



RICHARD DAWKINS' GOD DELUSION

PAWEŁ BLOCH

Richard Dawkins‘  
God Delusion

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Scientific consultation: Grzegorz Tomkowicz

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wydawnictwo@flavius.pl

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## INTRODUCTION

There is such a concept that has accompanied human civilization since the dawn of time. It has fascinated and attracted millions of people from time immemorial. It became the subject of reflection of philosophers, artists and scientists. This concept is God. Many wonder: Does He really exist? If so, what is His role in human life? If not, why does He have so many followers? The endless dialogue continues between two great stances of philosophy. The correlated concepts of God and atheism are constantly arguing about the truth and crossing in the battle for human beliefs, generating feelings of fascination and controversy at the same time. This dispute, which caused great hopes and disappointments, the one that engaged numerous philosophers, the one of a considerable signification in human life, is fundamental to the present cogitation.

Recording the past, we discover that the religious beliefs played an essential role in the history of civilization. However, the value of these beliefs has declined due to the powerful front of the anti-religious movements, which emerged in the recent centuries. There appeared many literature writers, who expressed religious skepticism in the pages of their works. Currently, at the beginning of the twenty first century, this front is represented by a number of the prominent and renowned leaders. Richard Dawkins, the Oxford professor, who endeavored to support the achievements of



his predecessors with his personal opinion and promote atheistic beliefs around the world, is included in this group. His book, *The God Delusion*, has become popular among thousands of readers, who accepted its content with great enthusiasm. Nevertheless, there is a number of such readers, who express strong criticism for Richard Dawkins' view, recognizing it as the unjustified and based on false premises attack on religion.

Reading the title of the book written by the Oxford scientist – *The God Delusion*, it is worth highlighting that the notions of God and religion as delusion were already known in the literature of past eras. Such a formulation may be found in the works of one of the fiercest atheists of the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, Donatien-Alphonse-François de Sade, known as the Marquis de Sade - the man completely devoid of values, deprived of elementary fairness, claiming to be guided merely by egoism, pleasure and moral corruption. This philosopher wrote: "The God Delusion is just a chimera and his unreasonable existence was accepted exceptionally by the insane"<sup>1</sup>. Karl Marx – the preeminent representative of the communist theory also appeared on the horizon. The leaders of the world's largest systems of the collapse of humanity and the enslavement, employed his ideology. Marx, a professed atheist, wrote: "The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness"<sup>2</sup>. Are marxism and sadism sources of the

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<sup>1</sup> Donatien-Alphonse-François de Sade, *Justyna, czyli nieszczęśliwa cnota*, tłum. M. Bratuń, wyd. II, Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, Łódź 1989, s. 212.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. Joseph O'Malley, Oxford University Press, 1970, [introduction].

contemporary literature and the commonly respected, scientific authority? Does professor Dawkins draw his inspirations from the works of these thinkers? Do the concepts of God and religion as the delusion tie these authors with the joint theme? Who has delusions and what kind of delusions does he have? Let the book by the professor Richard Dawkins, in the context of criticism, answer the aforementioned questions.

Lysias wrote a defence for some accused person, and gave it to him, and he read it several times, and came to Lysias in great dejection and said, "When I first perused this defence, it seemed to me wonderful, but when I read it a second and third time, it seemed altogether dull and ineffective". Then Lysias laughed, and said, "What then? Are you going to read it more than once to the jury?"<sup>3</sup>

Dawkins' God Delusion can be compared to the Lysias' speech since it gives the impression of being phenomenal, however, the deeper insight into its content reveals the lack of precision as well as superficiality of the analysis of the discussed terms. Reading *The God Delusion* one may have mixed feelings. On the one hand, the reader desires to acknowledge, with great curiosity, strong contradictory evidence<sup>4</sup>, which are mentioned by the author, and which indicate the non-existence of God; on the other, looking at the large book, one may get the impression that it employs methods of deceptive sophistic rhetoric, which are known for centuries. As a matter of fact, this book may be criticized for the con-

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<sup>3</sup> Plutarch's, *Morals. On Talkativeness*, trans. Arthur Richard Shiletto, Chiswick Press, 1978, p. 218.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, Transworld Publishers, London, 2006, p. 28.

