

ON IMPORTANCE OF REASON FOR HUMAN UNIQUENESS

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Abstract

The importance of rationality for human uniqueness in the surrounding world is often underlined by great philosophers from Socrates, René Descartes to Karl R. Popper. More recently, philosophy and theology of science proposed by Michael Heller is also a proclamation of rationalism. According to him not only science but also faith should be rational. Moreover, the whole world is the unique Word of God that gives a sense to all humanity. Reason that was at the beginning penetrates every human being, because its existence results from rationality of Divine Thought. We ought to look for the sense of the world and humanity in the mystery of rationality, because the sense given by God to every existing being is the justification of the universe. On the other hand, a spiritual evolution of every man depends on himself. Following critical rationalism of Popper, Heller has also noticed that the decision of being rational in a human life is a choice. And because rationality is a value, this is a moral choice. Rationality then becomes morality of thinking. Even the greatest mystics agree that the experience of Transcendence goes beyond reason, but it does not destroy it. Hence, if possible, one should always follow reason.

In the environment of **Sense the life is worth to live.**

Michael Heller.

Plan of Presentation

1. Introduction
 - Man in Nature (biology and anthropology)
 - Postulate of Rationality (philosophy)
 - Important of being Reasonable and Wise
2. Philosophical Thoughts
 - Socrates
 - Descartes
 - Popper
3. Proclamation of Rationality of Michał Heller
 - Science and Religion
 - Questions of Sense
 - Morality of Thinking
4. Discussion
 - Limits of Rationality
 - Reason and Mystics
5. Summary

Biology

Tablica 1: HUMAN TAXONOMY (BIOLOGY)

Domain	Eucaryota (cells with nucleus)
Kingdom	Animalia (multicellur organisms)
Type	Chordata (notochord and hearth)
Subtype	Vertebrates (backbone)
Class	Mammals (body temperature)
Order	Primates (placentals)
Family	Homindae (bipeds)
Subfamily	Homininae (gorilla, chimpanzee)
Genus	Homo
Species	Homo habilis Homo erectus Homo SAPIENS
Subspecies	Homo sapiens sapiens contemporary man

Place of Man in Nature

Anthropology: man - new species of living being (J. Huxley)
anthropological turning point (discontinuities):
Important stages (gradients!) of hominization (from biology to culture):
(e.g. Lucy, Ethiopia, 3.7×10^6 years ago, age of the Universe 1.4×10^{10} y)

- Homo *habilis*, handy man $(2.5 - 1) \times 10^6$ years (pleistocene)
- Homo *erectus*, upright man $(2 - 0.3) \times 10^6$ years
- Homo SAPIENS, wise man (CEFALIZATION !!!) $(1 - 0.4) \times 10^5$ years
- Homo loquens, speaking man?
- Homo faber, man the maker?
- Homo ethicus, religiosus, psychologicus, sociologicus ...?

- POSTULATE OF RATIONALITY

Contemporary man, according to its name (*homo sapiens sapiens*), should be wise. Let us examine is it really true?

- Importance of Reason

Paradoxically, everything what exists in the world, maybe except of human thoughts, should follow some logical laws. But having in mind only political events noted in history, one would have serious doubts, as to weather the name of our species has in fact been chosen properly [1].

Fortunately, in science, philosophy, and culture this name seems to be somewhat more justified.

Philosophical Thoughts

The importance of rationality for human uniqueness in the surrounding world is often underlined by great philosophers from Socrates, René Descartes to Karl R. Popper.

- Greek philosophy of Socrates (469-399 before Chr.)
(ethical intellectualism)

One can say that Socrates was the father of rationalism since he believed that the right and virtue originate from the human reason and the wrong is the results of ignorance. He invented dialectic way applied to the examination of basic moral concepts such as the Good and Justice.

- elenctic method
- maieutic method

Finally, he consecrated his own life for the honest thinking.

- Methodical doubts of Descartes (1596–1650)

With the famous *Cogito ergo sum* he has found a proper method of thinking for all humankind. This invented method pointing toward man as a subject of rationality can be considered as the beginning of the modernity.

