

The Experience of Human Being in the Thought of Karol Wojtyła

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This paper undertakes an issue of human experience as presented by Karol Wojtyła. He proposed an interesting combination of internal and external experiences, which results from phenomenological and personalistic thinking. At the same time, he juxtaposed his proposal with a phenomenalist (naturalistic) approach. However, Wojtyła did not elaborate on the contrast between these two positions. Hence, in this article there is an attempt to complement that. A detailed comparison of these positions helps in understanding better the personalist concept of the experience of human being, which can be succinctly expressed in the following thesis: to get to know the reality of human being is only possible when we take into account the integral experience of human being, including the experience of being human.

Keywords: internal experience, external experience, phenomenology, personalism, naturalism, Karol Wojtyła

INTRODUCTION

A good part of modern as well as contemporary philosophy is deeply involved in inquiry concerning human being. This path of philosophical investigation is very complex and has its dynamics, which is tellingly featured by the title of Robert Solomon's book concerning the history of Western philosophy, namely *Continental Philosophy since 1750. The Rise and Fall of the Self* (Solomon 1988). The concept of experience plays an important role in these anthropological discussions. A dividing line, roughly speaking, goes between the inner, subjective experience and the outer, objective one. Some thinkers concentrate on and develop the former, claiming that what we really need in order to understand the world and acquire a proper approach to it is the experience of oneself from within. Others in turn highlight the latter, pointing to the validity and the fundamental role of the experience given from without. Both sides seem to have good reasons supporting their positions, which results in the situation that there is a tension and even a conflict between them.

This tension, of course, is not an invention of philosophers but has its deep roots in human existence itself. On the one hand, inner experience constitutes our personal world and our self-identity depends on it to a considerable extent. Thus, it seems, we cannot play it down or reduce it to something else. On the other hand, outer experience leads us to many inventions and discoveries – in a sense it guarantees our control over the world. Hence, we cannot easily get rid of that. But as a result, we are torn between one and the other and very often we are disoriented as to the main compass in our lives. Thus, unless we sort out this issue and establish harmonious correlations between these two kinds of experience, there tensions and misunderstandings will always appear.

Such tensions and misunderstandings take place – at least *prima facie* – when the human being is the subject of the investigation. The dilemma is as follows: which experience is more important to discover the truth about myself – inner or outer? In this paper we want to concentrate on both experiences as lived out by the human being, and show the essential relationship between them. An interesting proposal concerning this issue was sketched by Karol Wojtyła in his book *The Acting Person* (Wojtyła 1994)¹. Our intention is to follow and advance his analyses showing the indispensability of both experiences in their mutual and complex relations. In this way, we want to prove that these two versions of experience are complementary and even necessary for each other. Proving that will be possible when we take into account details of the naturalistic concept of human being and the corresponding experience, which is mentioned by Wojtyła but never fully elaborated on.

WOJTYŁA ON EXPERIENCE. A PRELIMINARY APPROACH

A fundamental concept, which seems to be a cornerstone of Wojtyła's philosophy of the human person, is the term "the experience of human being". Explaining this term, the philosopher points to a "cognitive contact with myself". But what is interesting here is that the contact also has experiential character (Wojtyła 1994: 51). The combination of these two aspects of contact with the human and personal reality is a result of the phenomenological approach². However, such an account can be problematic. Many philosophers, especially modern and contemporary ones, respect the separation between what is cognitive and what is experiential. Thus the cognitive approach to human being seems to be distinguished from the experiential one. Wojtyła does not confuse them but reasons along the line that it is not easy to separate them, especially when a reality as complex as human being is the subject of inquiry. All in all, he is convinced that cognition and experience always accompany each other.

However, the philosopher specifies the relationship between a cognitive and experiential aspect. He claims that "the experience of a human being (a human being who is me) lasts so long as the immediate cognitive contact takes place, where I am a subject, on the one hand, and an object, on the other" (Wojtyła 1994: 52). Thus he makes clear that one must be in

¹ It is important to notice that a proper understanding of the person in Wojtyła's thought is impossible when we do not take into account the so-called lived experience. Thus the concept of experience is the key notion in Wojtyła's anthropology (see Savage 2013).

