

TOMISLAV IVANČIĆ

HAGIOTHERAPEUTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF PATHOLOGY
AND THERAPY OF THE SPIRITUAL SOUL

TOMISLAV IVANČIĆ FOUNDATION
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INTRODUCTION

1 WHO IS MAN?

Anthropology, as the science of man, can be developed from various perspectives. One perspective explores philosophical anthropology, the second theological, then medical and cultural anthropology, depending on the aspects from which man is explored.

Hagiotherapeutical anthropology studies man from the aspect of his spiritual soul, if it is wounded and needs therapy. This approach is new and justified. It is justified because man's spiritual soul is the centre of man himself and the source of everything we call man. On the other hand, the woundedness of man's spiritual soul causes almost 70% of his illnesses, so the therapeutical effect in the area of man's spiritual soul is relevant to understanding and healing the majority of the his illnesses. The knowledge of pathology and therapy of the spiritual soul helps to understand the placebo and nocebo effect. The "placebo" effect states the influence of the man's spiritual dimension to his healing and the "nocebo" effect states the destructive influence of trauma and illnesses of the spiritual

dimension onto the man's psychophysical health. Unfortunately, up to now, the spiritual dimension in the spiritual soul has been neglected in research, because most scientific research has been inefficient, and man and his organism unsearchable. So this approach is new. Eric Kandel, the Nobel Prize winner for research of the brain, says that he started exploring man's spirit in his old age because without the understanding of the spirit we cannot take a step forward into the direction of understanding the brain and man in general. He talks about the "emergence of the new science of the spirit".

There can be different starting points for exploring man's spiritual soul. Some, as philosophers, explore man's awareness, others, as neuroscientists, discover the woundedness of the man's spirit, the third as theologians, find the possibility of therapeutic effect in the area of the spiritual soul by the structures of faith.

My starting point is both theological and philosophical. As an expert in the area of fundamental theology and as a full professor at the Catholic Faculty of Theology in Zagreb, I had a task to build bridges between theological and other scientific areas. This is the context in which I explored the methods of the new evangelization. The starting question was how to assuredly and convincingly help man to accept the liberation from guilt, meaningless, addictions, destructive suffering and death in Jesus Christ. The Church has sacraments like baptism, confession and the last rites which liberate from both original and actual per-

sonal guilt; it has the sacraments of confirmation and the Eucharist which allow excellent results in man's work and life. The Church has thoughts which can free man and direct him towards meaning, it communicates with the Creator of man and can mediate love, forgiveness, trust, truth, goodness and love to him. In this context, I have acted both theoretically and practically based on early-Christian catechumenate and shaped a method of evangelization and inner prayer healing of the man's wounds and sufferings. It is all printed in the book "The Encounter with the Living God".

But after some 10 years or more, I have clearly understood that theology perfectly explores and knows God and his relationship to man, but that it lacks the understanding of man himself. Where does grace work in man, where does the destruction of man by evil and sin take place, does man need God and his salvation? Who is man, what are his longings, and what are his disappointments and anxieties? Philosophy says something fundamentally about man in philosophical anthropology, but it does not recognize man's sufferings, trauma and spiritual pain. Existentialist philosophy has tried to recognize some of these sufferings, but too negatively and hopelessly, and not in the spirit of therapy. Thus I felt a strong urge to start exploring man's spiritual dimension which acts through the spiritual soul and especially to explore the trauma, pains, sufferings, wounds and illnesses of the spiritual soul, as well as finding adequate therapy for the pathology of the spiritual soul.

During this work, I found myself in an unexplored area. Scientists, according to Eric Kandel, found an excuse to avoid exploring man's spirit, believing that spirit cannot be explored with the methods of natural sciences. On the other hand, Orthodox theologians declared the psychic dimension to be spiritual, thus identifying the mental and spiritual territory, and started to study psychology to be more efficient in pastoral action.

Psychologists, neuropsychiatrists and psychotherapists believed that by exploring the psyche they captured the whole soul and its pathology and therapy. Rare understood that between psychiatry and pastoral action of the Church lies an area of the spiritual soul which is not explored. Or between man's psyche and his religiosity there exists an important dimension of man, his spiritual dimension, waiting to be explored. Animals possess a psyche, so it is not a characteristic of man specifically. Religiosity is only one segment of man's spiritual soul and not the whole of his spirituality.