cealment, reducing to ridicule, the distraction, failing to provide the complete information on the issue, drawing conclusions that are not based on reliable evidence, and even presenting absurd, illogical reasoning. The reader, inundated with a torrent of words and an avalanche of incidental cases, gets the impression that the presented statements are equitable, whereas, the delivered opinions are not factual and objective. Reading *The God Delusion*, one may notice that the professor Richard Dawkins' conclusions are not based on 'strong contradictory evidence'<sup>5</sup>, but on his subjective worldview system. Furthermore, while attentive reading, it is observable that the book fails to tackle, except for several references, the issue of the existence or the non-existence of God. The content of the dissertation primarily concerns problems related to God in the sociological, and not metaphysical sense.

The believers frequently fear questions regarding their own views and convictions. They prefer life of pure faith that is not based on any source of cognition. This attitude is connected with anxiety about losing fundamental beliefs since a particular person would have to separate from them once they are proved to be unjustified. The depicted inclination is wrong, however. It may lead to the approval of contradictions that should not be accepted. Similarly, the second side, i.e., the atheistic, tends not to be prone to deeper reflections, due to the lack of interest in this field, rather than because of fear. The atheistic worldview is sufficient for the existence and its followers frequently do not seek anything else. They isolate in the consumer society and

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<sup>5</sup> Ibidem.

hermetically dissociate themselves from any spirituality. This attitude also seems wrong since it aims exclusively at the biological persistence and lacks the element of the philosophical depth. Regardless, such principal issues should not be avoided as they are so strongly linked to the sense of the human existence.

## CHAPTER 1

### SCIENCE AND GOD

While searching for the answers to the most fundamental questions of man as well as the sources of knowledge, from which he derives his inspiration, it is necessary to refer to science, the reliable verifier of truth and falsehood.

There is a contradiction between concepts of theism and atheism. Either God 'is' or He 'is not'. According to logic, one statement is true and consequently, the second, is clearly false. This seemingly simple structure encompasses significant obstacles, as it became the subject of the centuries-old dispute, which has not been resolved yet, as a number of great philosophers maintain.

Does atheism justify the sense of the human existence? Theists indisputably claim that not. They cannot accept the existence for the sake of existence, 'the struggle for survival', the ultimate emptiness<sup>6</sup> as the philosophy of life. Or perhaps atheism proclaims the inconvenient truth? Maybe emptiness is the ultimate goal of our life? Theists maintain that there exists the Entity, who gives the sense and significance to the human life. They seek the Absolute that would justify human fate and human desires. Mo-

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<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 403.

reover, they find the meaning of their existence in God, the soul and morality.

Dawkins' atheism implies the acceptance of the philosophy, which assumes that 'there is nothing beyond the natural, physical world, no supernatural creative intelligence lurking behind the observable universe'<sup>7</sup>. God comprehended in such a way does not exist, besides, religion is the false element that should be rejected. 'An atheist [...] is somebody who believes there is [...] no soul that outlasts the body and no miracles – except in the sense of natural phenomena that we don't yet understand'<sup>8</sup>. Thus, there is no God, no world beyond the physical one, no supernatural phenomena, no human soul (there is no afterlife, there is only emptiness<sup>9</sup>). Furthermore, in his dissertation, Dawkins recognizes pantheism as the kind of atheism<sup>10</sup>, since the idea of God, understood in terms of the laws of nature, nature itself, or the universe, represents the atheistic worldview, although it is named differently. Atheism presented by this philosopher is the type of atheism that regards the theory of evolution as the final explanation of the origin of life processes, and even morality<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibidem, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem p. 35. (Dawkins' atheism is associated – as he claims himself – with defence of 'contradicting opinion' concerning 'the God hypothesis'. The God hypothesis, however, he formulated as follows: 'there exists a superhuman, supernatural intelligence who deliberately designed and created the universe and everything in it, including us' – p. 52).

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, pp. 35, 403.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem, pp. 39-40.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, chap. 4, 6.

