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Towards to Non-Phantasmatic Inquires: Looking for a Gap¹

If our questions about the ethics or meaning of axiological beliefs present in the various structures of belief may generally mean something, maybe we would start to ask them. We ask for the truth, goodness, and beauty in the axiology far from – as it seems – to respond (which is also realising of how and why we ask), but mainly for another purpose: to establish themselves as those who "ask", so we could be relieved and free to sink into "deep inquires", avoiding understanding the question, and the understanding of the opportunities for effective response. This action, it seems, has features of "magic". It is kind of a ritual and fulfills similar functions: effectiveness is a function of the efficiency of its performance. Nor question nor answer matters, but the efficiency and effectiveness of response – so far as the question and the answer seems to be appropriate. As far as we ask and how these questions we are establishing possible response is appropriate for what we want to hear and we've been taught to listen.

One strategy the "right answer" is known as a type of religious discourse – the question able to be established is included in the *continuum* of allowed questions, in this respect "religious" is no different from the "ideology" (in popular meaning) and basically performs the same function: allows you to "not-question", which serves as an "universal response". The specificity of that discourse creates the *Universum* within asking is possible only for what has been already answered. So – just "questioning" becomes intellectually (and moral) sterile – it is not in fact desire to seek knowledge, but the desire to make sure that "knowledge" is knowledge existing "right". So, if the asking is able to find the correct position. "Heretic" and "schismatic" together are those who withdraw from the canon of "question and answer", or rather "answer – allowed the question."

¹ This paper is rewritten, slightly shortened version of previously published article in this Journal. Also is a part of research under collective title *Hunger, resentment and anger*.

This peculiar ritual "dance" is, of course, not an accidental phenomenon. It plays whether in the form of "religion", "ideology", "policy" or "philosophy" a safe structure of *continuum*. Structure of the "marked-allowed" has the same meaning as the structure of the *pure-impure* – sets the boundaries of a safe system, which is intended to endure and giving to the participants (or if said Slavoj Žižek: consumers) a share in the same duration. Inside, human frailty and uncertainty is perpetuated in what is called *eternal* – eventually: the more perfect and more fragile and uncertain appears to be a human being.

What seems to be significant, than the fear of leaving a safe continuum is not a feature of so called "original" or "primitive"². On the contrary – the more complex the system of (allowed) knowledge, the more powerful becomes fear before leaving³, while the more complicated they become instruments of punishment. Repression and method for determining boundaries, as complicated "system of knowledge" moves from elimination (expulsion) for annihilation, where peculiar excellence limit of punitive instruments is *annihilation without elimination* – turning in the "transgressor" as active (at least symbolically) participant in the system penalties. "System" as both a "social system" and "system of knowledge" (resp. "belief system") meets in Camus' "empire", from where is no escape. What is a "safe", becomes the only one possible⁴.

Appears to be quite significant that both the discourse on "terror" and "totalitarianism" happily shows religious character of one or the other as long as it is external "terror" or "totalitarianism". Oriana Fallacci was willing to use the term "islamofashist", but similar and symmetrical as structurally and in terms of the content the term "catholicfashist" of course, is for her (and similar authors) absent. The difference between "Fellah of the desert" carrying a concealed bomb, and the Irish or Basque doing the same thing, is *par excellence* "the difference"⁵. Religious nature of conflict between loyalists and separatists in Northern Ireland is ignored, so significant that it is hard not to call this "denial".

