

Foundations of natural science and their significance for the dialogue of cultures in the world

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Abstract

Theories of physics have high information value. Some natural phenomena of the deterministic chaos, cosmogonist theories and implications of quantum mechanics point to interesting indications that are beyond the competences of physics itself. The reason to refuse extreme optimism in knowledge does not consist in Windelband's theory which strictly separates sciences of various origins but on certain restrictions which are based directly on physical principles. That is why no unequivocal worldview conclusions can be drawn from the knowledge of physics, which forces us to accept these consequences and adapt to them on the social level. The existence of a parallel dialogue among cultures is the basic precondition for improving the world security. This paper uses consequences of physics as arguments and the conclusions include some of Martin Heidegger's views.

Key words: dialogue, cultures, physics arguments, science

Karl Popper said in arguments we should let ideas die in our stead. Slovak philosopher Rudolf Dupkala chose the same idea as an introduction to his treatise. From qualitative point of view, the interconnection of various world cultures on the same territory requires a different approach than that of arguing who is right or wrong. Epistemological disputes as well as factual disputes regarding the truth of argument are not only difficult to solve but they are of secondary importance too. The issue that gradually gets to the forefront of attention is the problem of solving the coexistence of multiple cultures on the planet whereas they often exist side by side on a small territory. The question of concordance loses its relevance in the postmodern world since in terms of axiology people are no longer able to find a common ground when it comes to basic values.

We are obliged to deal with the question of tolerance, unless we deem Hobbs's state of nature i.e. natural condition of mankind desirable. Tolerance is naturally connected with freedom of thought, conviction and religion as well as with the question of the meaning of human life. Intersection of these questions mainly in the area of arguments regarding ideology can be observed in the history of European philosophy since the times of sophists, in the history of Chinese philosophy since the suppression of fa-jia school, and in the history of Indian philosophy since the reaction of Vedic philosophers to emergence of Buddhism.

Despite all the hopes Plato put into his idea of the good, it is probably not possible to provide a universal answer to the question of fundamental axiological problem – the absolute value phenomenon. Plato himself did not develop his idea of the good verbally in more detail – at least not in the written part of his work. Complex attempts to reconstruct his non-written teaching cannot be taken into account for their inconsistency.

Conclusions of scientific disciplines cannot help reveal indecisiveness regarding ideology although they provide many indicia. The Trinity model is frequently present in physical reality which fact complies with the Catholic teaching that God as Creator left his mark in creation. (compare Krempaský and Ambrozy, 2015) However, one cannot base evidence on indicia. Physical examination leads us to Planck time 10^{-43} s. It would be easy to consider time zero and support it with a theory, however, as it is not possible to verify it we cannot speak of a science. Considering the time less than Planck time is not scientific. With all respect to physicists working on quantum cosmology we believe that these theses are without doubt sophisticated but not verifiable. Theories of S. Hawking, A. Vilenkin, R. Penrose and others are very interesting from the viewpoint of physics, nevertheless it is not possible to verify them. Moreover, they often contradict each other. As a result, these theories cannot present any new knowledge even if they evoked some compatibility with a particular ideologically definite picture of the world. Ultra critical philosopher Rudolf Carnap would certainly deem the entire realm of quantum cosmology meaningless.

We respect the opinions of J. F. Lyotard who claims that "scientific knowledge does not represent the totality of knowledge". (Lyotard, 1993, p. 105) Max Planck's scientific approach reduced reality to something that can be measured. Such approach is an exaggerated reductionism which ignores other criteria of reality. Physics as fundamental natural science creates its own picture of the world. However, in Heidegger's opinion scientific introduction will never be able to capture the essence of nature since subjectification of nature is predetermined in an only way, the way nature is handed in.

(Heidegger, 2004, p. 52) Knowledge and its creation must be inevitably approached by philosophy which reflects meta-scientific problems which do not naturally fall within the scope of competence of any other specific science. One of the basic questions which science cannot answer is the description of the moment of creation of the universe. The answers physics provides are very close. Nevertheless, describing what happened before Planck time is beyond the scope of competence of physics. The above problem would be certainly followed by other equally interesting and unanswerable questions overlapping with the issues of ideology and values.

