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## OF GUILT AND PUNISHMENT

### ABSTRACTS

From the Editors – From the Philosophy of Advent to the Theology of Hope (A. M. W.)

Guilt and punishment belong to the dark and tragic realm of humanity. Although we tend to think of them rather unwillingly, genuine reflection on human matters cannot avoid bringing up the question of guilt or punishment. Within the approach of realist philosophy, the entire human existential and moral experience demands serious intellectual analysis corresponding to the gravity of the issues in question.

The experience of guilt shakes the identity of the moral subject. If one can think about the basic meaning of the term «alienation,» it will undoubtedly involve the way the subject affects himself while committing evil. An absolutely incomparable grasp of such experience can be found in Ovid's: *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*. Is it not absurd that one should do the opposite of what one's discernment dictates? And the issue here is not mistake or error of judgment, but guilt. While judgmental errors manifest the unreliability of human cognitive faculties or their outright failure, guilt uncovers an inner split or hiatus one has caused in one's own being.

Guilt is a violation of the order that should remain intact. Due to its objective impact, guilt goes beyond a merely subjective experience. The actual depth of the guilt by which a moral subject is burdened is by no means a reflection of the sorrow or pain he experiences. On the contrary, it is the depth of his guilt that demands on his part a deep insight into the evil consequences of his own efficacy. However, the subject may not instantly realize the gravity of his guilt, in which case he will experience an even greater sorrow, once he has discovered its impact, either by having matured in the moral sense or by having his conscience stimulated by others. Both the «blindness» of the culprit and his «awakening» demonstrate how deeply-rooted in the human being his guilt is, while it is simultaneously related to some absolutely important aspect of the real world in which the human being lives and acts as a conscious and free agent.

In the center of the experience of guilt lies the paradox of the greatness and fall of man. The significance of this issue can be seen in the entire cultural heritage of humanity. The numerous attempts to explore it, undertaken in various cultures, prove that it pertains to a universal experience that goes beyond the conceptual frameworks imposed by religious or ethical systems. However, one must not fail to recognize the exceptional approach to this experience shared

by Judaism and Christianity, the core of Biblical anthropology being the narration about the greatness of man, who was created in the image and likeness of God, and about man's fall caused by sin.

Thus the Christian doctrine interprets the tragic experience of guilt and punishment, one that marks the human condition, in terms of primordial sin which is at the basis of man's desire to build a world without God, a world opposed to God's design. According to Hegel, it is primordial sin that marks the beginning of human history, making man its exclusive protagonist. One cannot help but wonder at the attempt to live as if God did not exist, *etsi Deus non daretur*, undertaken in the age of Enlightenment and based on the negation of the idea of primordial sin as such. The very same attempt at a new concept of life turned out to be a monstrous exemplification of sin in vast areas of history and culture. Probably all the moral dilemmas human beings face might be reduced to this original temptation to put man in the place of God. The Jewish and Christian revelation seeks the ontological foundations of human guilt within the divine-human drama and provides its description by means of this approach. In the light of the experience of guilt, an anthropology devoid of theology remains incomplete, moreover, it appears incomprehensible.

Guilt and punishment are so fundamental to human life and human history that it is only obvious that vivid reflections of these issues should be found in sacred texts and in literary fiction, the latter providing shocking descriptions of both guilt laden acts and punishments inflicted on individuals for their trespasses. Literary fiction offers also insightful descriptions of the process in which one recognizes one's guilt and acknowledges it. Starting with the Old Testament Psalms, poetry has demonstrated an outstanding capability of expressing the laments of sinners and their begging for mercy. Thus a sinner can recognize his own voice in the pleadings of the Psalmist, as well as in the words of contrition and remorse expressed by poets in various epochs. The cognitive, cathartic and penitential roles of the word cannot be overestimated. One can speak about guilt and punishment in the first person singular only, and such a monologue must have its auditor. An emblematic example of this type of evocation is provided by the Penitential Psalm *De profundis*:

Out of the depths I call to you, Lord;  
Lord, hear my cry! May your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.  
If you, Lord, mark our sins, Lord, who can stand?  
But with you is forgiveness and so you are revered.  
I wait with longing for the Lord, my soul waits for his word.  
My soul looks for the Lord more than sentinels for daybreak.  
More than sentinels for daybreak.  
(Ps 130: 1-6)

Guilt and punishment are also a focus of many descriptive sciences (such as history, cultural studies, psychology and sociology) which attempt to provide an objective account of these phenomena, and they invariably remain within the scope of interest of normative sciences (such as the science of law or pedagogy). The abundant empirical and normative material pertaining to the issues

of guilt and punishment, however, demands that they be explored on a sapiential foundation reaching to the core of the human drama and rendering philosophical and theological reflection indispensable. The crux, however, is not that the issues of guilt and punishment provide interesting problems to be tackled by philosophy and theology, but rather that the timeless nature of these issues determines the very need for philosophical and sociological discourse aiming at a better cognitive grasp of the human being.

Thus the phenomena of guilt and punishment necessarily involve philosophical and theological reflection. Yet one may ask which philosophy and which theology is in the possession of the key to tackle these issues adequately. The correlation between guilt and punishment prompts that there should be a closer link established between philosophy and theology, on the one hand allowing a synthesis of reason and faith, and on the other hand preserving their mutual independence. The cognitive results thus achieved will retain the sapiential character, while following from the metaempirical (transphenomenological) examination of the human experience.

Tadeusz Styczeń, SDS, who developed a concept of ethics «within the field of the moral experience,» concludes his analyses by pointing to the dimension of hope, which is inherent in philosophy. Styczeń does not hesitate to call ethics the «philosophy of advent» and, in a unique way, links the concept of independent ethics with that of the openness of ethics to theology.

An analysis of both the experience of moral duty and the truth about the human being this experience implies is sufficient, holds Styczeń, to recognize and justify the moral norms. Ethics remains independent of any outlook upon the world already at its starting point, when its subject is being determined, but also at the stage when its essential norms are being formulated. The epistemological and methodological autonomy of ethics decides about its status of a science as well as about its universal nature, and makes it applicable to the rational and coherent interpretation of the Revelation. Neither does ethics lose its autonomy when it becomes a tool of moral theology, because at the point when it encounters moral theology it is moral theology that draws on ethics without introducing any new content into it.

It is indeed the analysis of human guilt that points to the deep essential link between ethics and moral theology. At the point when ethics, having analyzed the moral experience, diagnoses the moral failure of man and asks the question whether he can overcome this condition, it assumes the shape of moral soteriology. To acknowledge one's sin means to discern something inhuman in oneself, to admit one's moral weakness responsible for the failure, as well as the ontological weakness that makes one incapable of a radical self-liberation from evil.