"Tabuisation the taboo" – the removal of the existence of taboos from recognizable symbols is otherwise good described⁶. In a certain extent – we can venture a guess that at some advanced stage of the "system", crucial rules need to become invisible. Absurdity of many existential investigations, within the policy or religion (or philosophy), may appear – with a change of perspective – not as immanent "mystery" (or problema) but the structure, which meaning and possibility of naming has been covered. By removing from the ability to "view", at the same time we removes the possibility of an actual transgression beyond the boundaries set by what "allowed to cross". What is unknown appears to be unknown only if it is already "known" – M. Douglas called this phenomenon "conservative

² It's mentioned by Žižek and Watney in introduction for *Czystość i zmaza (Purity and Danger. An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo)* written by J. Tokarska-Bakir; J. Tokarska-Bakir, *Energia odpadków*, in: M. Douglas, *Czystość i zmaza*, M. Buchoc (tr.), Warszawa 2007 (p. 30 notes 53 and 54).

³ Z. Bauman, *Phymny lęk (Liquid Fear)*, J. Margański (tr.), Kraków 2008, p. 225-229.

⁴ A. Camus, *Człowiek zbuntowany*, J. Guze (tr.), Kraków 1991, p. 221-222.

⁵ More extensively I discussed this in my previous book. A. Kubiak, *Twarz wroga*, see part II, Rzeszów 2008.

⁶ M. Douglas, *Czystość i zmaza*, op. cit., p. 190-193; also Žižek, *Przekleństwo fantazji (The Plague of Fantasy)*, A. Chmielewski (tr.), Wrocław 2001, p. 45-47.

curvature"⁷. The existence of the world as something comprehensible thanks to this "bias", while the fundamental impossibility of the existence of knowledge (even if only in the form of "questions about") beyond what is "already known" is the price that we pay for to stop fear, or a offering we fold before it.

The failure of what we call our ethics in determining the meaning and significance of our lives does not appear to be somewhat "necessary" in a cosmic or existential meaning. Nor from "result" or the "inherent structure" of Cosmos, nor the inability to answer the existential the "final questions". They rather are the outcome of programming *the inability to answer other than ritual*. It is not – as it seems – language determination and limitations (e.g., one or another philosophy), but the desire to language remains limited. Or simply a desire to answering other than already asked becomes impossible. "Art of form" remains open, but not "art of content".

The fact that for thousands of years of history of philosophy (so in a basic sense – the history of reflection itself, scientific as such) we are still asking the same questions, and indeed – in fact in the same way, so far have not shown that these questions (and answers) are just only one, though it is kind of a belief instilled in us. Languages, including science languages, which we choose (or not) and then we operate are not in themselves "a fate", but – as it seems – there is a strong desire to have them that way. Meaning of this is far more serious than ordinary aversion to effort. Going beyond the ritual of "Questions and Answers" in which the question and the answer is already included in the scenario, "Questioning and Answers" is dangerous. Threatens not only *inadequate* questions and answers – i.e. those not included in the spectacle directed (by example) some philosophy, but also the creation of a "space", a void, beyond the answers already given, and questions already preset.

This "space", which can be the state of "beyond good and evil" would put a man with the necessity of establishing yourself with all the dangers posed by such an act (or set of them). Necessity, of course, before that can be set aside, where the easiest way is to circumvent the and such dangerous spaces. Earth of scholars (or more generally thinkers) is still flat – abroad imagined pillars of Hercules monsters are lurking around, and even further "the ocean of thought" falling into nothingness. Philosophy and "thinking in general" is able to express hunger of "knowledge of all things" but only in a way that as Wanderer from medieval engravings sticks his head out of the Sphere to peek the mechanisms of the Divine Cosmos. Being such "out there" as to never leave "internality". Garden of The Earth, even if it is only a "Kingdom of the Devil", or just stop by for an indefinite eternity (imagined indeed in the image and likeness of the finite world) is a closed sphere. Surrounded by equally limited Heaven and Hell with compassionate and yet profitable to their inventors addition of Purgatory.