Theism is the view, according to which God exists. Some people claim that God, as the ultimate subject of the faith, is the greatest personal power and justification of every life form<sup>12</sup>. According to others, God is the principle and the final foundation of any reality<sup>13</sup>. And yet others consider God as the supernatural person, or the personified entity, that is the reason for the existence of the entire universe, and primarily, the destiny of the human life<sup>14</sup>. Dawkins maintains that 'the word »God« [...] should be [...] understood [...] to denote a supernatural creator that is »appropriate for us to worship«<sup>15</sup>.

If one defined God through the prism of Jesus Christ, it should be concluded that God is the highest entity from 'a different dimension'. As a matter of fact, Jesus claimed to be King and He taught about His kingdom, which is not from this world. God is good by nature since Christ was merciful and just. He has self-awareness and the ability of the existence beyond life on the earth, because He reasoned like all people, He was resurrected and went, as He declared, to His kingdom. God has the potential to induce supernatural phenomena, because Jesus healed and made signs that we are unable to explain in a natural way. The

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<sup>12</sup> *Religia. Encyklopedia PWN*, red. nauk. T. Gadacz, B. Milerski, t. 2, Warszawa 2001, hasło opracował J.A. Kłoczowski, Warszawa 2001.

<sup>13</sup> *Encyklopedia chrześcijaństwa. Historia i współczesność. 2000 lat nadziei*, red. H. Witczyk, Jedność 2001, s. 109.

<sup>14</sup> *Encyklopedia katolicka*, Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, wyd. I, t. II, pod red. F. Grylewicza, R. Łukaszyka, Z. Sułowskiego, Lublin 1976.

<sup>15</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 33 (Dawkins presents similar understanding of God also on pp. 52 and 82).

present study requires understanding of God through the figure of Jesus Christ.

### **‘The God Delusion’**

In ten chapters of his book, *The God Delusion*, Richard Dawkins presented assumptions that, as he believes, form the powerful argumentation in favor of the denial of the faith in the name of atheism. Already in the introduction<sup>16</sup>, Dawkins reviews his work:

Chapter 1 and chapter 10 ‘explain in their different ways, how a proper understanding of the magnificence of the real world, while never becoming a religion, can fill the inspirational role that religion has [...] usurped’. Chapter 2 deals with agnosticism and the view that the God hypothesis is the scientific hypothesis, which should be analysed sceptically. Chapter 3 concerns counterargumentation with the so called evidence for the existence of God presented by theologians and philosophers in the history. Chapter 4 discusses issues related to life and the world origins with no references to God. Darwinian theory of the natural selection constitutes the basis of the consideration. Chapter 5 explains why this belief is so ubiquitous. Dawkins wonders if God exist due to the universality of religion. Chapters 6 and 7 argue with the belief that religion and God are ‘necessary in order for us to have justifiable morals’. In Chapter 8 Dawkins indicates that ‘religion is not such

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<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, pp. 24-26.



a good thing'. In turn, chapter 9 tackles the problem of the education in religion.

Dawkins maintains that religion persists 'despite strong contradictory evidence'<sup>17</sup>, however, the above conclusion does not follow from the review of *The God Delusion*. In chapters 1 and 10 Dawkins wrote about the possibility of the understanding the world without any reference to God - when, in fact, this stance does not contradict the possibility of the existence of God. Chapter 2 discusses agnostics and, what is more, the concept of God in terms of the scientific hypothesis, that should be approached with some scepticism - however, the above statement does not exclude the properness of the belief in God. Chapter 3 encompasses the theological and philosophical proofs for the existence of God - that do not affect either the properness or improperness of religion. The issues pertaining to Darwinism are discussed in chapter 4. Nonetheless, Darwinism is not inconsistent with the faith since this theory does not deny the existence of God as well as the creation of life by God, as confirmed by Darwin himself<sup>18</sup>. Chapter 5, which describes the population of the believers, is not in opposition to the dogmas of religion. Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 deal with morality, religious 'benefits', the problem of the education in religion, and not the existence or non-existence of God.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, p. 28.

<sup>18</sup> Karol Darwin, *O powstawaniu gatunków drogą doboru naturalnego, czyli o utrzymaniu się doskonalszych ras w walce o byt*, tłum. S. Dickstein, J. Nusbaum, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Rolnicze i Leśne, Warszawa 1955, s. 515.

