

## Summary

The fact of human freedom is accessible for any human being in one's inner experience of the freedom of action. In human life freedom does not occur as something separate but it is intertwined with other human acts, the explanation of which touches on the issue of freedom and at the same time allows us to explain such momentous matters as social life, religion, legal order and the whole of moral life.

Freedom lived through as human experience constitutes a fact to be philosophically explained and justified, to be given the foundation; and its importance for the entirety of human personal life must be understood. There exist various attempts to understand freedom. The understanding of freedom as indeterminism in fact identifies freedom with coincidence taken as the lack of any internal and external determination. The rejection of any determination amounts however to the rejection of being itself, and thereby also the existence of freedom itself. Determinism (in various versions) is sometimes seen as an alternative interpretation of the experience of freedom: it is to be only the unawareness of various forms of determination. Yet, neither the theory of the unawareness of determinants nor the theory of indeterministic coincidentality explains the fact of freedom.

For any interpretation of the phenomenon of human freedom the contingency of human existence is fundamental. This contingency reveals itself both in biology of our life and in psychology of cognitive and volitional actions; also human freedom reveals itself in workings of our organic bodiliness and in psychology of our free and conscious experiences. It is neither higher nor more perfect than the human be-

ing from whom, as from a source, do free acts radiate. Thus, in any attempt to explain freedom one must accept a human measure, that is the measure of contingent beings which are at the same time personal beings, in their cognition and desire opened for anything that is both being and good.

Once we recognize the existential contingency of human being. When considering the question of freedom we must take into account a human way of acting. Freedom belongs to the way of acting characteristic for any potentialized personal being. Cognition and desire reveal themselves as two chief elements in the structure of personal being's acting; and the whole existential structure of human being is laden with acts of reason and will. Human soul pervades matter, organizing it from its foundations to its ultimate end which is intellectual cognition and love. The moment of coupling love and cognition is the moment in which human freedom occurs. For free choice, a crucial act of freedom, comes true in the moment of cooperation of reason and will in acts mutually assigned to each other and mutually completing each other. In any acting human being the cooperation of both personal faculties: reason and will is necessary; and neither reason nor will acts independently of the other. However, this is a human being as a whole who acts – a personal being who uses two “arms” of its personal structure: reason and will.

In the act of free decision human reason and will complete each other: will chooses the good revealed by reason in a practical judgment. Each intellectual revealing of some concrete content of a good corresponds to an act of will – consent and desire. The crucial moment of freedom – free choice – occurs neither in the theoretical stage of general consideration concerning a concrete action, nor in the stage of physical performing an action; it occurs in the moment of decision, i.e. in the moment of choosing a practical judgment concerning a good in order to determine oneself to action. The choice of a practical judgment concerning a good-means by which we realize our good is the moment of self-determination. This is me, who – by the free choice of a practical judgment on good – become a real efficient cause of my act. Freedom is here secured for it occurs in the sphere of our spirit. My concrete act



through the act of choice becomes a moral being. Thus, the essence of human freedom is the freedom of decision.

We are then free up to man's standards, as we are personal-potentialized beings striving to perfect one's actions. We educate ourselves in the aspect of cognition and working of reason; so too we can educate ourselves to freedom, that is to making decisions with ever greater independence from material determinants. For we possess our specialized action faculties: each of them undergoes improvement and by means of them we are able to develop ourselves towards freedom and independence from various forms of necessity. We are able to "read" true – and not apparent – content of good and to realize that good. Any deformation of any truth on good becomes a threat to human freedom and this is especially dangerous in the domain of religion, science, morality, law, politics, and property, for it makes freedom difficult or even makes impossible the realization of humanhood.

Truth and good inseparable intertwine in acts of human free decisions which realize real good. Good is always a motive of any human decisional acts. Ignoring or rejecting good as the motive and goal of human action dehumanizes man, reducing one to the role of a useful tool. Real true good chosen by a human being as the motive of action ultimately gives foundation to human freedom executed in acts of decision. For freedom is always the freedom of realizing good, and never evil, in each domain of life.

It is important to consider the problem of the relation between God and human being as well as the problem of the natural recognition of God as the source, exemplar, and goal of human action and of a fundamental decisional act with regard to reality. The basic question concerns the limits of human freedom in natural affirmation of God. The answer is: we are free and therefore one should accept the judgment that there exists a free personal relation of man to God who is the source, exemplar, and goal of human action. But can I reject God who reveals Himself in basic human acts of reason and will? Yes, I can, for all human cognition is partial, analogical, grasping only some aspects of reality in a very imperfect way. The act of free choice that follows such cognition is also unnecessary and voluntary. Thus, there exists the possibility of rejecting



religion – such facts are obviously observed – and therefore also there exists also the freedom of believing or not-believing.

The issue of freedom is inseparably connected to that of morality. Human freedom is revealed in action, it is a way of acting and free human action is thereby moral.

Each human being is born as a being directed to the personal development through cognizing truth and realizing good in action. For this development other persons and society are necessary, for they allow one to learn language, acquire cognition, and perform right actions. Any society must then organize the achieving of ends-goods necessary for the development of the life of individual persons and community itself. The goal of society is then common good which is the reason of the existence of society, including family and state. Politics is an art of realizing common good. Thus, in social and political activity in order to understand the necessity of the existence of natural communities (family, state) one must pay attention to man as a personal being and potentialized being and see those communities as environment that makes possible the actualization of human potentialities through rational achievements of goods necessary for life. Communities must complete those human potentialities and powers which the subject alone, only by oneself – without help of others – would never be able to achieve and execute.

It is possible to limit human freedom in social and political life – or even make it impossible. We experience this fact all the time. Three groups of sources of threats for man and human freedom may be indicated and they stem from aprioristic (utopian with regard to human rational nature) factors: 1) civilizations understood as systems of political life; 2) ideologized philosophical systems which aim not at explaining the world really existing but at changing it; 3) science narrowly understood. Human freedom is executed in action that voluntarily (by choice) realizes the judgment on a cognized good. It is the freedom to good and the freedom from evil. Yet, states sometime misuse their legislative power to pass laws that contradict the norm of natural law: “do good” or “good should be done”. If a norm of positive law contradicts common good it loses its binding force – law inconsistent with good is only pseudo-law.

Moreover, nowadays we witness the instrumentalization of science as well as objects of its research. Sciences provide us with ever more splendid instruments necessary for human life and for prosperity. Yet, there arises here a threat of using science against man. In the history of human thought three basic conceptions of science founded on different knowledge-creating questions have been developed by: Plato and Aristotle, I. Kant, and A. Comte. However, absolutizing any conception of science leads to dangerous deformations, and not only in the area of cognition. By treating scientific cognition as the only one that allows us to acquire knowledge of reality becomes a danger for human being, especially when the knowledge obtained by following this conception is employed in order to use human being for some purposes. Human cognition is broader than the cognition described in any conception of scientific cognition.

Execution of freedom – although very often so difficult – may heighten in our life when we overcome material determinants; but it may also decrease when we decide to adapt to material, psychic, or social determinants which we see – for various reasons – as powerful. Yet, human freedom always expresses itself in acts of decision in which we freely choose one of practical judgments on real good and through that judgment determine ourselves to a certain action and constitute ourselves as an efficient cause of that action. The act of self-determination is at the same time an act of self-constitution.