The crucial term is not "finite", however, but "closing". The imagination of most human beings, and perhaps not only these, in fact, is overwhelmed by the difference

⁷ Ibid., p. 78.

between the finite and the infinite. What expressible and "imaginary" in mathematics is not also just conceivable, hence the "infinite" appears as a series of finity, or as simple (and empty) negation. Whether the world is finite or not, is a moderate importance for human life, in the ontological and moral or axiological sense. However, the "closing" of the world and ourselves (and our language) appears as something more serious and touching closer to us. It determines not only the way in which "we feel on the world," but also how "we feel the world". "Feel" – not "think" as an intellectual formula of "closure" seems to be ex-post rationalization what happened before.

Paul Ricoeur⁸ in his concept of the *symbolic*, the symbolic (resp. symbol) recognized as a reference. The symbol *refers* to what is not them, sign or symbolic object "owns" the content outside of yourself, or a bit more detail – direct to content that is not them. Right away this reference is not just a simple reference. Symbol and symbolic phenomena are not only devoid of content links, rather the opposite – the text, which refer to "reflect" on their side. These "signs" are not in place, but move along with the reference content and its hermeneutics (or "hermeneutic of self"). The way in which Ricoeur recognized phenomenon and symbolic items here may be useful as an approximation of the relationship between "feeling" and "thinking" of the world. This "feeling" is not, of course, solely sensual understood (although we should not ignore this matter). Approximately "feel" it is the sense referred to by "thinking". "Thinking" fulfills there the role of a symbol that indicates what "feel" rather than "think". Content of "thinking" are outside. This process, however, appears to be backlinked – "feel" refers back to "think". The symbol is a reference to a reference, or more generally, a set of references to references. "Think" sets "feel" as "feel" sets "thinking". What is *ex post* establishes which was before him, and what have established it.

This "hermeneutic circle" is not just about what hermeneutics describes as "understanding". We can rationalize the structure sketched above in such a way, that each new interpretation modifies the "essence" of the phenomenon interpreted – but it seems the case is about something more basic. "Feel" constitutes "thinking" not in the sense that the "thinking" is an epiphenomenon of "feeling", or its interpretation – "thinking" to exist must be "presentimented" but only that "felt" what was already "thought" can be found in the "feeling order". In fact, we deal with this issue on a daily basis and it appears to be far less complicated than to the language of philosophy "tells" us to describe. When we come into the world we are only "feeling", but to "feel" the world we have to learn how to "premonite". To become something more outside a set of reflexes, we need to establish their order – a chaos of ourselves: hunger, fear, pleasure, to even become has to be placed into the order of hunger, fear or pleasure. Hunger is not just a hunger within the meaning of physiological phenomena. It is a kind of order in which reveals the need to satisfy it⁹.

⁸ P. Ricoeur, *Metafora i symbol*, in: *Język, tekst, interpretacja*, K. Rosner, P. Graff (tr.), Warszawa 1989.

⁹ Žižek wrote: "Membership in any society implies a paradoxical moment in which the subject requires to accept voluntarily, by his own choice, what would be imposed upon him" (p. 43). Man if there is existing always already is a social being. Moreover – this particularity existence is already "chosen" for him.

Even before we learn to speak, we learn (in the cognitive sense), "premonite" the ability to communicate – something other than broadcasting signals. We learn to anticipate the "self" ("individual") as a function of the world, rather than *life functions*. We compromise not our own fear, hunger or pleasure, but what "the world" makes them. Before ability to "think" becomes we are we are already "thought". It seems – it does not matter whether this phenomenon will include, as a presence in our eternal ideas (or our sovereign genotype), or take for granted that manifests itself in this way, or the absolute determination of the environmental, or finally accept some variant of the intermediate (which moreover, it seems sound). Appears to be more important that the world and its order, which reveal to us the same as "our world", *after some time, is now closed until we can "feel" or "think" differently*. Even before we begin to "think", we are "imaginated", the same as before "leef", now we have been "felt" already.