If there is an unanswered basic axiological question, i.e. a question regarding the meaning of life which is, in Heidegger's opinion, connected with the question of the meaning of existence, it is difficult to speak of a particular axiological set of values that could be considered universal and generally valid. Neither it is possible to draw any axiological, ethical or cultural consequences from *theologia naturalis*. It is true that also many contemporary philosophers try to present a proof of God's existence or, on the contrary, essential arguments of dogmatic atheism. One of those philosophers who postulate dogmatic atheism in a modern way is Quentin Smith. He tries to prove that the universe can be a priori infinite, however, he also claims that it was not created infinite. Similarly, Smith defends the idea of infinity in mathematics. He unjustifiably extrapolates his odd assertions into *theologia naturalis*. His views are interesting from the viewpoint of philosophy of formal and natural sciences. In our opinion, however, these views cannot provide plausible reasoning in basic ideological problems. W. L. Craig contradicts Smith. There is a principle that an infinite set has the same number of members as its own subset. After transferring this principle into reality explanations become totally unbelievable, absurd and contradictory. (Rojka, 2010, p. 249)

There are, however, also totally contradictory opinions. The a priori proof of divine existence presented by Anselm of Canterbury is well known. There have been several *a posteriori* proofs presented including the five ways of Thomas Aquinas. Despite the fact that *indicia* cannot be considered proofs of divine existence in terms of *theologia naturalis*, philosophers still try to do so. M. F. Sciacca believes atheism is mere human folly. He does not dust off old arguments which claim that it is not worth it to believe. He presents epistemological arguments. A human being is transcended by being as an idea. Being as an idea does not mean infinite existence. It is a sign of an infinite God in a human being. The "proof" as presented by M. F. Sciacca is a metaphysical speculation very similar to philosophical theology of Nicholas of Cusa.

"The notion of tolerance is one of the topics frequently discussed by contemporary philosophy, political science, culturology, sociology, ethics, and theology." (Dupkala, 2014, p. 255) From etymology point of view tolerance means the ability to bear or allow the existence of anything that is different – skin colour, language, culture, religion, nationality, etc. Although we can learn a lot from history, we are going to focus more on philosophical aspects of coexistence of various opinion groups.

The idea of intolerance is quite widespread. Social and philosophical literature published in the geopolitical setting of Central Europe tries to convince us that the portfolio of opinions in the realm of social philosophy belongs mostly to liberalism and theories of democratic establishment. However, the original truth is different. *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* written by Arthur Gobineau, or Marxist philosophy speaking of the class struggle with ever changing class enemy (slave owner, feudal lord, bourgeoisie) or Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and *Second Book* – they are all works describing human society as antagonistic with specific groups openly hostile to each other. The idea of superiority can be observed also in traditionalist views of some nations. Greeks opposed those they did not understand and those who were culturally inferior – barbarians. Jews, in their original teaching, did not speak positively of uncircumcised goys. The Chinese were referred to as black heads and their country was referred to as lesser heaven. Other nations were often referred to as barbarians. Unfortunately, similar attempts of antagonistic groups can be observed today too. People today analyse various situations whereas they often eruditely or non-eruditely try to identify those responsible for the events that occurred. They are aware of the consequences of these events, examine those they deem responsible and search for solutions. Basically, it is always one and the same vicious circle of those who blame and those who are to blame. (Lisnik, 2009, p. 67)

We can speak of the existence of many less tolerant or intolerant opinion groups, however, the most dominant religions of the world (religions from the viewpoint of sociology, i.e. including Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism) did not build their foundations on intolerance and xenophobia. For example, original Islam was unequivocally respectful of certain religions. "Quran unequivocally calls for respect to those who "own Holy Scripture" that is to Jews and Christians." (Vašek, 2014, p. 15) Other opinion groups (some fractions of Islam and some obsolete Christian ideological streams) are less tolerant to other ideologies and their representatives. Rudolf Dupkala points out the fact that tolerance occurs on the background of intolerance when intolerance itself begins to grow to an extent that leads to unbearable situations. He searches the history of philosophy (Socrates, Plato, Augustinus

Aurelius, Rousseau) in order to find reasons why tolerance occurred in natural human goodness. In his search he also finds opposing views of Machiavelli, Nietzsche, Freud and Lorenz. Rudolf Dupkala interprets the said concepts as insufficient reductionism which ignores the social character of human beings, their conscious ratio and the existence of their free will, responsibility, conscience, etc. As he believes, our flat perception of the source of the idea of tolerance must be broadened by conscience, responsibility, social interaction, and last but not least by defensive reactions to harmful manifestations of intolerance.

