



## Introduction to the issue:

### *Philosophical therapy — traditions and contemporary challenges*

On November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, a conference entitled *Philosophical therapy — traditions and contemporary challenges* was held at the University of the National Education Commission in Krakow. Philosophy has served a therapeutic function since the time of Socrates and Aristotle, and then on through the schools of the Hellenistic era to contemporary trends. However, when considering the topic, one should not limit oneself to history. Various dimensions of philosophy as a remedy for existential problems may be of interest including the practice of practical philosophy today, offering therapeutic services that draw on philosophy, and the conscious shaping of one's knowledge, morality and personality after entering adulthood. It is worth inquiring not only about philosophical service and what that means, but how everyone can practice philosophy to live well. We are aware that the terms "mentalotherapy", "philosophical psychotherapy", "existential therapy", "phronotherapy", and "nootherapy" also appear in the literature. All these contexts, among them coaching, are extremely interesting. The articles included in this volume constitute merely an introduction to the therapeutic dimension of philosophy, outlining selected issues in this area.

The issue begins with Andrzej Kapusta's paper *Philosophy as therapy: Eugene Gendlin on transformative experience* explores the role philosophy can play in therapeutic practice. The description and interpretation of the model provided by the author may inspire further examinations of the mechanisms of existential transformation potentially benefitting an individual. The approach stands out because of the differences between Gendlin's model, with its central concept of *felt sense*, and the alternatives.

In Piotr Leśniak's article *Dialog sokratejski jako metoda terapeutyczna* [Socratic dialogue as a therapeutic method], the author points out misinterpretations of the Socratic method in areas referring to Socrates as a source of inspiration.

The analysis of the aims and forms of his methods gives the reader an interesting opportunity to better understand the genuine possibilities they offer. Numerous references to the Dialogues give us a better understanding of how Socrates (or Plato) makes his practice work without any intermediaries. They form the basis for an examination of the polipsychism and internal dialogue which lay at the core of the Socratic method. Without considering polipsychism and internal dialogue, an understanding of Socrates' approach to philosophical thinking is basically impossible.

Paweł Walczak's *Ja aksjologiczne w terapii filozoficznej. Praktyczne implikacje Tischnerowskiej filozofii człowieka* [The axiological self in philosophical therapy: Practical implications of Tischner's philosophy of man] shares the perspective of Józef Tischner on psychotherapy when it includes important aspects of axiological reflection, essential to an individual. Central to this concept is the category of "axiological self" used to make contact with values that provide one with dignity and hope. This is important because according to Tischner the lack of dignity and hope is the key issue in the contemporary crisis of values causing psychological problems in people. But the article not only suggests important connections between psychology, philosophy and ethics but also provides a framework for using these relationships in contemporary psychotherapy.

The goal of Maciej Wodziński's paper *Neuroróżnorodność jako pojęcie moralne* [Neurodiversity as a moral concept] is to propose a way by which psychology can discard the burden of its past concerning the treatment of people who are viewed as psychological subjects or patients. The term *neurodiversity* makes it possible to break down the barrier that prevents us from treating everyone as fully-fledged, autonomous individuals. The nature of this barrier is to describe people as abnormal — compared to those who behave in a more stereotypically accepted manner — taking away part of the autonomy of the "abnormal". The term neurodiversity aims to remove some elements of normative assessment from the sphere of psychology — to remove potential biases.

Anna Szklarska's paper *Spokój w wymiarze aksjologicznym* [The axiological dimension of peace] discusses peace as a value — its ambivalence, its multifaceted nature. The article analyses the relationship between peace and the idea of development, also pointing to the importance of peace as a framework for thought (following Hannah Arendt). In times when vitalism is being re-evaluated, peace can represent both a positive value — as an important component of greater internal and external harmony — and a negative one, when it is identified as indolence, stillness and a lack of inspiration.

Jakub Dadlez's paper *Capitalism and the plastic brain: Catherine Malabou's language of economy* presents us with the concept of "plasticity" which emphasizes the mutability of socio-economical structures including those considered unchangeable. The special interest of the article is the analysis of the capitalist economy as a concept that neoliberal economists see as impervious to change, especially when it concerns the rules of how the market works and the consequences it brings.

Gabriel Klimont-Jaroszuk's paper *An intensity that transforms the field: Vagabonds and the eighteenth-century biopolitical regime in Poland* examines the development of biopolitical mechanisms in eighteenth-century Warsaw, revealing how Polish Enlightenment elites shifted from sovereign power to population-level regulation in response to mass migration and vagabondage. Employing Foucault's theoretical framework, it combines historical sociology with philosophical interpretation to investigate elite discourse and institutional practices such as decrees, interrogation records and acts of urban governance.

The final contribution to this issue is a review of Łukasz Kołoczek's book *Gra w ducha. Błądzenie w żywiole filozofii dramatu* [Playing the Spirit: Wandering in the element of the philosophy of drama] — by Tadeusz Bartoś.

We wish our readers an enjoyable reading experience.

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