"The World" anticipates us and teaches us to anticipate each other and themselves – that's why Plato, after all, archmetaphysician, makes Socrato "know yourself" and only himself. There is no world outside Socrates not because Socrates is "only the knowing mind" or that there is no opportunity to learn to Socrato in different order, but because *Socratic order of "existence", "feel", "think" has already been established before Socrato reveals himself as a phenomenon*. The deepest Socratic "self" is *someone else's project*, not only because we know that Socrato by Plato's creation in literature. The desire for "authenticity," which will becomes at some point the philosophical and literary obsession, "Project Socrato" find in what general and others – in the Pythagorean vision of mathematics.

What appears as "essence" of Socrates, from the intellect to the *daimonion*, it is a foreign body within him, which constitutes Socrates. *Homo Mensura* be revealed, not as a *measure* but the *measurement*. It does not Socrato measure the world together himself, but Socrato is measured. Socrates as a measure is a function of measuring himself – "establishes" view of the world according to the one which has already been set up for him – an escape from the cave of illusions is the only prison of eternal Ideas. "Release" is the space of finite mathematics. Socrato's borders of the world – its dimensioning are Pillars of Hercules, the Ttriangle and the chaos of barbarism. Platonic anamnesis intuition captures the phenomenon of order, which is prior to those who establish it – even if it is seen as the realization of chaos. However, since this is a metaphysical construct – it does not reflect completely the phenomenon of ordering *prior order* by its realization. But since we are, according to some legitimate comments, all just, either, and until, commentators of Plato, we remains blind to how the order is established by the chaos. As future orders and establishes its own past. How our actions and omissions establishes "values" that we call absolute, and how these values shall organize the chaos of our actions.

The main "preestablishity" what is examined, in principle, exclude the "test" itself, if you understand it as an attempt to bring anything significantly new. "The Knowledge System" and its members do not tolerate the "new", it's obvious. At the same time nothing is as desirable as the "pleasure of the other" at the same time as the *jouissance* as "foreign". "Another knowledge" is not only "knowledge of others" but "knowledge of another".

Therefore, recognizing the power of that desire, "the system must allow for the possibility of choice, which must never be allowed to carry because their appearance would lead to the disintegration of the system, and the function of the unwritten rules is precisely to prevent implementation of the choices, which are formally admitted by the system"¹⁰. Universe of possibility is also the Universe of *appearances*. What is permitted – for example, the penetration of a symbolic territory, so far is allowed unless it is realized. In Poland, for example, appears to be obvious that the cross in public "does not affect the ideological neutrality of the state", but an attempt to remove the religious sign, and attempt to realize this declared freedom (since the Christian sign does void this rule, any other should not, too) is already one of the prohibited realizations. In a single word – so long the state is ideologically neutral, as long as no one will "attempt to cross".

Appearance as reality of choice appears as a selection of some of these hidden rules, the disclosure of which is for the "system" the crime *par excellence* – the mother of all crimes. Strategy of "primitive systems" in this case is usually destruction of "symbolic aggressor" – those more advanced have a different, more complicated ways of repressive assimilation.

The first, relatively the most common, is the "flight forward" – the original group of "attacked symbols" is shifted and "aggressor" assimilated. Investigations into illegal or transgressive act, has been made "internal" so converting them to the original query or the original content of the act for the "aggressor" has become part of the "system". "Strangeness" is either absorbed as a "local frenesy", "disease" or a "local anomaly". Advanced Systems forms a kind of "licenses of permitted abnormality" which, in political and social reality works such as corporation designations¹¹. Their goal, of course, is the inclusion of "external" into "internal". The religious discourse (eg Catholic) this zone is filled by "local saints" or "local cults". How long locality will remain local – limited, separated and "discrete," so long even the extreme "anti-system" activity will be treated as "in-house".

