

I. KANT AND L. FEUERBACH ABOUT MORALITY AND RELIGION AS THE BASIS OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF A MAN

Serhiy Yaremchuk

Lviv Polytechnic National University

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The article shows the features of the New Age thinkers' interpretations of the main categories of moral and religious consciousness (grace, faith, truth, love, morality, salvation, virtue, etc) and their interrelation. The use of the historical and genetic method and the category analysis method allows to reveal the philosophical meaning of the main conceptions of the New Age morality and religion correlation and identify their relation to the processes taking place in the European spiritual life today.

Key words: grace, faith, truth, love, morality, religion, virtue, purity.

I. КАНТ І Л. ФЕЙЄРБАХ ПРО МОРАЛЬ І РЕЛІГІЮ ЯК ПІДґРУНТЯ ДУХОВНОГО ФОРМУВАННЯ ЛЮДИНИ

Сергій Яремчук

Виявлено особливості тлумачень мислителями Нового часу основних категорій моральної та релігійної свідомості (благо, віра, істина, любов, мораль, спасіння, чеснота та ін.) в їх взаємозв'язку. Звернення до історико-генетичного методу і методу категоріального аналізу дало змогу розкрити філософський зміст основних концепцій взаємозв'язку релігії і моралі в новочасній культурі і виявити їх причетність до процесів, що відбуваються в європейському духовному просторі сьогодення.

Ключові слова: благодать, віра, істина, любов, мораль, релігія, чеснота, чистота.

The Renaissance humanism and the New Age accepted the idea of exceptional human dignity in Christianity. The distinctive feature of the New Age is the desire to justify the human value apart from religion. Christianity insists on the primacy of transcendental and suprapersonal realities when the New Age refers this reality to the human subject. In the Middle Ages even non-religious morality was the subject of religion when in the New Age era even religious morality is the outcome of the human being. The person's true morality and the value of the virtues are associated with the free, independent and informed choice of the individual.

This problem hasn't been investigated in Ukrainian philosophy. The research is based on the works of Immanuel Kant and Ludwig Feuerbach. The aim of the article is to review and analyze the views of the German philosophers I. Kant and L. Feuerbach on the problem of religion and morality correlation.

I. Kant claims and justifies the final and complete priority of morality over all other areas of the human spirit. The philosopher discusses the problem of the morality and religion balance with the utmost and hitherto unprecedented clarity. "Morality in its purity and whiteness should be linked with religion that wasn't

comprehended by the ancient philosophers" [5, p. 94]. He implemented a truly grand plan of moral autonomy, subordinating all human activities to the task of moral self-improvement and education of the individual. According to I. Kant, knowledge hasn't got any value unless it helps a person to realize good in his life. Faith is justified only if it always helps to follow the duty. Kant affirms the autonomy of morality. "Morality doesn't require religion and it tends to itself by pure practical reason" [6, p. 261]. However, for I. Kant, mere human efforts aren't enough to fully realize the vision of the supreme good, which morality includes. One must "posit the existence of God as it refers to the possibility of the supreme good" [3, p. 377]. All moral precepts would have no power if there weren't a perfect human being perceiving them. "Religion provides morality with strength, beauty and reality because morality itself is something perfect... Religion is something that gives the moral weight; it should be a motive for morality" [5, p. 94]. Morality would remain in the noumenal world, if there weren't a person who makes morality in its entirety. "It is also impossible to appeal to morality without believing in God" [5, p. 94]. Religion is embodied morality, its strength.

According to I. Kant, only God guarantees the real moral world order. "The existence of God that isn't proved by any reasonable theoretical arguments is a postulate of practical reason" [1, p. 321]. Knowledge isn't of decisive importance in morality and religion. "I had to eliminate knowledge to make way for faith" [4, p. 43]. Thus, I. Kant made space for faith. "Dogmatism of metaphysics, i.e. the prejudice that it is possible to succeed in it without the criticism of pure reason, is the true source of disbelief (contrary to morality), which is always highly dogmatic" [4, p. 43]. It isn't faith that is dogmatic but mind that claims to knowledge beyond the experience. Kant believes that the criticism of pure reason "puts the end to all attacks against morality and religion" [4, p. 43]. Separating, on the one hand, the field of knowledge and, on the other hand, the field of morality and religion, he thus limits knowledge that would not play a decisive role in morality and religion.