The main sign of intolerance "is the inability and unwillingness to respect (acknowledge and accept) "otherness" connected with the fear of the unknown or mistrust of things that are "different" and with negative experience accompanying that fear and mistrust. (Dupkala, 214, p. 258) Between the two antagonisms – Hobbs's *homo homini lupus* and Feuerbach's *homo homini Deus* must stand man is a man to man, concludes Rudolf Dupkala. Tolerance is, without doubt, necessary. On the other hand, however, it is not possible to accept or reconcile with everything. Where are the limits of our tolerance? What can and cannot be tolerated? That is the question. Before we try to answer this question let us outline the two basic processes dominating the contemporary world – the process of globalisation and the process of cultural and social differentiation. (Dupkala, 2015, s. 271). The two processes contradict each other. They can coexist but as Professor Dupkala emphasises, their negative manifestations can result in a crisis (exaggerated multiculturalism, vanishing of regional and national cultures, ecological crisis). Then there is also xenophobia and fundamentalism. Professor Dupkala believes there is a solution. We must avoid the extremes of the loss of regional cultures and intolerance – "a dialogue of cultures and perhaps of entire civilisations". (Dupkala, 2015, p. 271) It must be a true Socratean dialogue which is close to the original etymological meaning. It is an effort to find answers to questions. It is an open dialogue. As J. F. Lyotard points out terror in dialogue is forbidden. After the meta stories fail to convince us (Lyotard) and philosophy of history becomes unfeasible in any form (Popper) dialogue will mean true openness, democratism and necessity of self-correction and above all of respect for the freedom of thought, speech and ideology concludes Rudolf Dupkala.

Let us return to our question. Does tolerance mean reconciliation with everything? Certainly not. Rudolf Dupkala believes that one cannot tolerate intolerance. "A free and responsible human being can tolerate everything but intolerance!!!" (Dupkala, 2015, p. 273) Our philosopher tries to find the limits of what is still acceptable for people and what they

are willing to reconcile with. He believes that his questions are partially answered by the existence of objective and subjective limits of what is acceptable and tolerable for people.

It is difficult to agree upon uniform rules (provide a satisfactory answer to Pilate's question What is truth?) and in this context we realise that it is not possible to postulate cultural absolutism, i.e. an axiological system connected with a particular culture which would be ready for extrapolation and implementation into other cultures of the world. Unfeasibility of cultural absolutism is compatible with cultural pluralism. As Rudolf Dupkala notes, Michel de Montaigne anticipated cultural relativism in his *Essays*. He spoke of the unity of humankind as of unity in variety. He pointed out tolerance of otherness in terms of axiological orientation of humans. Z. Bauman draws our attention to harmfulness of value relativism whereas he claims that value absolutism is not possible. So, how shall we proceed in this situation?

Professor Dupkala believes that participants in a dialogue can ensure pluralism of values. This means they respect other attitudes, i.e. they are aware of the situation that "absolute validity of particular values is only allowed in a particular system of these values." (Dupkala, 2015, p. 275) In case the outcome of such dialogue is cultural pluralism then the dialogue itself can be peaceful. Participants' belief in pluralism, i.e. their ability to understand that there are acceptable values in other cultures too is the alpha and omega for understanding mutually incompatible values and behaviour patterns. Professor Dupkala argues that the above way could ensure peaceful coexistence. This does not mean that values become mutually compatible. It means that participants in the dialogue accept them as possible ways of full-fledged human experience. It also means that participants acknowledge the right to cherish one's values whereas they agree that no group has the right to force its system of values on adherents of another system of values. The aim of such dialogue of cultures is "reaching the point of mutual respect". (Dupkala, 2015, p. 276) In this context we can mention Ms. Hvizdová (2013, p. 65) who says that society in which people live shapes their basic views and hierarchy of values, mutual relationships as well as their own self. Survival of cultural values, people's views and values tend to be invariable and they evolve in the process of learning and upbringing. Secondary views change more often. The above information should make marketing experts focus more on shaping people's secondary not basic values.

All attempts to provide global solutions and export values to other countries must inevitably fail. Whatever we force upon others whether it is the idea of Trotsky's permanent revolution or forced Christianisation cannot be successful. As Rudolf Dupkala emphasises,

peaceful dialogue of cultures in which all participants are equal respecting each other's freedom of thinking and autonomy of cultural value systems is the only way.

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