Exploring man's spiritual dimension, its pathology and therapy, I had to start from the beginning. I felt myself to be a pioneer in this research. I started from the known towards the unknown. Having already had experience with the prayers for the inner healing in the evangelical work, I started from this, and then moved from religious to universal territory, from theological to extended scientific interdisciplinary research. While the evangelical action happened only within

the borders of the Church and Christianity, I realized that spiritual therapy must be extended to all people, as it happens in medicine and psychotherapy. Christian therapy of prayer and faith may be applied only to Christians. Religious therapeutical action is suitable for members of religions. Thus atheists and agnostics were unable to access the spiritual therapy. I realized that the scientific approach to exploring the spiritual soul, its pathology and therapy, encompasses all people and opens the doors to therapy for everyone, regardless of their beliefs and life views. The Creator made every man and imprinted the same laws in nature and man. If we abide by these laws, we will reach health, and if we break them, we will become ill. This is seen in the spiritual area by accepting or refusing the moral and ethical laws which are the laws of Spirit and Being. Jesus's extends salvation and reaches every man who chooses to act morally. Jesus came to enable us to conquer evil and do good. The decision is upon us, and on His salvation is the power to accomplish the decision to do good. The Church documents, especially those from the Second Vatican Council (GS 22) speak of this exactly. Who does good is in the Being and becomes indestructible, and the Being is the person, the Creator. Thus, through a scientific approach to man's spiritual dimension, a path to the health of man's spiritual soul is opened, and consequently to man's health if he is man.

Exploring man's spiritual soul in the context of its pathology and therapy, I discovered new possibilities

to scientific knowledge and a new perspective for mankind. Man realizes by rational and empirical research, but also by the mediation of trust. Science and faith are two eyes, two ears, two lung wings for the realization of the unknown. What science discovers and trust in someone's statement allows, is the reality which is always present, but we do not see it, do not hear it, do not recognize it. Why? We are obviously in some kind of darkness because healthy eyes are not able to see objects if they are not lit. To be able to see, we need a healthy eye but the light as well. An ear can hear if the airwaves are adapted to the ear. Lungs, although healthy, cannot support life without the air. Our sensory, empirical cognitive powers do not function if our consciousness is not awake, if the spirit does not recognize what the sensory and other cognitive powers mediate.

Man is made of psychosomatic, earthly and spiritual, heavenly reality. Psychosomatic reality is limited, powerless, temporal while spiritual reality is unlimited, powerful and eternal. If we do not respect this complexity of man and his cognition we will remain powerless, one-sided and unscientific. By intellect man knows the whole of an object, and by reason man knows the details, measurable elements and parts. Everybody understands what is an ocean, it is an intellectual knowledge, but what lies in the concept of an ocean, like the waves, shores, the richness of the depths, flora and fauna, is explored by the reason (ratio) and it causes problems. Everybody understands who God is. This is mental cognition. But what is all of that? Can it be

measured? It is the demand of the rational knowledge. What the ratio does not see can be made visible by the intellect. There is no unreasonable faith or unconvinced faith. Man cannot believe in something if he does not have enough of reasons and beliefs to believe. Faith is belief.

2 WHO IS GOD?

Exploring man's spiritual dimension, I have come to an experiential belief that it is not possible to stand on the spiritual level and not discover God. This is not a theoretical knowledge of God, but real, intuitive, objective, clear and direct knowledge. It is impossible to light a candle in a dark room and not be able to see things in it. Thus it is impossible to know intellectually and intuitively and not to register God who is present. Who is God? He is Being, and Being is something objective, it is an existence that each of us recognizes. This existence, Being has always been and cannot cease to be. Being is spiritual and God is Spirit. Spirit is transparent, it is consciousness and self-awareness. Thus every man is aware of God. Children from the moment of conception are aware of God and respond spontaneously to prayer from the first months of life. UNICEF warns mothers to talk to their children in the womb: *"Infants understand everything. They understand with the heart."* is written on a UNICEF poster. Victor Frankl says that spirit and consciousness are in our subconscious, so Frankl talks about the *"subconscious*