God is not a matter of reason but a condition of morality. God is neither the source nor the cause of morality. According to I. Kant, God is a hypothesis. "God isn't a creature beyond me but just my opinion" [2, p. 376]. Therefore, understandable God isn't an external authority to humans and He is recognized as the condition of morality that is the very possibility of moral acts. "It is not so important for us to know what God Himself is (by nature) as what He is for us as a moral being" [6, p. 370]. I. Kant considers the existence of God not in the cognitive but in the purely moral context. According to I. Kant, it would be immoral to treat God as an anthropomorphic being, thus humiliating Him. The only thing to be pious is the attitude toward God as the holy legislator, benevolent ruler and righteous judge. I. Kant claims that these moral attributes of God are needed because they may give great efficiency to moral qualities. Knowledge of God as a moral being is the essence of natural theology.

The idea of moral purity and religious experience from empirical principles is, so to speak, a nerve of Immanuel Kant's philosophy. The principles of pleasure, benefits, profit and happiness aren't acceptable to justify morality. His ethics of duty confronts empirical ethics. Only an act motivated by duty can be considered as truly moral. Purity of moral motives is unbreakable. I. Kant understands the limitations of reason in justification for the idea of pure morality as well as in resolving moral and religious issues. Therefore, he justifies the importance of faith to morality and religion. "Faith in God, which as a practical faith derived from the principle of morality, is so powerful that speculative counterproofs cannot wrest it from the moral sense" [5, p. 93]. Faith is inevitably mentioned in human behavior where the need is not thinking but action in accordance with the ideal. Kant's reason cannot give such an unshakable foundation since it is connected with contradictions and moral actions require

absolute rather than problematic belief in the rightness of actions undertaken.

In morality and religion Kant attaches the utmost importance to faith. "When the man himself cannot realize the idea of the highest good, inextricably linked with the purely moral direction of thoughts, he finds for himself the necessary belief in assistance or existence of the moral world-keeper ensuring this goal" [6, p. 370]. And if faith has a subordinate position in knowledge, religion and morality, it is indispensable. According to Kant, there are three kinds of faith. Pragmatic faith is the man's faith in his innocence in a particular case. Doctrinal belief is a belief in general provisions, or otherwise, faith of reason. I. Kant claims that these kinds of faith are unstable and contingent. A moral belief has quite a different character. "Nothing can shake it because of moral principles that would be rejected in such a way" [4, p. 600]. Kant puts faith in God dependent on morality. To believe in God means not to think about his existence but to strive to be kind. Kant values knowledge more than dogmatic and doctrinal beliefs but he puts moral faith above knowledge, thus assuring the primacy of practical over theoretical reason. I. Kant believes that only pure religious faith, or otherwise faith of reason, can serve as a basis for the true religion because it might be clearly conveyed to anyone having a mind.

I. Kant distinguishes between the concept of "faith" and "religion". There is only one true religion but there may be different types of faith. Therefore, it is more appropriate to say "a man of a particular faith" instead of "a man of a particular religion". Church faith is historically conditioned. But this is not for pure faith of reason which is the basis of moral religion. The philosopher says that historical faith has pure religious faith as its supreme interpreter. Kant spreads the idea of "pure morality" that is free from everything empirical. Purity of religious experience is possible only with pure morality. In this regard, Kant defines the Church as an association of people "based only on moral rather than any other motives" [6, p. 336]. Religion, by its content, isn't different from morality. The purpose of the religion of reason is "moral perfection of a man" [6, p. 345]. There are just different kinds of faith but religion is one as the only and true morality.