Is this a deadlock? Indeed, history has witnessed intellectual attempts at ascribing man the capability of self-soteriology, such as ancient Pelagianism or modern rationalism. Such ideas, however, crumble easily, since they contradict the basic human experience which involves the inclination to do evil, which is incurable within the limits of human nature. A philosophical standpoint that declares human capability for self-soteriology seems to be a result of the anthropological optimism which – being unable to keep its promise – turns into pessimism, and frequently into utter despair.

Religious thinking neither makes a human being a lonely island nor perceives him as doomed to the ontological «defeat.» Continuing his reflection within the field of moral experience, Tadeusz Styczeń brings up the question of *Cur Deus homo?*, once asked by Anselm of Canterbury. The question why God became man implies the one about God's attitude to a sinner. The oxymoron *O felix culpa!*, used by the ancient author of the *Exsultet*, must have been an expression of not only poetic enthusiasm, but also his deep insight into the essence of the Paschal grace resulting from the event of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. A happy guilt is the guilt of Adam, the guilt which deserved the saving rebirth of man accomplished through Christ.

The Paschal message is the fruit of faith. Yet the expectation of the grace of redemption seems rational even before man hears the faith awakening word of the Gospel, and it is motivated by the experience of his moral failure and of the destructive power of guilt. While ethics makes no claim to replace theology and merely assumes the role of the philosophy of advent, it is clear that this essential cognitive minimalism turns out a maximalist approach in the dimension of hope. This opens a new horizon, one unavailable within the framework of a purely naturalistic interpretation of the human being. Ethics does not use the categories of the supernatural, of grace, hope, redemption or charity, but it can reach as far as possible in order to stand at the threshold of the Revelation, in the light of which the question of man becomes the question of God Himself. A philosophy concerned about the tragic condition of the human being is allowed to ask about the Redeemer of man. Philosophy and theology use various scopes of the concept of hope. While in the case of philosophy the content of the category of hope remains undefined and open to the expected fact of redemption, theology preaches the accomplishment of the redemption of man in history. While ethics can ask merely about the possibility of redemption, theology is anchored in the realism of the Revelation, and it develops a vision of universal salvation based on the trust in God's boundless love for man. The pioneering works by Card. Hans Urs von Balthasar and Waclaw Hryniewicz, OMI, represent the theology of hope, bringing up the essence of Christian anthropology, which perceives the relationship between God and man as one based on love.

In the age marked by totalitarianism and nihilism, in which humanity was at the brink of an anthropological catastrophe, the thoughts and prayers of many people quite unexpectedly turned towards the charity and mercy of God. A part of the heritage of John Paul II is that God's charity and mercy be preached continuously, in accordance with the mystical message passed on by St. Faustina Kowalska. This spirituality manifests a deep humanism and it must not be perceived as a shallow sentimentality. The categories of charity and mercy, although increasingly assimilated, still surprise many with their novelty and aptness. After all their meaning is that man should look at himself in the way God, who became man, looks at him. "The true and proper meaning of mercy does not consist only in looking, however penetratingly and compassionately, at moral, physical or material evil: mercy is manifested in its true and proper aspect when it restores to value, promotes and draws good from all the forms of evil existing in the world and in man" (*Dives in misericordia*, Section 6).

JOHN PAUL II – The Penitent's Lament (The Catecheses on Psalm 51 delivered during general audiences between the years 2001 and 2003)

During four separate audiences between the years 2001 and 2003, Pope John Paul II presented a comprehensive theological and philosophical analysis of Psalm 51, the *Miserere*, in which he referred to the most significant commentaries on the psalm in question. John Paul II stressed the penitential character of Psalm 51, a hymn of sin and pardon including a profound meditation on guilt and grace.

The Jewish tradition placed the Psalm on the lips of David, who was called to repentance by the severe words of the prophet Nathan who rebuked him for his adultery with Bathsheba and for having had her husband Uriah killed. The Psalm, however, was enriched in later centuries, by the prayer of so many other sinners, who recovered the themes of the «new heart» and of the «Spirit» of God placed within the redeemed human person, according to the teaching of the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Psalm 51 outlines two horizons. First, there is the dark region of sin (cf. vv. 3-11) in which man is placed from the beginning of his existence: “True, I was born guilty, a sinner, even as my mother conceived me” (v. 7). Even if this declaration cannot be taken as an explicit formulation of the doctrine of original sin as it was defined by Christian theology, undoubtedly it corresponds to it: indeed, it expresses the profound dimension of the innate moral weakness of the human person. The first part of the Psalm appears to be an analysis of sin, taking place before God. Three Hebrew terms are used to define this sad reality, which comes from the evil use of human freedom. The first term, *hattá*, literally means «falling short of the target»: sin is an aberration which leads us far from God, the fundamental goal of our relations, and, consequently, also from our neighbor. The second Hebrew term is *awôn*, which takes us back to the image of «twisting» or of «curving». Sin is a tortuous deviation from the straight path; it is an inversion, a distortion, deformation of good and of evil; in the sense declared by Isaiah: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil, who change darkness into light, and light into darkness” (Is 5: 20). Certainly, for this reason in the Bible conversion is indicated as a «return» (in Hebrew *shûb*) to the right way, correcting one's course. The third term the psalmist uses to speak of sin is *peshá*. It expresses the rebellion of the subject toward his sovereign and therefore an open challenge addressed to God and to his plan for human history.

If, however, man confesses his sin, the saving justice of God is ready to purify him radically. Thus we come to the second spiritual part of the psalm, the luminous realm of grace (cf. vv. 12-19). By the confession of sins, for the person who prays there opens an horizon of light where God is at work. The Lord does not just act negatively, eliminating sin, but recreates sinful humanity by means of his life-giving Spirit: he places in the human person a new and pure «heart», namely, a renewed conscience, and opens to him the possibility of a limpid faith and worship pleasing to God.

The richness of Psalm 51 reveals several fundamental components of a spirituality which should permeate the daily life of the faithful. There is above all a lively sense of sin, seen as a free choice, with a negative connotation on the moral

and theological level: "Against you alone have I sinned; I have done such evil in your sight" (v. 6). There is also in the Psalm a lively sense of the possibility of conversion: the sinner, sincerely repentant, (cf. v. 5), comes before God in his misery and nakedness, begging him not to cast him out from his presence (cf. v. 13).

Finally, in the *Miserere*, a rooted conviction of divine pardon "blots out, washes, cleanses" the sinner (cf. vv. 3-4) and is able to transform him into a new creature who has a transfigured spirit, tongue, lips and heart (cf. 4-19).

