, we mean truly great deeds, escaping the ethical correctness, thrilling to similar gestures, described in poems. Appreciating the contribution of Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945) in breaking the man from "the functional circle of the animal" and the introduction of the concept of "animal symbolicum", it can be noted that at the same time it is high time – according to the adopted dialectic – to reverse this idea in some sense. The task for people, who – in the limits permissible for themselves – have developed enormously in the sphere of rational thinking, may now be just a deeper discovery of passion in themselves, which from the current perspective will be able to gain a subtle but also expressive meaning.

Therefore it is not a matter of letting us free ourselves from all kinds of magical thinking. We would rather choose the interesting paths for our thoughts. Philosophical thinking is not completely free from animal thinking or from the irrational myth of irrationality. Eventually, philosophy draws from myth. Plato (427BC–347BC) already focused on it. On the other hand, despite appreciating the ideal world he was very ambivalent about myths. The difference between mythological thinking and myth thinking seems to rely on the occurrence or absence of the ability to consciously assume an attitude toward the inconceivable and also on honest agreement for the presence of something unverifiable in human life. This ability is apparently present in the case of mythological thinking, and absent in the case of thinking with a myth, which, in turn, unknowingly places eg thinking about self on the side of random events, untranslatable to logical language. Does true wisdom lie in an ability to admit non-knowledge to oneself? Is there not wisdom in a skill to meet the Invincible but without complete doom? An interesting illustration of the age-old conflict between spiritual aspirations of reason and an emotional world of senses can be Hermann Hesse's book *Narcissus and Goldmund*.

In addition, it turns out that our human world is not only two-dimensional, but woven from many interpenetrating planes. Here friendship with one's own shadow comes out for good. In turn identifying oneself with the role fulfilled in given circumstances marginalizes spiritual life<sup>6</sup>. Here, the only chance for development is the consent to the course of life, as well as the conse-

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<sup>6</sup> See in: C. G. Jung (conceiver and editor), *Man and his Symbols*, New York 1964.

quences of the choices made. Looking for meaning in life, one can try to treat the existing reality as a picture painted by humanity from the beginning of time. If we began to rip away the visible layers of what is, then we would not easily get to what it was. There is no free passage from cause to effect in the world and the present rarely becomes a direct consequence of the past. It is much easier to point to the jumps that have taken place in our history or in the history of every single human being. In order to understand history, one should therefore be zealously directed to the source of what is, and not try to guess the invented puzzles that only divert our attention from the essence of all things.

### 7. What is important

For example, in painting a picture it is important to properly "leave", which should be understood as the ability to distance yourself from your own work by looking at it from a greater distance from the easel, through a guarantee of success in trying to see everything you need to understand. Although there are different schools, the science itself, especially philosophical, will always focus on what is important. In accordance with the principles of dialectics, it will lead the student's mind from the general to the specific, not compelling him to acquire absolute knowledge (it is important to know that a man cannot have it), but will encourage to constant exercise of mindfulness, never to miss the opportunity to step closer to the truth again. It can be understood as the meaning of existence, because it is expressed in the essence of a given thing or phenomenon. It is not dependent on what we can actually believe; we rather depend on it, but only if we live in harmony with ourselves, with our true self. The amateur of truth may turn out to be the creator of tomorrow, because he is a man whom history inspires to express the unique life on his own. It is this life that we have been gifted with, and nowhere else will we find ourselves, only here and now.

It can be said that every age has its own children; it also has its great heroes. However, distinctive regularity, which seems to apply to significant heroes, as well as to silent saints, almost in every age is the current inability to recognize and appreciate true innovators and predictors of tomorrow<sup>7</sup>. However, the development of mankind probably does not end yet. New generations will come. In this matter, a lot depends on education of youth, because even spoiled fruit

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<sup>7</sup> See in: W. Kandinsky W., *Concerning the Spirituality in Art*, trans. M. T. H. Sadler, Unites States 1977.

can have healthy seeds<sup>8</sup>. Perhaps each of us has the ability to honestly anticipate events, but not everybody realizes it. Not everyone can afford to give up the ballast of their unbelief. "The darkest is just before dawn", when one is already deeply aware that he or she cannot see the real world, when they cannot see it yet. Soon the night will rapidly change into a day. This unique moment was poetically presented by Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), who described it as penultimate level of the mysterious Pyramid.