Morality can not be derived from religion because it precedes it. Religion begins with a man and appears where there is the relationship between man and God. However, there are religions without morality. "There is no morality but prudence and diligence of reasonable conduct towards God" [5, p. 92]. I. Kant formulates the problem of the morality and religion correlation as a kind of a moral problem. He says that "morality should be connected with religion" [5, p. 94]. They are separated but must be linked. Religion that does not involve morality reduces only to the outer ministry. Distinguishing

“external” and “internal” religions, or in other words “the religion of ceremonies” and “the religion of mood”, Kant denies that the first one has the right to be called “religion”. “External actions can be either internal means of religion or its consequences but outer religion is nonsense” [5, p. 95]. True religion is called “religion of mood”, or otherwise “moral religion”. Religion necessarily involving pure moral religion is actually “moral religion” which is the awareness of “all our commitments as divine commandments” [6, p. 380]. According to Kant, this natural religion should be the completion of morality. It is the awareness of duty as divine commandments. It is complemented with “the religion of revelation” which understands the divine commandments as a duty.

The religion of revelation and natural religion are not opposed to each other but complement each other. “Natural religion can be at the same time the religion of revelation” [6, p. 382]. Both of them posit the proper life, coming to it from all sides. Awareness of the divine commandments as a duty and awareness of duty as divine commandments are essentially the same. Here it is important not how a person comes to the idea of duty, through reason or through his faith in God, but it is important that he understands the good and aspires to establish it in his life. “Supernatural religion is an addition to the natural one by higher divine help” [5, p. 96]. Natural religion is true but incomplete since it always implies only limited human efforts to attain the fullness of life. At the same time, only our moral behavior makes us worthy of God’s help. Supernatural religion itself is something passive. It implies that God does all instead of a man who has no need to do something because everything will happen without his participation. I. Kant concludes that if there is morality in the actions, supernatural religion must be preceded by natural religion.

Unlike I. Kant, L. Feuerbach refuses to withdraw morality and religion of transcendental principles. He is against the “insensible” morality separated from a particular individual and transfers its source on a real person. Morality is a real practical relation of one person to another. L. Feuerbach denies the possibility of the morality of mind without the correlation with feelings. Morality is not possible without the Kantian “autonomy” but it doesn’t exist without interpersonal relationships either. Another person isn’t an abstraction or scheme. Feuerbach defends the idea of a real, not an abstract man. He rejects the “absolute, immaterial speculation that draws materiality from itself” [8, p. 17] and affirms “the reality of being a single sense” [7, p. 79]. Along with the “speculative” morality Feuerbach also rejects speculative theology which, in his opinion, opposes God as the transcendent essence of human nature. God, spirit and soul are empty abstractions for him. He proves that “the true meaning of theology is anthropology” and “there is no difference between the divine and human subject of

nature because they are identical” [8, p. 21]. For Feuerbach, God has the nature of man. Or, in other words, God is a kind of a symbolic image possessing purely human characteristics and qualities.

L. Feuerbach rejects only God as a transcendent entity but not religion. “To be without religion is to think only of oneself; to have religion means to think about the others”. He wants to improve religion but not to withdraw it. The true essence of religion lies in the nature of man. Religion is “the direct nature of man”. Feuerbach considers religion to be the necessary and logical step in the formation of human self-consciousness. This is his generic feature because animals don’t have religion. The fact that the gods were created in the image and likeness of people is the root of meaning and value of religious consciousness, the basis of its reality in history. According to Feuerbach, God is the essence of man. Religion encourages to love God. So religion eventually preaches man to man love which is the essence of morality. Religion is nothing more than morality. L. Feuerbach supports religion without God that is religion of the love of man to man.