Commenting in the first part of Psalm 51, John Paul II focuses on some key items: the person praying prays to God first of all for the gift of purification that, as the Prophet Isaiah said, makes "white as snow," "like wool" our sins even though they are more like "scarlet" and "red as crimson" (cf. Is 1: 18). The Psalmist confesses his sin candidly, without hesitation: "For I know my offense; my sin is always before me. Against you alone have I sinned; I have done such evil in your sight" (vv. 5-6). Now there comes into play the personal conscience of the sinner who is ready to perceive his wrongdoing honestly. This experience involves freedom and responsibility, and leads him to admit that he has broken a bond and has preferred to build a life different from that of the divine Word. The result is a radical decision to change. All this is contained in the verb «recognize,» that in Hebrew implies not just an intellectual agreement but also a vital choice. The admission and consciousness of sin are the fruit of a sensitivity acquired through the light of God's Word.

In the confession of the *Miserere* there is a noteworthy emphasis: the sin is described not only in its personal and «psychological» dimension but above all what is described is the theological reality. "Against you alone have I sinned" exclaims the sinner.

Sin is not just a psychological and social matter, but an event that corrodes the relationship with God, violating his law, refusing his plan in history and overturning his set of values, "changing darkness into light, and light into darkness," in other words, "calling evil good, and good evil" (Is 5: 20).

Before finally injuring man, sin is first and foremost a betrayal of God. The words the prodigal son says to his father, whose love is so abundant, capture it well: "Father, I have sinned against heaven [that is, against God] and against you" (Lk 15: 21).

At this point the Psalmist introduces an angle that is more directly connected with human reality. It is a sentence that has given rise to many interpretations and has been linked with the doctrine of original sin: "True, I was born guilty, a sinner, even as my mother conceived me." The praying person wants to indicate the presence of evil in our whole being, as is evident in his mention of conception and birth, as a way of expressing the entirety of existence, beginning with its source. However, the Psalmist does not formally connect his state with the sin of Adam and Eve; he does not speak explicitly of original sin.

It is still clear, according to the text of the Psalm, that evil is rooted in man's innermost depths, it is inherent in his historical reality, so the request for the mediation of divine grace is crucial. The power of God's love exceeds that of sin, the forceful river of evil is less powerful than the fruitful water of forgiveness.

In this way the theology of original sin and the whole Biblical vision of man as a sinner are indirectly recalled in a way that at the same time gives an intuition into the light of grace and salvation. The confession of sin and the consciousness of one's misery do not lead to terror or the nightmare of judgement, but indeed, to the hope of purification, liberation and the new creation.

Another key element of Psalm 51 is the grandiose plea for forgiveness it includes (cf. vv. 12-16). First of all, it is important to note that in the original Hebrew the word «spirit» is repeated three times, invoked of God as a gift and received by the human creature who has repented of his sin: “Renew in me a steadfast spirit. [...] sustain in me a willing spirit” (vv. 12. 14). One could say, taking recourse to a liturgical term, that it is an «epiclesis,» that is, a triple invocation of the Spirit who, as in creation hovered over the waters (cf. Gn 1: 2), now penetrates the soul of the faithful, infusing it with new life and raising it from the kingdom of sin to the heaven of grace.

With this triple mention of the «spirit,» after describing in the preceding verses the dark prison of guilt, Psalm 51 opens onto the bright realm of grace. It is an important turning point, comparable to a new creation. As in the beginning God breathed his spirit into matter and created the human person (cf. Gn 2: 7), so now the same divine Spirit recreates (cf. v. 12), renews, transfigures and transforms the repentant sinner, embraces him again (cf. v. 13) making him share in the joy of salvation (cf. v. 14). Now the human being, animated by the divine Spirit, sets out on the path of justice and love. Having experienced this inner rebirth, the person praying becomes a witness; he promises God to “teach the wicked your ways” of good (v. 15), so that, like the Prodigal Son, they may be able to return to the house of the Father. In the same way, St Augustine, after experiencing the dark paths of sin, in his *Confessions* felt the need to witness to the freedom and the joy of salvation.

For one last time, the person praying looks at his dark past and cries out to God: “Rescue me from death, God, my saving God” (v. 16). The «blood,» to which he refers is variously interpreted in Scripture. Here on the lips of King David, it refers to the killing of Uriah. In a more general sense, the invocation indicates the desire for purification from evil, violence and hatred always present in the human heart with dark and malicious force. Now the lips of the faithful person, purified from sin, sing praise to the Lord.

In fact, the passage ends with the promise to proclaim the «justice» of God. The term «justice» in this context, as so often in biblical language, does not actually indicate God's punitive action of evil by God, but rather indicates the sinner's rehabilitation, since God reveals his justice by making sinners just (cf. Rom 3: 26). God derives no pleasure from the death of the wicked, but only that he give up his behaviour and live (cf. Ez 18: 23).

The message of hope of the *Miserere* which the Psalter puts on the lips of David, a converted sinner, is this: God can “blot out, wash and cleanse” the sin confessed with a contrite heart.

In his reflection on the end of Psalm 51 John Paul II stresses that is full of hope, for the person praying knows that God has forgiven him (cf. vv. 17-21). On his lips is praise of the Lord, which he is on the point of proclaiming to the world, thereby witnessing to the joy felt by the soul purified from evil, hence,

freed from remorse (cf. v. 17). The person praying witnesses clearly to another conviction, making a link with the teaching reiterated by the prophets (cf. Is 1: 10-17; Am 5: 21-25; Hos 6: 6): the most pleasing sacrifice that rises to the Lord like a fragrance, a pleasant odour (cf. Gn 8: 21), is not the holocaust of bulls and lambs, but rather of “a broken, humbled heart” (v. 19)

The Psalm ends on an unexpected note in an utterly different perspective that even seems contradictory (cf. vv. 20-21). From the final supplication of a single sinner, it becomes a prayer for the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem, which takes us from the time of David to that of the city’s destruction centuries later. Moreover, having voiced the divine rejection of animal sacrifices in verse 18, the Psalm proclaims in verse 21 that it is in these same burnt offerings that God will take delight.

It is clear that the last passage is a later addition, made at the time of the Exile and intended, in a certain sense, to correct or at least to complete the perspective of the Davidic Psalm on two points: on the one hand, it was not deemed fit that the entire Psalm be restricted to an individual prayer; it was also necessary to think of the grievous situation of the whole city. On the other hand, there was a desire to give a new dimension to the divine rejection of ritual sacrifices; this rejection could be neither complete nor definitive, for it was a cult that God himself had prescribed in the *Torah*. The person who completed the Psalm had a valid intuition: he grasped the needy state of sinners, their need for sacrificial mediation. Sinners cannot purify themselves on their own; good intentions are not enough. An effective external mediation is required. The New Testament was to reveal the full significance of this insight, showing that Christ, in giving his life, achieved a perfect sacrificial mediation.