² At the beginning of the paper, it should be remarked that Wojtyła should not be considered as someone who is in the main stream of the classical phenomenology. Although he draws on a phenomenological method, which he mastered while studying Max Scheler and Edmund Husserl, in fact he is a personalist. It means two things: first, he is not limited by presuppositions accepted by the Fathers of phenomenology (e. g. Wojtyła rejects the thesis that consciousness has an intentional character); second, the Polish thinker introduces some ontological theses that typical phenomenologists may be unwilling to accept.

cognitive contact with oneself in order to experience himself. This thesis, however, does not mean that cognition and experience belong to two different stages of inquiry, coming one after another. Rather, it reveals the correlation between them and even their interdependence, i. e. one depends on the other and one is needed for the other. As a result, Wojtyła claims that “any experience is at the same time a kind of understanding” (Wojtyła 1994: 52). Hence, there is no cognition of myself without a component of experience and any experience of myself is accompanied by self-knowledge and understanding.

What is interesting in Wojtyła’s position is the conviction that any process of experience is at the same time a kind of self-experience, and hence a self-knowledge. He claims that “experience of any thing, which is outside a human being, is always associated with a kind of experience of the human being himself. A human being never experiences something outside himself without experiencing, in a sense, himself in that experience” (Wojtyła 1994: 51). Thus, preliminarily, we can point to a thesis that there is no pure external experience. The latter quote indicates that external experience always engages the inner experience of experiencing human subject. Correspondingly, knowledge concerning external and objective realities of various kinds contributes something to the knowledge of myself. For instance, it can be the knowledge about myself as an inventor that is the knowledge that deepens and strengthens (confirms) my understanding of me as the researcher.

What about a pure inner experience? Is it possible to penetrate my interior in a direct way without any intermediaries? In the order of pure possibilities it seems possible. I am always with myself and I have an exclusive access to myself. However, in practice it is a non-starter, especially as far as mature self-experience is concerned. The latter is possible only when there is a distance between me as the experiencing subject and me as the inner object of my experience. This distance is acquired and advanced in the course of my contacts with external realities. The experience of inner-outer relations makes me ready to realize that I myself am also in a relation with me and I am disposed to experience my inner objects. In other words, without the inner distance I will be unable to discriminate between me and my inner objects. This leads us to an important distinction between a subject and an object of experience.

Human experience, like human cognition, has its subject and object. The former is the human being himself, whereas the latter encompasses many realities, including humanness itself. In the realm of the experience of human being, there are two vital experiences. In the first, the object is the experiencing subject, in the second it is other human beings. They differ because I get an exclusive insight into my own “I”, which is not the case when I try to experience the humanity of the other. Wojtyła claims that there is a natural disparity (Wojtyła 1994: 54) between them but at the same time they have much in common. In one as well as in the other, I experience what belongs to humanness. In a sense, there is one object of these two activities and hence Wojtyła introduces a concept of “unity of the object of experience” (Wojtyła 1994: 53). The difference in turn is revealed in the relationship between the subject and the object, that is, in the case of experiencing myself the object is “closer” and more immediate than in experiencing the other.

UNITY OF EXPERIENCE

As mentioned above, it is difficult to separate the inner experience from the outer. Nevertheless, at the first glance, we have some reasons to claim the opposite. Inner experience is strictly connected with memory, consciousness, self-knowledge and reflection. The outer in turn depends, to a considerable extent, on activities of senses. Thus we have some cognitive

resources to discriminate between these two approaches. Epistemologically we cannot question that. However, Wojtyła as a personalist avoids this narrow distinction and even doubts its viability. Can we really separate the sense experience from other inner experiences where the reason plays a vital role? The answer he gives is rather negative. No one knows what pure sense experience is about and what its character and scope are. We human beings are not animals in our cognition. We are not limited to activities of the senses as is the case of animals. The participation of reason in any experience leads to the situation where “a stabilization in the realm of the object of experience” is guaranteed by reason not by senses. Thus what we experience – be it inner or outer objects – goes through “metal classifications and distinctions” (Wojtyła 1994: 54).