The essence of morality is the love of man to man. Feuerbach rejects the Christian thesis that “God is love”. He believes that religion is essentially immoral not only in some of its manifestations. If love is the essence of religion, faith is its conscious form. Love identifies man and God and therefore man and man and unites them. Faith separates God from man and therefore man from man, thus separating them. In fact, faith is immoral. “Faith by its nature is bound and limited” [8, p. 288]. It is always a belief in something definite and the only true. Faith involves fanaticism and intolerance towards all infidels. “So faith assimilates only believers and repels unbelievers. It is good towards believers and wicked towards non-believers” [8, p. 290]. Feuerbach claims that faith cannot be a criterion to distinguish between good and evil because it is unstable and based on a random feeling or mood. Randomness is generally the main subject of religion. Religion is something unintentional and involuntary, something independent from human knowledge and will, but at the same time, it is something that determines the fate of man.

Faith, according to Feuerbach, inevitably turns into hatred unless it meets restrictions in the form of morality on its way. Faith considers itself above the laws of morality. “For faith there is nothing above itself because its object is the divine personality” [8, p. 299]. Therefore, it makes achieving supreme bliss dependent on itself, not on performing common functions. Man faces an unresolved dilemma because he has to sacrifice “both love for the personality of God and the personality of God for the sake of love” [8, p. 302]. Religion is opposed to morality because faith is the opposite of love. “Man is exhausted by faith. Only faith contains all the virtues that make us pleasing to God” [8, p. 292]. Faith cancels morality and limits love. “Love in Christianity is

contaminated by faith; it is not taken freely and in pure form. Love limited by faith isn't real love" [7, p. 117]. In this sense, love is identical with mind only, not with faith, because mind and love are general in nature and faith is always limited.

Only for love Feuerbach reserves the right to be the basis of morality and religion. Love unites morality and religion. "Love is a connection and an intermediary between perfect and imperfect, sinful and sinless, general and individual, the law and the heart, God and human. Love is God Himself and there is no God out of love" [8, p. 79]. Love to man should be the supreme law for a person. It is impossible to love another person if you don't see in him the divine, akin to God as well as if you don't see God in him. "The love of man to man is God and that is the higher practical basic principle" [8, p.308]. Feuerbach considers it to be lost in Christianity. Morality in Christianity has the criterion of religion but morality itself is subordinated to religion. God prevails over morality. Man thanks God for the blessings for him from another person but doesn't thank the person. In Feuerbach's opinion, "in this way, the morale of religion dies" [8, p.310]. Morality, unlike religion, doesn't separate but unites people, being the true basis of religion and manifestation of true piety.

For Kant, religion is the embodiment of morality, its completion when for Feuerbach, morality as the moral attitude of one person to another is the true meaning of religion. Morality is religion, they are identical. And if Kant's morality is the essence of religion and the fullness of morality is the idea of religion, for Feuerbach, morality itself (not "in itself" as for Kant), taken in empirical terms, is the true religion. "Feuerbach adores simple laws of human coexistence and morality" [2, p. 329] and makes empirical ethics absolute. It strongly exacerbates Kant's assertion that knowledge of God adds nothing to the morality of man and argues that faith is opposed to love, being in fact immoral. Finally, L. Feuerbach offers a vast concept of the transformation of philosophy. "The old philosophy had the double truth: the truth for itself, which didn't care about the person,

such as philosophy and the truth for man that was religion. In addition, the new philosophy is essentially the philosophy of man. Without affecting the dignity and autonomy of the theory, even in complete harmony with it, philosophy has in fact a practical tendency. It stands instead of religion, it involves religion, it is truly religion itself" [7, p. 204]. Moral philosophy should become the basis for true religion. Philosophy should replace religion. Remaining itself, philosophy must include all the benefits of religion. It is intended to become not only theoretical knowledge, but also a guide to a happy life.

Conclusions. The German classical philosophy clearly claimed the priority of morality over religion. This advantage in its extreme expression means that the idea of God is valuable only when it promotes the moral improvement of man. In religion a person depends on God but ultimately God Himself depends on the person. God must be moral and religion in its essence is nothing but morality. Morality is the true religion. The moral law is God.

The results of this study allow to carry out further research on the rich intellectual legacy of the New Age and solve the practical problems of human morality at times of the spiritual crisis of the modern European world.

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