Summarized by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** The Book of Psalms, sin, forgiveness, contrition, hope, penitential prayer, human freedom, feeling guilty

The published text comprises the Catecheses on Psalm 51 delivered by John Paul II on: 24 October 2001, 8 May 2002, 4 December 2002, 30 July 2003.

*Against you alone I have sinned*, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/audiences/2001/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_aud\\_20011024\\_en.html//](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_20011024_en.html//).

*Where sin abounded, grace was more abundant!*, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/audiences/2002/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_aud\\_20020508\\_en.html//](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/2002/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_20020508_en.html//).

*Take not your Holy Spirit from me*, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/audiences/2002/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_aud\\_20021204\\_en.html//](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/2002/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_20021204_en.html//).

*“Have mercy on me, O God!”*, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/audiences/2003/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_aud\\_20030730\\_en.html//](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/2003/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_20030730_en.html//).

Rocco BUTTIGLIONE – The Social Dimension of Guilt. Is Passive Guilt Conceivable? (trans. P. Mikulska)

The author addresses the social and cultural aspects of guilt, investigating the question of the person's responsibility for morally wrong acts that are generally approved of in their social environment so that the person may be unaware of the immorality of those acts or – for a variety of reasons – feel unable to adopt a different course of action, thus participating in the “passive guilt.” The author argues, following Karol Wojtyła, that the person's responsibility for an act committed in such conditions depends on the degree of the responsibility for their own ignorance or insufficient self-possession and self-dominion. This claim is based on the view of the human person as capable of transcending the historical and social circumstances that have formed them, however difficult it may be. In this context the author comments on St. Thomas Aquinas' adage: *conscientia erronea obligat*, and points to the fact that nowadays an insurmountable error of conscience may be shared by much larger social groups than in the past, or even become a “mass error.” On the other hand, just as it may hinder the perception of good and evil, the cultural context may help see them correctly and produce in the person an emotional disposition towards morally good acts – a sort of “passive virtue.” This shows the importance of the community aspect of the human act and indicates an obligation to shape the society according to the truth and the good. Thus the person born within the structures of sin is not – in virtue of this very fact – a sinner, but is called to change them.

Summarized by *Patrycja Mikulska*

Keywords: guilt, social aspects of guilt, structures of sin, passive guilt, conscience

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Fr. Tadeusz DOLA – Hell and Purgatory: Historic Transformations in the Magisterial Teaching on the Punishment for Sins

The teaching of the Church on the punishment for sins is rooted in the Biblical tradition. Therefore an analysis of this issue must be preceded by an examination of the essential elements of Biblical thinking on the relation between sin and punishment. Theological reflection on the Biblical pronouncements has evolved in history. These transformations in turn clearly affected the magisterial doctrine of punishment for sin.

The major changes in the Church's teaching, ones that affected the entire Magisterial doctrine on punishment for sin, were those concerning the conception of God. In the earliest comments on punishment for sin, God is presented as a fair Judge, who administers punishment for the sins that humans commit. However, in Magisterial opinions voiced in the recent decades, God tends to be perceived

as the merciful Father, who wants the sinner's conversion and salvation. Such a vision of God indeed informs the entire magisterial teaching on punishment for sin in modern times.

Thus punishment is not perceived as a consequence of God's direct decision, rather, it is seen as a result of sin, which destroys human relations and introduces disorder in the world. The reality that comes into being as a result of sinful acts proves to have a negative and not infrequently coercive influence on the human being, who finds it difficult to resist its pressure and to decide freely and consciously about taking the option for God. Surrender to the power of evil may lead to the rejection of God which will be irreversible, and which, as such, signifies the punishment of hell, or eternal estrangement from God. Yet the decision that the human being enter the state of eternal damnation is not made by God, but by the human being him- or herself who commits sin and persists in it. However, God's saving initiatives motivated by love engender the hope that, owing to Christ's victory over death and Satan, human beings will release themselves from the power of evil and will be able, both in this life and in the eternal one, to participate in the purifying grace that flows from the saving work of Christ.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** heaven, hell, purgatory, sin and punishment, conception of God, magisterial doctrine

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Fr. Eligiusz PIOTROWSKI – Might Hell Be Empty? Hans Urs von Balthasar and Waclaw Hryniewicz, OMI, on the Hope for Universal Salvation

The current article is a comparative essay intended as a presentation of the eschatology advanced by two eminent theologians in the last few decades, namely, by Hans Urs von Balthasar, a Swiss who was nominated to be a cardinal of the Catholic Church, and the Polish scholar Waclaw Hryniewicz, professor at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. Both of them are representatives of the current in theology that voices the hope for universal salvation. In general, it might be said that Hryniewicz develops the ideas worked out by von Balthasar, which, however, does not mean that his approach to eschatology is identical with von Balthasar's.

Folk wisdom holds that "all is well that ends well," but can this saying be referred to the work of creation and can universal salvation be considered as an inherent part of the Divine plan? From the advent of Christianity onwards, two alternative eschatological models have been developed in parallel, both referring to Scriptural texts in order to find support. The one that has sadly pre-

vailed seeks its power in the prospect of eternal punishment for sinners and unbelievers, and of eternal reward for the just ones and true believers. The other model, relying on the efficacy of God's saving design, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and on the deepest truth about the «Paschal Mystery,» draws on God's determination to save every human being, even the one that seems absolutely lost to the world.

Both theologians whose ideas are examined in the article reject the «evangelization» model that rests on the eschatology driven by threat and fear. However, the determination they put in to undermine this model is different for each of them. Hryniewicz is definitely more radical in his views and takes every opportunity to expose the incoherence and even ridiculousness of the attempts at preaching threat and fear based faith and the image of God that results from it. Both Balthasar and Hryniewicz have been falsely accused of dissent from the Gospel, while their work actually demonstrates real effort to bring out its deepest truth. They both consider death and the Last Judgment as saving events which open a whole range of possibility resulting from the sinner's (that is every human being's) encounter with the Savior.

One can say without doubt that Hryniewicz is the one who goes further in preaching the "hope for universal salvation" and that he is more consistent in his ideas than von Balthasar. While each of them has approached a borderline in preaching hope and in the «trusting certainty» approach to the issue of salvation, it is Hryniewicz who shows an incomparable consistency in his ideas and absolute determination in advancing them. Thus one may suppose that, unlike von Balthasar, he will not receive the cardinal's hat.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** apocatastasis, efficacy of salvation, eternal nature of hell, freedom, Last Judgment, purgatory, Sheol

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### Anna GŁĄB – The Concepts of Guilt and Punishment in Analytic Philosophy

The article discusses the issues of guilt and punishment, as developed by analytic philosophers.