The Polish philosopher acknowledges a complex but also an integral approach to human being as far as experience is concerned. He claims that “there is no way to artificially detach human experience from the sets of cognitive acts, which have the human being as the object. All sets of cognitive acts directed to the human being, whom I am but also any other is, has both the empirical character and the intellectual one. One is in the other, one influences the other, one draws on the other” (Wojtyła 1994: 56). Thus what we can see is an attempt to associate and even unify various manners of human cognition and experience. In a sense, they operate simultaneously in their own right but at the same time they complement each other and bring support for one another.

Wojtyła worked out such a broad concept of experience being aware at the same time that particular experiences are not symmetrical and – as we already noticed – there is a kind of disparity between them. However, he was convinced that even if we inquire into particular and deep structures of human being all corresponding experiences are not misleading us. We are still experiencing human being as such, i. e. in his essence and existence. As the Polish thinker claims, the integral experience in its simplicity reigns over its complexity. In other words, in any particular and limited experience, we do have the experience of the whole human being. That wholeness of experience is, in a sense, made up of various particular elements coming from a personal experience of human being as well as from the experience of others; it is also a result of the inner and outer experience. Wojtyła concludes in the following way: “all those [elements] in the cognition ‘comprises’ the one whole rather than bring about the ‘complexity’” (Wojtyła 1994: 56).

Still, we can enquire into the reason for that integral picture of experience. What causes render the philosopher unwilling to yield to a fragmentary approach to human being? Why is he so resistant to give a privileged role to any particular experience concerning human life? There may be a couple of answers but one seems particularly striking. Wojtyła as a phenomenologist was convinced that any reality has its exclusive manner of cognition and experience. The reality of human being is one of them. Thus we are in possession of integral cognitive and experiential methods of investigating human being. This is something, which goes far beyond methods applied to investigating things or inanimate objects. It encompasses not only objective aspects of human being but also subjective ones. In this vein Wojtyła claims: “I, for myself, am not only the ‘interiority’ but also the ‘exteriority’; I remain the subject of both experiences: given from interior and from exterior” (Wojtyła 1994: 55). And correspondingly, to know myself I should concentrate on both kinds of experience, which in fact constitute the integral experience of human being.

HUMAN EXPERIENCE – A RIVAL NATURALISTIC APPROACH

Wojtyła makes a distinction between his approach to experience and an approach typical for naturalism. His position is close to a phenomenological stance, whereas the naturalistic

position is called a phenomenalist one. The philosopher is rather critical of the latter and directs some important questions to it, namely, “what is it given in a direct way? Is it only a ‘surface’ of the being – enquired by senses – which we call human being or human being as such? Whether and under what conditions is this a proper “I” [understood] as human being?” (Wojtyła 1994: 57). We cannot answer these questions until we have investigated at least some selected proposals of naturalistic concepts of the person, which make part of contemporary philosophy. Wojtyła did not mention any specific naturalistic projects but it seems reasonable to make reference to some of them in order to determine what kind of experience of human being is presupposed in them. Is that a pure sense experience only or maybe a kind of experience less evident and more complex?

In the naturalistic thinking there is a tendency to introduce a distinction between human biological life and life of the person³. Let us accept it at least for the sake of the present analyses. For instance, Peter Singer uses this distinction claiming that the former amounts to “member of the species *Homo sapiens*” (Singer 1999: 85). Consequently it brings with it a set of tools necessary to experience and acquire knowledge about human being. As Singer points out, “whether a being is a member of a given species is something that can be determined scientifically, be an examination of the nature of chromosomes in the cells of living organisms” (Singer 1999: 85). In terms of Wojtyła’s discrimination of various experiences, belonging to the species *Homo sapiens* is given via external and objective experience.