Theory of knowing (subjective knowledge), implication, ontology

- Critical rationalism of Karl Popper (1902–1994)
Knowledge intersubjectively sensible

The important transition from subjective to intersubjective knowledge has only been performed in the last century by Popper with his idea of the third realm consisting of all valuable information acquired by humankind in an open society based on knowledge, science, and understanding.

Philosophy of Heller is a proclamation of rationality:

- Michał Heller, *The Morality of Thinking*, in Polish (Biblos, Tarnów, 1993).
- Michał Heller, *Czy fizyka jest nauką humaistyczną?* (Biblos, Tarnów, 1998).
- Michał Heller, *The Sense of Life and the Sense of the Universe. Studies in Contemporary Theology* (Copernicus Center Press, Kraków, 2010).
- Wiesław M. Macek, *On Being and Non-being in Science, Philosophy, and Theology*, in: *Interpretazioni del reale: Teologia, filosofia e scienze in dialogo*, red. P. Coda, R. Presilla (Quaderni Sefir, 1, Pontificia Università Lateranense, Rome, 2000), s. 119–132.
- Wiesław M. Macek, *Theology of Science according to Father Michał Heller* (in Polish, Summary and Contents in English, see <http://www.cbk.waw.pl/macek>) UKSW Edition, Warsaw, 2010, 2014.

RATIONALITY according to Michał Heller

- **Science and Faith**

Both science and faith should be rational.

- **Question of Sense of Life and Sense of the Universe**

The whole world is the unique Word of God that gives a sense to all humanity.

Reason that was at the beginning penetrates every human being, because its existence results from rationality of Divine Thought.

We ought to look for the sense of the world and humanity in the mystery of rationality, because the sense given by God to every existing being is the justification of the universe.

- **Morality of Thinking**

On the other hand, a spiritual evolution of every man depends on himself.

Following critical rationalism of Popper, Heller has also noticed that the decision of being rational in a human life is a choice. And because rationality is a value, this is a moral choice. Rationality then becomes morality of thinking.

- LIMITS OF RATIONALITY

We are aware of limits of rationality. Admittedly, not every human experience could be totally penetrated by reason. But often the greatest tragedies in human life begin at the moment when the reason is strangled by the 'reason' of hearth.

- REASON AND MYSTICISM

Even the greatest mystics agree that the experience of Transcendence goes beyond reason, but it does not destroy it [1].

- POSTULATE OF RATIONALITY

Hence, if possible, one should always follow reason.

Summary

- Reason that was at the beginning penetrates every human being, because its existence results from rationality of Divine Thought.
- The whole world is the unique Word of God that gives a sense to all humanity. We ought to look for the sense of the world and humanity in the mystery of rationality, because the sense given by God to every existing being is the justification of the universe.
- Human uniqueness is based on possibility of using reason.
- A spiritual evolution of every man depends on himself. The decision of being rational in a human life is a choice.
- Rationality is a value. Rationality is then morality of thinking.
- The experience of Transcendence goes beyond reason, but it does not destroy it. If possible, one should always follow reason.

Literatura

- [1] Michał Heller, *The Morality of Thinking*, in Polish, (Biblos, Tarnów, 1993).
- [2] Michał Heller, *Czy fizyka jest nauką humaistyczną?*, (Biblos, Tarnów, 1998).
- [3] Michał Heller, *The Sense of Life and the Sense of the Universe. Studies in Contemporary Theology*, (Copernicus Center Press, Kraków, 2010).

[Teaching of Church]

- [4] Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* of Holy Father John Paul II, (Wydawnictwo M, Kraków, 1998).

[Additional Papers]

- [5] Wiesław M. Macek, *On Being and Non-being in Science, Philosophy, and Theology*, in: *Interpretazioni del reale: Teologia, filosofia e scienze in dialogo*, red. P. Coda, R. Presilla, (Quaderni Sefir, 1, Pontificia Università Lateranense, Rome, 2000), s. 119–132.
- [6] Wiesław M. Macek, *Theology of Science according to Father Michał Heller* (in Polish, Summary and Contents in English, see <http://www.cbk.waw.pl/macek>) UKSW Edition, Warsaw, 2010, 2014.

Logos

Reason penetrating the World is called by Greeks **Logos**.

And from Greeks this concept is used in the **New Testament**.

Thank you!