In the first part of the text the definition of guilt is specified, followed with an analysis of the judgmentalist and the nonjudgmentalist views on guilt, and of their implications. The problem of what determines feelings of guilt is discussed. The conclusion is that «subjective» guilt does not necessarily involve a judgment (or a belief) that one actually is guilty.

The second part of the article comprises an analysis of various theories of punishment justification, namely, of utilitarianism, retributivism and restitutionism, as well as the reform theory. In each case, both the strong and the weak

points of the proposed justification for punishment are discussed. As a result, none of them is pointed to as the best possible one. It seems, however, that any theoretical justification of punishment is doomed to eclecticism and experiment.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** analytic philosophy, guilt, punishment, punishment justification, utilitarianism, retributivism, restitutionism, reform theory

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### Dariusz ŁUKASIEWICZ – Hell: Punishment or Free Choice? Models of Hell in the Analytic Philosophy of Religion

In the first part of the article I discuss two concepts of hell fundamental for the analytic philosophy of religion, namely, the punishment model and the free choice model. The analysis of both concepts leads to the conclusion that the issue of hell (or damnation) must be considered jointly with that of heaven (or salvation).

Any standpoint on the questions of damnation and salvation, in turn, is based on the assumption of the existence of human free will. This assumption, however, can be called in question in the context of the attributes of God, in particular of divine foreknowledge and omniscience.

Thus, in the second part of the article, I consider major standpoints on the omniscience of God (Thomism, Molinism and open theism) and point to their conclusions that might be relevant in the debate over possible models of hell.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** analytic philosophy of religion, models of hell, salvation and damnation, human free will, divine omniscience, divine foreknowledge

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### Robert PIŁAT – Temptation

The concept of temptation is a vague one, which stands in contrast with the role temptation plays in determining one's actions and the hampering effect it has on human self-knowledge. In the present article, I am considering the following questions: What distinguishes temptation from desire or need? Is it al-

ways the case that the content of temptation is a reprehensible act? Are temptations irrational by nature? What are the sources of temptations, in particular, are these sources natural or cultural? What does it mean to cope with temptation? Are there any noteworthy transformations in the way temptations are generated and coped with in contemporary civilization and culture?

I am considering these questions against the background of the 20th century developments in the philosophy of man, and I am situating my reflections in a broader context of the problem of self-knowledge. The thesis I advance is that there is a strong connection between temptation and the ideal of self-fulfillment. Traditionally, the ideal in question was based on the metaphysical principle of identity. Today, however, it is related to the concepts of difference and transgression. I attempt to demonstrate that while the traditional conceptual framework generated an aporia between volition and desire, the new difference oriented perspective has merely introduced new aporias.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: temptation, self-knowledge, desire, need, volition

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Furio PESCI – A Society without Victims. On René Girard's Mimetic Theory (trans. P. Mikulska)

The author presents the mimetic theory, i.e. the views of French anthropologist René Girard, as the conceptual framework to unify the knowledge of man acquired in human and social sciences, and as a demonstration of the importance of Christianity for the contemporary culture. The author explains the key concepts of the mimetic theory: desire and imitation, and describes how those two phenomena lead to violence in a community. He discusses Girard's claim that religions provide a remedy for the mimetic violence through the mechanism of the 'scapegoat' – an individual whose killing channels the accumulated violence thus enabling a community to restore peace and order. Against this background the author shows Girard's views on the exceptional character of Judaism, and especially of Christianity. The French anthropologist argues that they are the only religions where all violence against fellow human beings is forbidden and the scapegoat is replaced by the figure of the Suffering Servant (the Book of Isaiah), and ultimately by Jesus Christ. The aim of Christ's teaching, according to Girard, is to make human beings aware of the ambiguity of their desire and to convince them that the only way to fulfilment leads through satisfying not their own desire but the desire of the Other, i.e. the will of God. The author also discusses the critical analysis of the mimetic theory by Hans Urs von Balthasar and argues that Girard's ideas make it possible to reintroduce the Christian vision of man into scientific research without compromising the ideal of scientific rigour.

**Key words:** René Girard, mimetic theory, desire, imitation, mimetic violence, scapegoat, religion, Judaism, Christianity

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**Rabbi Burt SCHUMAN – Collective Sin, Divine Punishment and Reconciliation in the Torah: Rabbinic Jewish Perspectives on the Story of Noah and the Flood, and the Golden Calf (trans. D. Chabrajska)**

The author presents various Jewish perspectives, including his own, on two of the most significant narratives in the Torah on the themes of collective sin and punishment, that of the Flood and the sin of the Golden Calf. He argues that it is virtually impossible to understand the Jewish approach to the text through the plain sense of the meaning alone. Rather, one must approach these texts through the eyes of the Rabbinic «Oral Tradition» of Mishnah, Midrash, Peshanot (classical commentary), Gemara, Codes of Law and Responsa literature, often in an anachronistic manner. Liberal Jewish biblical analysis incorporates other approaches as well, such as the historical-critical approach of scholars such as Leopold Zunz and Gunther Plaut, as well as contemporary women's commentators such as Tikva Frymer-Kensky and Tamara Cohn Eskenazi. Concepts such as the mitzvot, merit, righteousness, Teshuvah (often translated as repentance, but literally meaning "turning") and God's Midat ha Din (measure of justice) and Midat Ha Rachamim are critical to the analysis of Biblical text from a Jewish perspective. Finally, these texts reflect powerful individual and societal struggles with conflicting human drives and difficult moral and ethical choices and the limitations of human mortality on truly understanding who God is.

**Keywords:** Oral Tradition, Halachah, historical-critical method, Mishnah, Midrash, Gemara, Talmud Codes, Responsa literature, Noahide Code, Teshuvah, Midat Ha Din and Midat Ha Rachamim.

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**Giovanni SALMERI – What Precedes Punishment? A Reading of the Book of Job (trans. P. Mikulska)**

Despite the fact that all cultures uphold a connection between guilt and punishment, the meaning of punishment is not easy to interpret in a convincing manner. Theories emphasizing its deterrent value seem to dissolve the concept of guilt and transform moral choice into the economic calculus of convenience:

if a penalty for an offence may be reasonably considered less onerous than the advantage the latter offers, there is in fact no reason not to commit it. Theories attributing educational value to punishment seem more satisfactory, but they also encounter difficulties: punishment establishes a correlation between guilt and displeasure, while the correlation the offender is expected to see is that between guilt and unhappiness. Thus educational punishment actually requires the offender to be able to establish exactly the connections it is supposed to teach. That provides a good reason to turn to the retributive theory of punishment: regardless of the subjective consequences, punishment implements the moral order. From this vantage point, the law of retaliation, present in the oldest known legislations, more adequately reflects the aspiration for order and symmetry.