Second strategy is to "escape to the side" – the shift of discourse within the system to assimilate "transgressor" as "ineffectual". Impossible question becomes in this strategy not "impossible" because is simple unacceptable by the "system", but "impossible" because "poorly specified". "Attacker" in this strategy do not cross borders really and threatens "the system" but *uses its grammar in wrong way*. Not content, therefore, will be raised against him, but the form, and when he is tamed his statement formally – "authorized response" reveals, and an act of violation or aggression will be idle. Finally – that strategy forces the potential "agresors" pre-screening of their expression: such reformulation both its structure (grammar) and the content was already "domesticated"¹². Activity if "Transgressor" is

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 45.

¹¹ A good example of this is kind of "artistic license" such as art school diplomas. The very act of "anti-system" made by a licensed "transgressor" is often treated as an activity "inside" and authorized (eg. serves the category of "creative freedom") when made by someone "unlicensed" become such an ordinary crime.

¹² An example fairly well reflects this phenomenon is the polish discourse on abortion. Starting from the change by changing the axiological vocabulary associated with it. See also K. Szczuka, *Milczenie owieczek. Rzecz o aborcji (Silence of the Lambs. About Abortion)*, Warszawa 2004

pacified in this way in the bud, and himself assimilated as part of the "system". "Heretic" and "profan", as "schismatic" can exist only within the symbolic system – now if only on the grounds that what "Aside from system changes" does not exist at all. Appearance of arbitrary (resp. freedom) given by a "system" is the way (one of several) to maintain its integrity. "Magic and Miracles" – a violations of "natural" so much are possible if they are already "natural", allowed by the "system"¹³ – enable overseeing of experience only possible in the ritualized form – controlled going beyond the "system" while remaining within. The ritual is here indispensable element which guarantees a safe form of transgression – the one who is subjected to the ritual *goes* in such a way so as *not leaving, being at return*.

The existence of the society always means the existence of rules so that it can last. In this respect *dynamis* of human life as social life is in the peculiar dialectics of "the system" and "anti-system" because if the community if have the characteristics of durability has to shaped its "system" (also called "system of knowledge"). At the same time, as Douglas points out: "Every form of social and accompanying style of thinking in one way or another limited self-knowledge of the individual"¹⁴ and this leads to stagnation and dying the "system" eventually, if the design will not be reprocessed. Destruction-reconstruction cycle present in all the features of the historical life of "the system" reflects the dynamics of the society, shows also how to *changes what does not change*. For the "dedicated Catholic" his "Christianity" is always the same for centuries, although this is obviously nonsense. This conviction cannot be defeated by historical competence, because it is a constitutive part of the *duration* of the system, which if it exists, it does **not** change, regardless of the facts.

Awareness of the crucial category of *duration*¹⁵, if only one present in the work of LeGoff and Delumeau is perhaps one of the ways out of the kind of this "system" mess. The way to avoid the inevitable pitfalls of narcissism³¹⁶ – the recognition of his own "system" for only one existing. Both the "persistence" and "hermeneutic circularity" of the systems, whether we are trying to figure out the nature of philosophical ideas or structure signating shame, guilt, or holiness in some belief structures are apparently key categories, according to which there can be any possible and at last succesful study. Kingdom of the Thoughts, as well as the Kingdom of the Heaven is like most "of this world" full of dialectics of fears and desires and their sovereignty emerges on careful look as one of the major phantasms, which guarantees the stability of their ever-fluid boundaries. Such inquiries appears to be mostly possible, however we need to cross in reflection both "neurotic" fear of violation of "the system" and the desire to assimilate the "unknown".

¹³ M. Douglas, *Czystość i zmaza*, op. cit., p. 182-183.

¹⁴ M. Douglas, *Symbole naturalne. Rozważania o kosmologii* (*Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*), E. Dżurak (tr.), Kraków 2004, p. 184.

¹⁵ Strictly, category of "long duration"; descriptive appealed to this phenomenon M. Bloch. The very term was introduced to historiography by F. Braudel, now this category is used both in historiography, as well as in the social sciences.

¹⁶ J. Tokarska-Bakir, *Energia odpadków*, op. cit., p. 39-40.