Singer undertakes the second understanding of the term “human being” and this is associated with the personal life. He recalls a figure of Joseph Fletcher who worked out a set of personal features, which in turn seems to be a further elaboration of John Locke’s thinking about the person⁴. These features include intelligence, self-awareness, self-control, sense of time, sense of futurity, sense of the past, capacity to relate to others, concern for others, communication with other persons, control of existence, curiosity, change and changeability, balance of rationality and feeling, idiosyncrasy, and neocortical function (Fletcher 1972: 1–4). Other philosophers, to mention only a few figures, who are naturalists or sympathizers with this approach, add further characteristics such as a capability of valuing one’s own life (Harris 1985: 15–17), a possession of the concept of a self as a continuing subject of experiences and other mental states, and a belief that one is such an entity (Tooley 1986: 82)⁵.

In the light of these proposals, it is not easy to get to know what kind of experience helps us to be acquainted with the person: internal or external. On the one hand, it seems reasonable to claim that a special role is given here to internal experience. All mental, psychological and moral characteristics and attitudes are basically subjects of experiences from inside. We cannot acquire them and have a control over them unless we have access to essential values and qualities in

³ The position of philosophical naturalism is quite complex. There are many representatives of that and it is not possible, in this brief sketch, to make reference to all of them. Basically, we are going to draw on ideas presented by those who are active in the field of the contemporary bioethics. However, there are many others involved in discussions taking place, for instance, at the intersection of philosophy and cognitive sciences.

⁴ John Locke said that the person “is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and as it seems to me essential to it” (Locke 1996: Bk. II, chap. XXVII, sect. 9).

⁵ The naturalist approach rejects the classical concept of substance and subscribes to the bundle concept of that. Thus the person is understood here as the constellation of psychological characteristics (see Holub 2016: 174–176).

the subjective dimension of our being. On the other hand, in the case of other people, what we have is only an objective access to them; we can judge them only from outside. Thus, we can preliminarily contend that both experiences are somehow present and operating here.

From Singer's remarks we can infer a claim that a more important role should be given to inner experience. This philosopher is convinced that comparing these two faces of humanity, the person is "a real human being" (Singer 1999: 86). It manifests what is perfect and especially precious in human life. Hence, all methods of reaching out to this aspect of humanness should be emphasized and appreciated. In contrast, to be a member of the species is merely a matter of a biological fact. It helps us to notice that a human being is an organism among many others. Correspondingly, inner experience gives us an access to this human fullness and is a tool of strengthening and developing this unique potential. Outer experience seems to be unable to touch and affect the latter. It concentrates on the objective side of human existence with its tools and modes of inquiry. However, such reasoning is not exact and does not reflect the main point of naturalistic perception and experience concerning human being.

Singer as a typical naturalist states that "these two senses of 'human being' overlap but do not coincide" (Singer 1999: 86). It happens that they occur together but at the same time we cannot identify one with the other. In other words, the beginning and the end of human life of the member of the species and of the human person differ. Trying to determine this difference, we must say that the human organism is the reality, which usually subsists longer than the reality of the person. The reason supporting this claim is that personhood is constituted by personal characteristics and these appear not at the beginning of biological life and in many cases disappear before a biological death⁶. Thus, what we have are two manners of experiencing human life and they are definitely asymmetrical. The experience of the human organism is given longer in terms of time and has a rather external character. The experience of the person in turn is shorter quantitatively but deeper qualitatively (it goes clearly beyond what is grasped by senses) and hence reaches – as Singer put it – 'a real human being'.

Let us concentrate on the latter experience. As we have already said, it seems to draw upon intellect, will and moral sense. Traditionally they have been understood as higher powers and faculties. They constitute the bedrock of the rationalistic approach to human being. In fact, when we take into account objects of intellect, will and moral activities, we are assured that sense perception is limited here. Nevertheless, in the naturalistic approach to human being these activities play essential roles and find their *sui generis* explanations. Basically, naturalist philosophers are interested in them as in actual phenomena. In other words, they are taken into account as capacities, which can be easily exercisable but not as parts of underlying potentialities (Tooley 1983: 149–156). As a result, a massive attention is paid to the fact whether they obtain in a given situation and can be currently verified. Thus, it is an attempt to grasp what is internal through the lenses of the external, i. e. in the light of the methodology of the external (empirical, sensual).