### 8. Types of light

The role of light cannot be overestimated in life and in art. There is, however, a profound difference between the blinding sun of "knowledge" which was described by Georges Bataille (1897–1962) in *Inner Experience* and the radiance of the Sun of Ideas described earlier by Plato in *The Republic*. When our world knowledge reveals something to us, it also hides something else. On the other hand, in the case of the fundamental type of light (ideas), we are not blinded but clearly instructed about the truth we are looking for. This light radiates with particular clarity, only if of course it can be invoked, thanks to anamnesis, beyond the incarnation of the soul directly from the world of ideas. The deep difference is also between the Light of God and the light of the eyes. Do we see well only with our hearts? – would ask the Little Prince from the book of A. de S. Exupery (1900–1944). However, Augustine of Hippo (Saint Augustine, 354–430) could answer him (beyond time) that both, a bad and a good heart, can be full of abyss, including doubts and some kind of unbelief<sup>9</sup>. A man turns out to be inconceivable even in the ways of manifesting his individuality among other beings. However, if we put the Good in the center, on the altar of our lives, what power above us can have a shadow over that power which is a part of nature? The unique mystery of man was emphasized by Abraham J. Heschel (1907–1972). According to him the search to answer the questions about God by human, at most allows us better understand our own being. On the other hand, when we ask for ourselves, the answers we discover can point us to God, that is, to our true heritage. Anyone who is able to believe it, believes also that

<sup>8</sup> See in: J. Bilczewski (archbishop of Lviv), *Młodości! Ty nad poziomy wylatuj! List pasterski do uczniów szkół średnich i seminariów nauczycielskich, 20 stycznia 1905 r. (Youth! Fly above the levels! Shepherd letter to students of high school and teacher seminars, January 20, 1905)*.

<sup>9</sup> H. Arendt, *Wola (Willing)*, trans. R. Piłat, Warsaw 2002, p. 125.



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everyone (without exception) is the heir of the kingdom. Every human being is a free individual who has an unusual ability (though they are not compelled) to follow the subtle calls of the Spirit, inviting people to participate in the great work of creation.

### 9. Inner light

The most powerful creation engine is love (like in Empedocles' philosophy). That is why generosity in the upbringing of a creative man turns out to be so important. The love which creates through awakening aspirations, and does not weaken by neglecting talents or even the very people who are endowed with them, is a guarantee of development of potential in people. Thanks to this power, a man has a chance to become his entelechy, the best version of himself (like in Thomas Aquinas' lecture). At the same time, everyone can be one's own teacher, taking self-education in time. If a man knew that he would stumble, he would not go forward, and thus would not make a groundbreaking mistake on which he could learn something new. Like a small child, when he or she learns to walk and they can still experience their failings, so adults should not forget, that every first step requires a lot of commitment and faith. It is a metaphor for the development of humanity as such.

If the presentation of the world and the image of one's own person (creation of the representations of the world and building knowledge, feeding convictions about oneself) does not differ significantly from the truth, human cares for the need for further development towards perfection. Although people will never be perfect, as long as they last they have a unique opportunity to work on themselves. For example, it seems to a man that he is walking on a rope. However, he walk neither on a rope nor along an usual path, but he moves almost entirely on the inner path marked by personal effort, which depends on the strength of human conviction that he does not have to be a grating and can be a way (for himself) at the same time.

The aspects described above are components of my approach to the indicated research problems and are the specific overcoming of the well-established in the tradition ways of understanding human reality.

## 10. The Philosophical experiment “Universal Interpersonal Creativity Training”

In response to modern dilemmas deeply rooted in society and above all in people who do not want to be only cogs in the machine, who want to be like live sparks, I would like to propose a specific thought experiment under the slogan “Universal Interpersonal Creativity Training”, inspired by philosophy of man, the need to improve interpersonal relations, socio-cultural animation and drama.

The themes of these abstract trainings can oscillate in the circle of "I" – "We". In this way, the intuitive dynamics of the transition from self-discovery to integration with other people would be captured. The basic trust that – as Socrates taught – a good man is especially protected by Providence, whereas evil results only from human ignorance<sup>10</sup>, on a mental level may help us to work out bridges of understanding with other people and with the world, leading to undermining and eventually demolishing the walls of possible mutual prejudices. It can in turn promote the revival of the spirit of global cooperation and great fun, even at work and during work, thanks to play of work. The key to success lies in good cooperation, not in competition.

This philosophical experiment may turn out to be interesting in the light of raised issues. It is a special proposition of Universal Interpersonal Creativity Training as a response to the needs of very different people, which the Reader individually discovers in himself. It is important for me to search for an intuitive common link in pursuit of personal development by participants of this "virtual fun". As a part of realization of this special game, everybody can personally analyze the possibility of cooperation between people at a varied level of intellectual, artistic and social development. By describing the structure of such a specific training, it will be possible to explain the idea of *indefinitely (self)shaping*. After the initial reconnaissance I can point to its following components:

- the development of mankind, a human being in history;
- the development of human individuality, due to the inability to define the end of man as an entity;
- no rigor of segregation of people (everyone can take part in this thought experiment).