Therefore, where are the chapters that include strong, contrary to religious beliefs evidence? What happened to them? The names of the chapters and the author's comments lead to the conclusion that *The God Delusion* analyzes exclusively sociological problems of the faith, on the basis of which, the unjustified and sophistic reasoning about the non-existence of God is presented.

### **Argumentation**

The relation between science and logic to religion is fascinating. For centuries, numerous researches have endeavored to establish their boundaries, however, a great number of religious phenomena is not congruent with their scientific assessment, and therefore, formulating their exact definition becomes extremely challenging. Dawkins presented several observations concerning the aforementioned relations and he attempted to show that science is incompatible with the concepts of God and religion.

Who is responsible for providing argumentation that will approve his views? Dawkins, quoting Bertrand Russell's thought, said: 'the burden of proof rests with the believers, not the non-believers'<sup>19</sup>. Is the expressed idea correct? This issue is of the practical, methodological and logical nature. Legal sciences that greatly dealt with the problems of command, provided the solution that can also be applied in the above case. 'The burden of proof rests on the person

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<sup>19</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 76 (por. also pp. 74-75).

who derives legal effects from the particular fact<sup>20</sup>. Let's focus on the 'deriving effects'. In the legal world we would deal with the legal effect, whereas as far as God is concerned – with the worldview effect. Thus, the person who aims at inducing the specific result should provide evidence. With regard to God, the proof should be delivered by the person who claims that God 'exists' as well as the one who states that God 'does not exist'. Both sides desire to demonstrate the validity of their beliefs. Therefore, the former and the latter group of people, while proclaiming anything connected with the existence or the non-existence of God, are obliged to provide evidence to their assumptions. Russell's reasoning, that is quoted above, concerning the unilateral duty, could only be justified in case if one, who presents any thesis, spoke with a person who has no opinion on the subject. In other words, if a person, who has nothing to state about God, talks with a person who claims that God exists, then he will have the right to expect the unilateral proof. So, if the pointed speaker says: 'you prove me that it is not true', the person demanding evidence would have the methodological right to respond:

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<sup>20</sup> The Civil Code (the Act of April 23, 1964 – the legal status on September 1, 2007), ed. M. Buczna, Wolters Kluwer Poland Sp. z o.o. This construction assumes the equality of sides rather than the disturbance of the evidential balance. The principle of the process of Julius Paulus (Digest 22, 2, 3) „*Ei incumbit probatio qui dicit, non qui negat*” is essentially similar, because an atheist acknowledges the existence of a specific state, which is denied by a theist. (e.g. an atheist claims that human consciousness lasts till the moment of physical death, whereas a theist rejects this idea).

‘but I do not claim that it is not true, it is you who says that it is true – demonstrate then, why do you think so’.

Let us take a man, Peter, who stated: ‘In the first wagon of the train there is only one person’, as the example. Here, no evidence is provided. It is the statement similar to: ‘God exists’. Paul, however, says: ‘It is not true that there is only one person in the first wagon’ (thus, the atheist would state: ‘It is not true that God exists’). Andrew stays silent. So who bears the burden of proof? The one who claims that ‘it is so’? The one who claims that ‘it is not so’? Or the one who claims ‘nothing’? It seems that the person who asserts and the person who negates are responsible for providing evidence, namely, Peter and Paul. The obligation does not affect only the person who does not say anything – in this case, Andrew.

As for the command of the existence of God, the dispute over the the burden of proof appears to be significant. It is comparable to the ongoing conversation:

*Peter:* There is only one person in the first wagon.

*Paul:* This is not true.

*Peter:* Why?

*Paul:* Because you did not provide evidence. If not, you will prove that you did not say the truth.

*Peter:* The fact that I did not provide evidence does not signify that I did not say the truth. The lack of evidence shows that I did not present any proof to confirm my thesis.

*Paul:* Still, with no proof you said the untruth.

*Peter:* If I said the untruth, then your words would essentially boil down to the following statement: ‘It is un-

true that there is only one person in the first wagon, which logically means that there is nobody or just more than one person'. Thus, if you claim that the situation is different than what I said, provide evidence or I will consider your words as untrue, in accordance with your own reasoning.