We can still enquire into how real inner experience is. In fact, the problem revolves around the real existence of the human interiority. If there is such a sphere, the claim concerning a corresponding experience is strong and quite credible. But if there is no such real interiority, the corresponding experience will be a projection of something else or even an illusion.

⁶ It is interestingly put by Mark Cherry: "once beings permanently lose the cognitive capacities that sustain personhood, they become beings, if not things, which have the character of being former persons. Without such essential capacities beings cannot, even in principle, participate in self-conscious, self-reflexive moral agency" (Cherry 2005: 22).

To solve this problem, we must first ask what the origin of those personal characteristics is, according to the pattern of naturalistic thinking. In this approach one thing can be excluded at once: that interiority is not the extra-natural sphere. There is no such independent reality as spirit, self or the “I”. They are unavailable for empirical tools and there are no resources within the naturalist methodology to inquire into them. Nevertheless, there is still a concept of self but understood as something associated with a bundle of various characteristics⁷. Basically, those characteristics will be closely associated with the higher brain and the nervous system, and we can consider them as emergent properties of the cortex and nervous systems⁸. Hence, the higher brain plays an essential role in the existence of the person as such⁹. The interiority here – if we can speak about such a sphere at all – is rather a derivative reality, and so should be considered a possible internal experience. But they are both ontologically weak realities and there are doubts whether we can take them seriously into account¹⁰.

HUMAN EXPERIENCE: PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH VS PHENOMENALISTIC ONE

Now we can return to the questions put by Wojtyła. In the naturalistic position what is given in a direct way are foremost empirical features. On the one hand, they consist in biological and neurobiological systems. On the other, they are made up of emergent proprieties coming from complexes of material structures. The latter have an unclear ontological character. The naturalistic position considers them within a non-reductive naturalist theory. Thus, they are not non-natural features but should be accredited with the status of derivatives of natural realities. If we ask whether personal characteristics promoted by the naturalistic stance can be called a ‘surface’ of human being, the answer – given from the Wojtylan perspective – will be positive. There are several reasons justifying this opinion.

Biological and neurobiological systems can be successfully inquired into by methods of sense experience. There is a growing body of empirical tools helping us to get to know our cells, neuronal cells and systems grouping these factors. The problem is with personal characteristics. First, it is hardly believable that they arise from material reality. They are essentially connected

⁷ The question is whether we can consider seriously the existence of the self or the “I” at all. In the bundle theory of substance there is no distinction between a subject and its attributes. All elements seem to constitute such a bundle equally and there is no element of higher order organizing the whole. In the case of human being, it is hard to point to the self or the “I” that precedes its constituents and makes them into a complex and ordered human individual. In other words, there is no “the single owner” of those constituents making up the bundle (Sorabji 2006: 260).

⁸ For instance, Christian Smith presents personal characteristics as emergent properties. First, he sets out an understanding of the process itself: “emergence refers to the process of constituting a new entity with its own particular characteristics through the interactive combination of other, different entities that are necessary to create the new entity but that do not contain the characteristics present in the new entity” (Smith 2010: 25–26). Then, he claims that human being possesses casual capacities, which are emergent from the human body, particularly from the human brain. Finally, Smith is convinced that “personhood is emergent from them” (i. e. from casual capacities) (Smith 2010: 42–43).

⁹ To give a couple of examples, we can point to Joseph Fletcher. He declares that “without the synthesizing function of the cerebral cortex, <...> the person is nonexistent” (Fletcher 1974: 6); or in the same vein Mark Cherry: “removal of the higher brain demonstrably destroys the necessary conditions for the embodiment and existence of the person” (Cherry 2005: 25).

¹⁰ In the naturalistic position one important thing is unclear and unexplained, namely, what is an origin of the content of personal characteristics, often associated with abstract ideas and intentions. We cannot adhere to the thesis that they are produced by natural processes, occurring in the brain and nervous systems. Thus the naturalistic stance seems to assume more than it declares.

with abstract concepts and intentions, and the latter in principle cannot be products of natural processes. Second, there is a real problem to explain how casual capacities or a combination of natural systems initiate the appearance of personal characteristics. Christian Smith adhering to the emergent view of the human person acknowledges this openly¹¹ as other philosophers¹² do. Finally, we remain at the surface of the human being because there is not an extra-empirical self or an “I”. The naturalistic position operates within the third-person-perspective and talking about a sphere that is beyond that or in the background of that is rather pointless.