While the legal precepts of the Old Testament testify to this tendency, the Book of Job seems to cause its radical crisis by suggesting that the world is not orderly or at least its order is not knowable or understandable. This view is presented in the Book of Job in two apparently different (and partly contradictory) stories. There is, however, a motif that unites them which can be found not in the theories of the universe or God's justice, but in an insight into the human capacity for being close to those who suffer. The keyword of the book is thus *consolation*: Job finds consolation after God has allowed himself to be seen, and at the end of the book Job's friends, who have decidedly failed him, become capable of giving him comfort.

At the end of the analysis of the Book of Job, it may seem that that we can move the discourse onto another plain. In fact, drawing attention to the human values of closeness and affection makes it possible to resume all the theories of punishment exactly where we have abandoned them. The theory of deterrence can be seen as presupposing that human beings are attracted towards the good; the theory of education seems to be based on the premise that human words and examples that testify to the beautiful and to the good are educationally effective; finally, the theory of order rests on the conviction that the restoration of order is the best way to facilitate the acts that human beings, with their anxieties and fragility, often find too difficult – the necessary acts of forgiveness.

Translated by *Patrycja Mikulska*

**Keywords:** theories of punishment, deterrence, retribution, education, restoration, the Book of Job, human values

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Ireneusz ZIEMIŃSKI – Can Crime Be Justified? A Philosophical Commentary on *Crime and Punishment*

The article is an attempted reconstruction of the arguments used by Raskolnikov, the main protagonist of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment*, in order to justify murder. The first line of argumentation refers to elitism, the position which holds that an outstanding individual stands above all the moral principles and has the right to break them. In the case of Raskolnikov, however, this justification of crime is not only incoherent (as there is no unequivocal criterion to distinguish between outstanding and average individuals), but outrightly absurd (Raskolnikov considers his crime as an experiment which is to prove to him whether he is an outstanding individual).

The second line of argumentation Raskolnikov uses may be associated with utilitarianism, which goes against the principles of elitism: If the reason why he commits murder is to help others, he acts against the idea he holds that the lives of most people are devoid of value (and so it is not worth sacrificing oneself or others for the sake of their welfare).

The other protagonists of the novel in question, Sonia and Porfiry, suggest that the source of Raskolnikov's crime lies in his atheism (the reason why he rejects the belief in the immortality of the human soul, which gives a special dignity to every human being and is the basis of the right to life each human being deserves). However, in fact such a concept of atheism may motivate crime on equal basis with sacrifice of one's life for the sake of others.

The solution to the dilemma of crime Dostoyevsky proposes relies on moral intuition which reveals the obvious nature of the right to live and of the prohibition of murder.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** *Crime and Punishment*, literature and philosophy, elitism, utilitarianism, crime justification

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Tomasz GARBOL – "... besides that we are innocent": The Issues of Guilt and Punishment, as seen in the Poetic Output of Czesław Miłosz

The article focuses on the poetic approach to the questions of guilt and punishment, as can be seen in the poetic output of Czesław Miłosz.

The starting point of the reflections is the recognition that Miłosz happens to be a moralist merely at times and does not seem intent on performing such a task. The moral message he conveys comes down to the so-called principle of

golden means. Miłosz does not manifest the belief that the culprit will always be punished, nor does he openly refer to the perspective of eschatological justice. Instead, while believing punishment is an imperative, he considers it to be a postulate of moral sensibility rather than a simple consequence of the laws to which human beings are subject. The relative impunity of wrongdoers, as manifested by Miłosz's poems, echoes his recognition of the powerful «demon» of Historical Necessity. The fact that one is a «tool» of this demon, however, does not remove the responsibility for the committed evil: punishment is as if inscribed in the life of the wrongdoer, whose existence becomes inhuman, impoverished, and actually reduced to the concern for physical survival at any cost. The prospect of death diminishes human trespasses, as they turn out to be insignificant compared to the terror of nothingness. A recurring theme in Miłosz's poems is innocence, which, however, does not come from relativizing sin. The source of innocence, according to Miłosz, lies in the fact that sharp moral judgments must be suspended. Consequently, the center of the gravity of self-reflection is subtly shifted in his poems: the poet accentuates the metaphysical and ontological sensibility in the human being rather than the moral one. He also repeatedly refers to the poetic gesture of guilt being annulled through gift reception. The anguish of non-performance and the sense of guilt recede to the background, as the sudden and expected tranquility, which thus follows, deprives them of their power to poison life. One must note though that Miłosz draws a sharp line between genuine innocence, consisting in the reception of the gift of peace of heart that annuls the guilt the wrongdoer has recognized and admitted to, and hypocritical relativization of evident evil. In the background of Miłosz's poetic approach to the issues of guilt and punishment is the belief that human acts and the entire sphere of activity that is subject to moral appraisal do not exhaust the meaning of human life. Thus a consideration of the essential message of Miłosz's poetic output shows that the poet does not point to any duties or acts the human being is supposed to perform, rather, he suggests the kind of attitude to take. It consists in being faithful to the reality conceived of in the maximalist terms and seen as opposing death, in existence perceived as the antithesis of nothingness. Such an attitude can be shaped by two qualities, namely, the sympathy induced by the recognition that life is marked with irreversible loss and the admiration of the phenomenon of existence.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: Czesław Miłosz, innocence, guilt, punishment, evil

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Andrzej SZOSTEK, MIC – Can Punishment Be «Blessed»? A Contribution to the Ontology of Punishment

The purpose of the title question is to help determine the criteria a punishment, above all an institutional punishment, must meet in order to prove «blessed» for the offender. After a brief discussion of the essential functions of a penal system (namely, the justice, protection and guaranty related ones) the author undertakes a critical analysis of the humanistic approach to penal law, which, in its core, questions the fundamental conditions that determine the reasonableness of punishment, namely, the freedom and the responsibility of the offender. The presented criticism of the humanistic standpoint does not mean, however, that the idea of opening the prospects for a moral revival to the offender should be excluded from the conception of penal law. Yet executing this idea requires that both the actual system of penal law and the offender should meet certain conditions. The law, for its part, must ensure maximum impartiality and fairness in hearing particular cases and in establishing the offender's guilt. This purpose is served by a proper structure of the legal system (involving the independence of the courts of justice, the system of appeal as well as suitable defense and prosecution representations) and by strict observance of the rules of court (above all, by respecting the principle of legality, *nullum crimen sine lege*, stating that conduct does not constitute crime unless it has been previously declared to be so by the law). Not only must the mentioned principles be inherent in the legal system instituted by the state, but they must inform the entire public sphere, which, according to the author, needs to develop a higher legal culture than, for instance, the one characteristic of today's Poland.