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<sup>10</sup> See in: A. Kazimierczak-Kucharska, *Chrześcijaństwo jako filozofia. Postać Sokratesa jako jedno ze źródeł nauczania św. Justyna Męczennika (Christianity as a philosophy. The figure of Socrates as one of the sources of the teaching of Saint Justin Martyr)*, 2010, [in:]: [www.katedra.uksw.edu.pl](http://www.katedra.uksw.edu.pl).

This particular proposition of *intra-personal* training is to be focused on defining the importance of self-understanding and in order to direct attention to the need for development of competences of living in a community. The goal of people at various levels of life development is/should be mutual paying attention to their strengths, which are the share of each one of them. If these people start to form a group or create larger communities, they will probably also have greater or lesser need for social affiliation, although they will not always be aware of how they can achieve better results of cooperation in a team with which they would really like to integrate. Very often, not being aware of our own competences and before we discover our talents, we do not fulfill enough interesting functions and in addition we also feel then inefficient, and even we have a sense of personal maladjustment. I think, therefore, that it is worth to find out in advance whether such situations can be remedied. Can any team member perform their tasks with the passion of a person genuinely involved in their work, while inspiring other people, often very different? Let us think about it for a moment!

### **11. Connections between philosophy, religion and art (multi-dimensional approach to the problem)**

The particular issue is also from the beginning felt aspect of human spirituality. It is worth noting that our spirituality is connected not only with the religious ritual, but also very often with rituals centered around art, although the role of sacred works is differently understood in different religions; as having or not their contribution to the Salvation. The problem concerning the sacral significance of images is not particularly important for these considerations. I am much more interested in a man himself, with his dilemmas and lofty dreams, a man – as a living picture of the Sacrum. According to the Latin sentence – "ars longa, vita brevis". However, it seems that on the way of life a man may let himself be sanctified by the power of Grace. Therefore when people follow Christ, taking their own crosses, they also receive their participation in the great uninterrupted work of creation.

I think it is worth to make an attempt to develop the problem of inevitable ambivalence present in the creativity, therefore it seems to be inseparably connected with create process. An artist and an amateur work with their sensitivity, going through spiritual cataracts, including existential crises. One of the few sources clearly pointing to the existence of such an unresolved (or unsolvable?)

problem are the writings of Brother Albert. Before he devoted himself to the poor, he had become an outstanding painter, for example the author of the work *Ecce Homo*<sup>11</sup>. The life of Adam Chmielowski (his previous name) can also be a valuable inspiration for people interested in the problem of spirituality in art. I consider the need for the diagnosis of a deeply rooted in human aspiration to verbalize the tension in the soul between the pursuit of perfection in the temporal world (art) and the sense of vocation to sanctify one's life through inner simplicity.

I also think that in this matter, it is impossible to limit oneself to attempts to answer the question whether art stands in the way of sanctity, because it implies further questions in the following way: is sanctity (understood as a deep spirituality) a condition for a real art? In search of the sense of sacrifice for art, you can also ask other types of questions. For example, if a work of art *seizes* the entire world, can it be seen only as a product of an artist who receives a spiritual invitation to creativity? It is not so important to complete the work, for example to paint a picture, but the spiritual development of a human being. According to the biblical teaching, every man is called to holiness; it's like a call to genius, to the maximum of life in the truth. Nobody is released from the obligation of self-improvement.

Similar themes can also be found in the sphere of "philosophical faith". The treatment of art as a signpost in considering the hidden meanings of reality is related to the lecture by Karl Jaspers (1883–1969) on the "ciphers of transcendence". Already Schopenhauer thought that art creates an opportunity of detachment from temporal subjective afflictions and – as a form of pretense of the will – it was for him something the best that could happen to a man. Nietzsche, who searched the truth alone, saw in art the inexhaustible possibilities of manifesting the Spirit.

The broadening consciousness concerning the subtlety of human spirituality based on the study of the process of human creativity, broadly understood in the sense of undertaking of various ambitious projects, can contribute to a more complete realization of the liberating idea presented as a way to realize the need for the actual sanctification of life.

There is some risk in marked by human subjective adversity the necessity of confronting with danger of assessment and measurement all people by one

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.catholictothemax.com/catholic-art/ecce-homo-by-st-albert-chmielowski-print/>.

measure. It is necessary to remember that every human has their own standards, with which they play in their constant struggles.

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