Wojtyła is convinced that in the case of human being the first-person-perspective is irreducible. This perspective is anchored in the “I” or the self who is the primary reality and the subject of other powers and faculties. Thus, personal characteristics belong to the “I” and are his manifestations. The experience of human being cannot overlook this primary reality because otherwise the inner experience has no object. Nevertheless, he does not exclude the third-person-perspective, important for the scientific and objective approach to the world. Wojtyła’s methods, belonging to the realist phenomenology, enable him to combine the first-person-perspective with the third-person-perspective. We can even claim that such a combination seems indispensable in the light of his anthropological presuppositions. In other words, these two perspectives need each other, depend on each other and in the final analyses – cannot exist independently¹³.

Our earlier analyses revealed that the person cannot employ a purely objective perspective. He, as the subject, is always present in all undertakings experienced and, as Wojtyła mentioned above, the experience of his outer reality is always associated with the experience of his inner reality. This participation of the “I” in seemingly non-personal acts (e. g. a scientific enquiry) is sometimes not obvious. But because Wojtyła’s understanding of the “I” is far from Cartesian *res cogitans*, namely, it is not an extra-worldly subject, there is no separation (or a gulf) between what is inside and what constitutes the exteriority. Correspondingly, any contact (cognitive and experiential) with the latter has its direct consequences for the former. Wojtyła’s claim that external experience is strictly connected with internal experience finds its confirmation in contemporary phenomenology and cognitive sciences¹⁴.

¹¹ “How the brain interacting with the rest of the body gives rise to the mental capacity to, for example, creatively imagine possibilities that do not yet exist, is absolutely mysterious” (Smith 2010: 43).

¹² E. g. Thomas Nagel observes: “if the emergence is the whole truth, it implies that mental states are present in the organism as a whole, or in its central nervous system, without any grounding in the elements that constitute the organism, except for the physical character of those elements that permits them to be arranged in the complex form that, according to the higher-level theory, connects the physical with the mental. That such purely physical elements, when combined in a certain way, should necessarily produce a state of the whole that is not constituted out of the properties and relations of the physical parts still seems like magic even if the higher-order psychophysical dependencies are quite systematic” (Nagel 2012: 55–56).

¹³ Sticking to the third-person-perspective only is a non-starter in any philosophical and scientific enterprise. Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi put it this way: “There is no pure third-person perspective, just as there is no view from nowhere. To believe in the existence of such a pure third-person perspective is to succumb to an objectivist illusion” (Gallagher, Zahavi 2008: 40).

¹⁴ E. g. Gallagher and Zahavi point out: “On a very basic level one might argue that all reports given by subjects, even if directly about the world, are in some sense, indirectly, about their own cognitive (mental, emotional, experiential) states” (Gallagher, Zahavi 2008: 15). Or “<...> the usual opposition of first-person versus third-person accounts in the context of the study of consciousness is misleading. It makes us forget that so-called third-person objective accounts are accomplished and generated by a community of conscious subjects” (Gallagher, Zahavi 2008: 18–19).

What about the first-person-perspective? Is it possible to limit our human activity to what is going on inside (cognitively, experientially)? As we have already said, there is no any separate sphere in human being: the exteriority is vitally connected with the interiority, and vice versa. Wojtyła is unwilling to give a totally autonomous status to reason or consciousness. He remarks quite directly that he is very far from “the absolutization of consciousness” (Wojtyła 1994: 79). The inner sphere, although important for the emphasizing of what is specifically personal in human beings, remains in an essential relationship with the exteriority and even, to a certain extent, depends on it.