The author holds that death penalty is difficult to retain if the penal system is to offer offenders a chance of moral correction. On the other hand, offenders can turn even very severe punishments into «blessings» for themselves, if they demonstrate sufficient courage to face the truth about the acts they have committed, without shifting the responsibility for those acts on other individuals. Such openness to truth helps them to conceive of punishment in terms other than those of retribution, and to experience the punishment to which they are subjected as a stimulus that triggers genuine contrition. In this way punishment – through conversion – can result in a life change.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** penal system theory, punishment, offence, independent judiciary, retribution, moral correction.

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Francesco D'AGOSTINO – The Crisis of Penal Justice in Modern Culture (trans. P. Mikulska)

The author discusses the causes of the present crisis in the criminal law, identifying as the main one the rejection of the classical, or humanistic, model of criminal law that is based on the concept of justice, and includes such notions as responsibility and freedom. In this model, justice is understood as the principle of rendering to everyone his due; in the case of the criminal, what is due to him is the just punishment. The author argues against the postmodern theorists' and neuroscientists' proposal to overcome the crisis by abandoning – as «metaphysically contaminated» – the idea of crime as the wrong use of freedom and replacing it with the idea of defective functioning of the nervous system; as a result, the concept of punishment would be replaced with that of treatment, which, according to the author, leads to the consequences that are not only absurd but socially dangerous. In his view, the postmodern theory of law is unable to protect the fundamental inviolable rights of the person, and in particular, to respect the criminal as a conscious and free individual that deserves punishment.

Summarized by *Patrycja Mikulska*

Keywords: crisis of criminal justice, classical model of criminal law, postmodern theories of law, responsibility, freedom, neuroscience

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Piotr ŚLĘCZKA, SDS – Two Kinds of Guilt? Between the Philosophy of Advent and the Christian «Advent Existence»

A philosophical reflection on the experience of guilt encounters a principal difficulty in that the experience in question can be explored in terms of various methodologies. The concept of guilt is addressed in disciplines such as psychology, ethics and moral theology, but it is also and probably most often used in colloquial language, by means of which human beings attempt to express their emotional states as well as the states of their minds.

In the present article, I focus on the concept of guilt as it is understood in ethics and in theology, as well as on the existential context of the everyday human experience of «feeling guilty.» I point thereby to the presence of cognitive acts and actions in the human experience that ultimately escape philosophical analysis. Among them are basic existential decisions, in particular those related to the discernment of one's vocation and the choice of one's state in life, including those that involve the dimension of religious faith. According to Hans Urs

von Balthasar, it is such decisions that (in the theological sense) make the human being a human person.

While continuing von Balthasar's approach, I put forward the thesis that in order to be able to make such choices subject to theoretical reflection we must work out a new, «trans-ethical» concept of guilt. It is only on the plane of theology, namely, on the plane of the faith in Jesus Christ, the God-man, that guilt stops being absurd, while it does not stop being a mystery.

On some occasions, an exchange with another human being may be a step towards overcoming one's guilt, on others, it is the voice of conscience that makes such a step possible. The ultimate instance, however, is God's mysterious acting presence in the world, for which the faithful use the word «charity.»

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** theological definition of person, vocation, repentance, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Tadeusz Styczeń, Wojciech Chudy

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#### Fr. Antoni SIEMIANOWSKI – The Mark of Cain: On Being Marked with Guilt

The focus of the article is to explore the essence of guilt, seen as disgrace or a spiritual mark of the human being.

Guilt is difficult to be defined clearly and unambiguously. The first reason is that guilt never occurs on its own, but is always intertwined with the person's behaviors, experiences and subjective mental states. At the same time it is never identical with any external acts the person performs, with his or her feelings, such as hate or revenge, or with subjective emotional states, such as shame, sadness or undefined fears. Secondly, guilt is difficult to be recognized objectively and is impossible to be made subject to purely external observation, since it has a strictly subjective, personal nature. Guilt always «belongs» to the person who feels guilty and it is cognitively accessible only to that person, he or she being the only one who knows about it. No one else can have this knowledge, it can only be inferred indirectly – either accurately or inaccurately – judging by the various symptoms of the person's behavior and his or her way of being. This subjective dimension of guilt, however, does not change its objective nature: while guilt might be difficult to recognize, it is not an illusion. The feeling of personal guilt, which is always experienced as «mine,» as opposed to «someone else's,» is like an unremovable mark on the person's spiritual being and at the same time a spiritual burden. Thus it is by no means a subjective fiction or a projection of the person's fears, although it is possible that the actual feeling of guilt is unfounded. This nature of guilt, the fact that it is perceived

subjectively, is simultaneously its objective attribute: it is a consequence of the person's individual surrender to moral evil expressed in his or her attitudes, behaviors and dispositions, and a consequence of the consent the person gave to participate in wickedness and in harm-doing. By acting wickedly in the moral sense, the person becomes objectively guilty of his or her wicked acts, of moral evil, and of sin. The extent of this guilt depends on the extent of the person's consent to moral evil.

Since guilt or its extent are difficult to recognize or judge (the thing judged is the external acts, crimes, offences or negligences), it is essential that the person should confess it, show contrition ask forgiveness. Forgiveness, however, does not remove guilt. The only way to retrieve innocence is through an inner transformation of the guilty person. While contrition or repentance cannot at times repair the harm that has been done, they can purify the guilty person before the fellow human beings and before God. An act of forgiveness on the part of the wronged person is a gesture of love and while it cannot remove the guilt the perpetrator experiences, it may facilitate his or her spiritual change.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: guilt, feeling guilty, subjective and objective aspects of guilt, forgiveness

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Jacek SALIJ, OP – God as our Defender from Ourselves: God's Charity and the Punishment for Sin, as seen in St. Faustina's *Diary*

Putting the charity of God in contrast with the justice of God frequently serves as an appeal for conversion and as a reminder that one may convert only in one's earthly life. However, if human beings imagine God as being charitable now and as being just at the Last Judgment, they do so merely in an anthropomorphic sense. Actually, God is both charitable and just, and this is invariably so. It is the sinner who in his personal decision to reject the charity of God closes himself ultimately and irreversibly to it.