*Paul:* It is true that my words boil down to this assumption, however, the fact that I did not provide evidence does not imply that I said the untruth. You told me so. This means that I did not present any proof. So, if you regarded my statement (about the number of people in the first wagon) as false, then yours would be true. Therefore, please present evidence of the veracity of your assumption, otherwise, I would consider it untrue...

And so, remaining in conflict, the sides persist in the deceptive argument and endlessly shift the burden of proof on each other. It seems that both sides should provide evidence – since they both claim something and desire to induce ‘a specific effect’. The discussion on the existence of God looks alike to the demonstrated conversation.

There is another weakness of the belief, according to which, the burden of proof rests on a person who asserts and not the one who negates that should be taken into consideration. To illustrate the above problem, the following logical reasoning could be presented:

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| an atheist claims that after death:       |           |
| assertion                                 | negation  |
| ‘there is emptiness’ = ‘there is no life’ |           |
| a Christian maintains that after death:   |           |
| negation                                  | assertion |
| ‘no emptiness’ = ‘there is life’.         |           |

The atheist claims that ‘there is emptiness’ after death. Therefore, saying that ‘there is emptiness’ after death – he is obliged to prove this fact. Christians, who reject this belief, are not constrained to command the existence of life after death, i.e., ‘the lack of emptiness’. On the other hand, Christians maintain that ‘there is life’ after the physical death. Atheists, however, deny this possibility declaring that there is ‘no life’. Thus, Christians must prove the existence of life after death, whereas atheists must not. To conclude, we get the contradiction, according to which, both, atheists and Christians, simultaneously must and must not provide evidence of the same view.

Dawkins, focusing on Bertrand Russell’s thought, expressed the conviction that the burden of proof of the existence of God rests on the one who claims that God exists (the believer). On that account, he should prove that such a burden essentially rests on this person, and at the same time, does not rest on the person who states that God does not exist (the non-believer). Be that as it may, he avoided such a command. The aforementioned view can be considered false by bringing the rule of the presented reasoning to the contradiction. Thus, it appears that the au-

thor of *The God Delusion* does not proclaim the truth as far as 'the burden of proof' is concerned<sup>21</sup>.

### Proving the non-existence

Dawkins is trying to avoid the answer to the question, which is fundamental to his worldview: 'That you cannot prove God's non-existence is accepted and trivial, if only in the sense that we can never absolutely prove the non-existence of anything'<sup>22</sup>.

It is difficult to understand the above statement as nobody demands the certainty of his atheistic postulates from Dawkins. It would be sufficient if he cemented their validity on the scientific foundation, then, his beliefs would become extremely significant. Science uses the method of proving the non-existence of particular objects of the research, therefore, it is hard to discover the reasons why Dawkins would intend not to apply this method. The microbiologist can prove that there are no germs in the water, and consequently, it is safe to drink. The engineer can prove that there is no risk of the collapse of the bridge during specific seismic movements. Even on the grounds of legal sciences the attorney can prove that there is no link

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<sup>21</sup> Dawkins himself tacitly admits to the fact that the burden of proof also rests on atheism, because he didn't finish his book just after presenting his thesis, yet he continued – as he believes – the affirmation of the validity of atheism.

<sup>22</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 77. (Inaccuracy: the non-existence of particular objects is proved with an 'absolute certainty' in logic and mathematics).

between the crime and his client. He may also declare that the legal regulations do not include the articles, which could help with convicting the accused.

Proving the 'non-existence' is the simple research procedure that is accepted by the scientists; Dawkins' atheism, however, does not follow this criterion as it separates this philosophical concept from the real science.

### **The infinite regress**

Dawkins quotes one of the arguments in favor of atheism, he writes:

»Who made God?«. A designer God cannot be used to explain organized complexity because any God capable of designing anything would have to be complex enough to demand the same kind of explanation in his own right. God presents an infinite regress from which he cannot help us to escape. This argument [...] demonstrates that God [...] is very very improbable indeed<sup>23</sup>.