As to the former, we can rightly claim that the waking up of the inner sphere goes through a contact with what is external, especially through contact with other people. Any experience given in such an encounter helps one to realize that he is a separate subject and his being is unique and unrepeatable. Although we are potentially creatures disposed to exhibit the first-person-perspective, such a sphere is activated only because we are in a sense compelled to employ the third-person-perspective in the first place. Also maturation of this former sphere depends, to a huge degree, on the quality of these external relationships. Thus, the third-person-perspective is a kind of an in-built ingredient of the first-person-perspective.

In the order of ontological thinking, we can contend that there is no pure, spirit-like, extra-worldly interiority. The latter is a kind of entity, even an object. Of course, it is a very special object in many respects. In the realistic perspective, the “I” is not a projection (or derivative) of any other reality but has its independent existence. Wojtyła – as his commentator claims – adheres to the belief that “subjectivity is something that exists objectively in the world” (Merecki 2015: 37). It has various powers including intellectual and volitional ones and as such can be considered a reality participating in the ontological plurality of the world. Thus, the first-person-perspective, which encompasses the third-person-perspective and corresponding complex experience should be accepted as irreducible elements of the world we live in.

CONCLUSIONS

Wojtyła’s approach to human experience is typical of the personalistic and phenomenological stances. He combines the internal experience with the external one in order to grasp the full meaning and importance of the human being. He is aware that no simplistic mode of inquiry is adequate and a confrontation with naturalistic concepts makes that evident. The experience of human being should encompass its object in all aspects and dimensions. Wojtyła is convinced that human being is not a one-dimensional reality, hence the experience connected with his existence is complex and rich. Particularly, he proves how the internal experience is intertwined with the external one, and how they complement each other. Thus, the stabilization of the internal experience is achieved through the external one, and the latter is always saturated with the former¹⁵. In this way, we can exclude two extremities from the concept of experience, namely, subjectivism and pure objectivism.

The naturalistic approach to human being does not share these conclusions. Basically it draws on sense experience and what is empirical. However, activities of reason and will

¹⁵ Conclusions of this paper are close to a personalist epistemology worked out by Juan Manuel Burgos. Drawing on Karol Wojtyła’s ideas, he proposed the concept of comprehensive experience. The main theses of this project are the following: “1) experience is a primary action of the person with a cognitive dimension; 2) experience is both objective and subjective; 3) the cognitive dimension of experience is a unitary process performed by intelligence and sensitivity; 4) experience objectifies itself in understanding” (Burgos 2015a; also see Burgos 2015b).

are somehow hidden in this method. It is thus because it would be impossible to understand adequately personal characteristics without the mind and other internal powers. Although naturalists try to explain them as emergent properties, there are justified doubts as to the adequacy of such reasoning. Wojtyła's suspicion that naturalism offers a phenomenalist approach to human being and that there is no access to its interiority seems justified. But it is only when we take into account the main tenets of naturalistic thinking about human being, that we realize the extent of this claim. The reason why naturalists remain at the "surface" of the human reality results from rejection of the non-empirical self or the "I". Thus they tend to inquire into human being primarily from without. But such an attitude leads to a kind of paradox, namely, that they try to explain the reality of human being by excluding the experience of being human.

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Karolis Wojtyła: žmogaus būties patyrimas

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama Karolio Wojtylos žmogaus būties patyrimo samprata. Jis siūlė įdomią vidinio ir išorinio patyrimo kombinaciją, kuri išplaukia iš fenomenologinio ir personalistinio mąstymo. Kartu sugretino savo siūlymą su fenomenalistiniu (natūralistiniu) suvokimu. Tačiau K. Wojtyła nedetalizavo šių dviejų pozicijų prieštaros. Taigi straipsnyje bandoma užpildyti šią spragą. Detalus šių pozicijų palyginimas padeda geriau suprasti žmogaus būties patyrimo personalistinę sampratą, kurią glaustai galima išreikšti taip: žmogaus būties tikrovės pažinimas įmanomas tada, jei vertinsime visuminį žmogaus būties patyrimą įskaitant patyrimą būti žmogumi.

Raktažodžiai: vidinis patyrimas, išorinis patyrimas, fenomenologija, personalizmas, natūralizmas, Karolis Wojtyła