One can speak about God's anger and punishment only in an analogical sense. In this vein, Sister Faustina says that God's anger consists in the sinners being left to themselves and given what they wish. She adds that God's punishment turns out to be a negative consequence of sin, unexpected to the sinner.

Sister Faustina's *Diary* includes some literary images that appear similar: those of Christ calming his Father's just anger, as well as those of Virgin Mary and other intercessors calming the righteous anger of Christ. The article shows that the similarity between these two types of images is merely apparent and that in fact they are distinctly different.

In the article, the author focuses on three particular images recurring in the *Diary*, ones by means of which Saint Faustina demonstrates the need to plead for sinners and the effectiveness of such prayer for protecting the world from the punishment of God. The images in question include that of the friends of God, who owing to their prayers and sacrifice sustain the existence of the sinful world, which otherwise would have disintegrated long ago, that of God who intends to impose his punishment, but his hands are tied, and that of God's anger being calmed down. The essence of intercession prayer is a mystical identification with Christ, in particular with the crucified Christ. Such prayer results in God's charity embracing those who might seem irreversibly closed to it. The spiritual growth of the person sending up intercession prayers is accomplished in a way unintentionally. The reason is that every loving act fills the person who does it with growing love, until the person is completely encompassed with it. That the intercessor is not thinking about his or her own growth in love is in fact what makes this love similar to Christ's absolutely selfless love.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: Saint M. Faustina Kowalska, intercession prayer, God's charity, God's punishment

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#### Fr. Marek SZYMAŃSKI – To Discover the Healing Power of Confession

The theme of reconciliation is frequently the focus of present day debates on problems concerning human life, both in its individual and social aspects. It also recurs in the lives of whole nations, usually in reference to the issues of guilt and punishment experienced on various planes. The significance of reconciliation in the life of a religious person can be seen on the basis of an analysis of the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, which is an important aspect of the mission of the Catholic Church.

In early Christianity, penance was considered a public act denoting the sinner's return to the community of the faithful, and so its therapeutic aspect was accentuated. However, once individual confession was introduced, the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation was seen in the paradigm of the judgment of a sinner. Its function was to make sinners spiritually ready to receive the Holy Communion. As a result, the social dimension of penance (and of individual confession) was no longer considered as essential, and the significance of the sacrament of Penance for restoring the sinner's unity with God and with the entire Church was undervalued. The sacrament of Penance was seen from the purely juridical perspective, as that which makes a human person free from guilt.

The theology of the *Vaticanum Secundum*, which postulated a revision of the rites of Penance, made reconciliation the focus of theological and pastoral reflection, thus returning to the social dimension of penance. This reference to the sources of the Christian understanding of penance enabled a change in the paradigm of confession: the juridical approach was replaced with the Biblical one, pointing to the healing power of the reconciliation with God. The sacrament of Penance itself was described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church as a sacrament of healing (see Section 1421).

Practicing the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is significant, particularly in situations that may contribute to a crisis in the life of faith, not infrequently aggravated by the experiences of sin and guilt. The sacrament of Penance is then a way to seek the gift of reconciliation and spiritual health.

The results of sociological surveys show that the faithful who practice the sacrament of Penance confirm the theological interpretation of the healing power of confession. These opinions are particularly significant in the face of the fact that practicing a religion, which includes a necessary reference to the experiences of guilt and reconciliation, is an important factor contributing to a person's mental and physical health.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** history the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, rites of Penance, confession, experience of guilt, sin

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### Dariusz RADZIECHOWSKI – The Motif of Evil in Christian Theology

The article discusses the issues of guilt and punishment, as they are interpreted in the context of Catholic theology, with a special consideration of the contribution of Pope John Paul II to the teaching of the Catholic Church on the issues in question. In Catholic theology, the recognition of justice and of the real difference between good and evil constitutes the necessary basis for the discussion of the issues of guilt and punishment. Justice, or the requirement that everyone is paid what is due to him or her, demands that one should accept punishment for one's trespasses. In the Christian tradition, justice is closely related to love and charity (love conditions justice and justice serves love).

In the perspective of the economy of salvation, in the «beginning,» human beings existed in the state of original innocence, marked by harmony and justice. That condition, however, changed as a result of their disobedience. The first parents lost their original innocence due to evil, which introduced disorder into their existence. From then onwards, human beings have been guilt-laden, or sin-laden, in a twofold sense. Firstly, they carry the burden of the original sin. Secondly,

they suffer from the violation done to their original human nature, and so they have an inclination to commit sins.

However, God has not abandoned man and already in the «beginning» gave him a hope for a change of his condition. The punishment human beings receive for their sins is not to be perceived as a revenge, but rather as a pedagogical lesson. The Son of God became man and died for the sins of all mankind, thus offering human beings a chance of salvation and opening the possibility of their return to the state of original innocence.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

**Keywords:** Catholic theology, Christian concept of justice, original sin, committed sin, original innocence

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### Maciej SOBIERAJ – A Man of Service

The text comprises a profile of the late Janusz Krupski (1951-2010), minister and representative of the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression, tragically killed in the fatal crash of the Polish President’s plane in Smoleńsk, Russia, on 10 April 2010.

Janusz Krupski was a history student at the Catholic University of Lublin. He graduated in 1976, with the summa cum laude honor. Throughout his time at university, he was involved in dissident activity against the communist regime. In 1973, together with other students, he opposed the foundation of an agenda of the Socialist Union of Polish Students at the Catholic University of Lublin. In 1976, he started a clandestine printing house: using a copying machine, he and his friends published many materials, including the quarterly *Zapis*, and, since 1977, *Spotkania* [“Encounters”], an independent journal of young Catholics. The latter was published in close cooperation with dissidents from Lublin, Cracow and Warsaw. The articles it comprised were written in the spirit of the Catholic *aggiornamento*, while many of them referred to the difficult problems of the relations between Poles and the Ukrainians, Russians, and Jews.

After martial law was declared in Poland in 1981, Janusz Krupski was persecuted by the communist secret police and he hardly survived the attempt on his life they plotted.

After 1989, he was co-founder of the *Spotkania* publishing house, and then founded his own publishing company. In 2000, he became Vice-President of the Institute of National Remembrance and largely decided about the profile of this important agenda. From 2006 to his premature death, he served Poland as minister representing the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression.

He was a man of principles, an uncompromising person who did not hesitate to denounce falsehood in public life. He considered it a great honor to do his service for Poland, and for those who, during the communist period, struggled for the free and sovereign Poland. Janusz Krupski was also a man of deep faith, a true Christian.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

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