To understand the value of Dawkins' reasoning, the terms: 'God' and 'organized complexity' should be substituted by the analogous concepts in the specified configuration. For instance, the words 'Dawkins' and 'the book *The God Delusion*' could represent such substitution.

»Who made Dawkins?«. A designer Dawkins cannot be used to explain the book *The God Delusion* because Dawkins capable of designing anything would have to be complex enough to demand the same kind of explanation in his

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<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. 136.



own right. God presents an infinite regress from which he cannot help us to escape. This argument [...] demonstrates that Dawkins [...] is very very improbable indeed'.

Thus, if Dawkins proved that God is in the infinite regress, he himself – on the basis of his own comprehension – would exist in the infinite regress. If Dawkins demonstrated that 'God is very very improbable', he also would be 'very very improbable'. If God cannot be used to explain organized complexity, then Dawkins himself cannot be used to explain the same complexity, which is his book, *The God Delusion*.

Dawkins could claim: 'The above way of understanding is misleading because I do not function in the infinite regress yet I come from the finite, that is from the matter which entered into the state of evolution'. In this situation one should respond: 'It is true that the above way of reasoning is misleading, nevertheless, it is the same reasoning, which Dawkins imposed on himself since, by locating God in the infinite regress, he created logical structure, upon which Dawkins can also be placed in this regress'.

### **'The teapot'**

Dawkins quotes the utterance by the popular atheist, Bertrand Russell who proclaimed: 'If I were to suggest that between the Earth and Mars there is a china teapot revolving about the sun in an elliptical orbit, nobody would be able to disprove my assertion'<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 75.

According to Dawkins, God appears as Russell's teapot, that is the total fiction, separated from reality and without even the slightest confirmation in reality, and whose the unreasonable non-existence cannot be proved.

From the Christian standpoint, Dawkins' declaration that God is the abstract invention appears to be the attempt to impose the very model and understanding of God that do not exist in this religion. Christians focus on the historical sciences and draw legitimate conclusions from them. Jesus is a historical figure, such as Pontius Pilate, Josephus, Tacitus and Caiaphas. Only undermining testimonies, referred to by the Church historians, may transfer the assertion of the divinity of Christ to the sphere of abstracts. Therefore, Dawkins and Russell must relate to this historical argumentation, because their analysis does not concern the very essence of the issues presented by Christianity.

## Likehood and God

For Dawkins 'very low probability'<sup>25</sup> of God's existence is the basis of his atheism. He wrote: 'The existence of God is the scientific hypothesis' and 'available evidence and reasoning may yield an estimate of probability far from 50 per cent'<sup>26</sup>.

Dawkins expressed his beliefs using the concept of probability<sup>27</sup>. However, is the theory of probability the appropriate method to apply the presented reasoning? Definitely not, due to the fact that this mathematical tool exhibits its

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<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, p. 73.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, p. 73. (Dawkins, of course, implies the probability below 50%).

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, pp. 71, 73, 75, 77 and other.

strength in case of possessing precise data, which, as far as God is concerned, nobody owns. It is clear that in order to calculate the probability of an event you must specify both, the basic set  $\Omega$  (the set of all possible elementary events of the random experiment) and the set of elementary events conducive to the occurrence of the given event<sup>28</sup>. It should be noted that Dawkins, as far as God is concerned, did not specify neither the basic set, nor the set of elementary events favorable to a particular event, and therefore, he refers to the concept of probability only in the non-scientific sense. Thus, it can be concluded that Dawkins' statements about the probability of God's existence are solely his subjective judgement that is not confirmed by the required allocation and, being obtained non-methodologically, they could be rejected.

### **Abstaining from the judgement**

Every person, analyzing religious concepts thoroughly and constituting his worldview on the basis of achievements of the modern civilization, must answer the question: what position does science present as far as God's existence is concerned?

In this place, statements of the world-famous independent scientists, such as Philip G. Zimbardo and Floyd L. Ruch can be quoted: 'With regard to theological or metaphysical »reality«, science holds the agnostic position – it

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<sup>28</sup> T. Gerstenkorn, T. Śródka, *Kombinatoryka i rachunek prawdopodobieństwa*, PWN, Warszawa 1983, wyd. VII, s. 78-79.

simply has no knowledge on this subject<sup>29</sup>. Some philosophers interpret the silence of science in favor of atheism, whereas from the methodological standpoint, silence means the complete suspension of the judgement and opting for none of the sides. In this sense, Dawkins' comments are not based on evidence acquired by the scientific research, and the book *The God Delusion*, derives from alternative sources of knowledge while dealing with the issue of God's existence.

The position of the believers tends to be presented fairly differently. From this perspective, it is widely acknowledged that the particular philosopher could not be able to resolve the issue of God's existence on the grounds of the scientific discipline that he represents. However, the historicity of the life of Jesus Christ becomes the starting point in Christianity as opposed to the scientific heritage of man.

### **'The atheistic constant'**

'An atheist in this sense of philosophical naturalist is somebody who believes there is nothing beyond the natural, physical world, no supernatural creative intelligence lurking behind the observable universe, no soul that outlasts the body and no miracles – except in the sense of natural phenomena that we don't yet understand. If there is something that appears to lie beyond the natural world as it is now im-

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<sup>29</sup> Philip G. Zimbardo, Floyd L. Ruch, *Psychologia i życie*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, wyd. III, Warszawa 1996, s. 19.

perfectly understood, we hope eventually to understand it and embrace it within the natural<sup>30</sup>.

This is the argument constantly occurring in the atheistic considerations and was also cited by Dawkins. It seems to have, however, solely rhetorical dimension. If someone looks deeper into this reasoning, he will notice that it can be used as the justification of all absurd cognitive structures. Dawkins, accusing anyone of the inconsistency, has to deal with the analogous response: 'I am convinced that there is no contradiction in the presented argument. If you encounter reasoning that seems contradictory, in its far imperfect comprehension, you may hope that one day, with the development of science and research, it will turn out that this very reasoning is actually completely correct'. Therefore, each Dawkins' accusation, in which he indicates on someone's contradiction, can be answered with his own reasoning<sup>31</sup>.

## Logic, God and evolution

The first question that you should ask yourself, if you desire to investigate the issue of God's existence, is: Are the concepts of evolution and God mutually contradictory, or can they maybe coexist? The reasoning of the person who derives his atheism from evolution could be presented in the following manner:

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<sup>30</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 35.

<sup>31</sup> The word 'believes', that is used by Dawkins, is worthy of attention, because everyone has some beliefs, yet as we all know, the above does not determine their authenticity.

Since the believers claim that there is God and God is the creator of the universe, and according to atheists, it is true that there is no God and God is not the creator of the universe because evolution took place – then, the conclusion is as follows: there is no God. The reasoning conducted in such a way is wrong in two points:

- first:* the fact that God did not create the universe, does not mean that God does not exist;
- second:* the fact that evolution took place does not mean that God did not create the universe.

The first reasoning can be supported by the counterexample. Someone claims: ‘Napoleon existed’ (that is ‘God exists’) and ‘Napoleon wrote the book *The God Delusion*’ (that is ‘God created the universe’). However, the truth is that Napoleon did not write the book *The God Delusion* (that is ‘God did not create the universe’). Therefore, Napoleon did not exist (that is ‘God does not exist’). The conclusions, drawn in such a way, are incorrect. There is no logical link between the act of creation and the existence of God that would allow the above findings.

The second reasoning requires several of the following interpretations. Since evolution seems to be ‘slowly increasing complexity’<sup>32</sup>, then, in order to avoid conflict between evolution and the act of creation it should be asserted that the creation was connected with the formation of the first structure of life endowed with the enormous potential for development. Everything that happened after that was merely the result of this action. This counterexample was expressed by Darwin: ‘Noble, indeed, is the idea that the Crea-

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<sup>32</sup> Ibidem, p. 139.

tor breathed several, or just one life form and when our planet, that is subject to the strict laws of gravity, was rotating, then an infinite number of the most beautiful and most admirable forms managed to develop and is still developing<sup>33</sup>.

Thus, there is no contradiction between the recognition of God as the creator and the appreciation of evolution. The different counterexample may be provided. The creator could only be the First Mover during the Big Bang and everything that we can observe nowadays is just the consequence of his work. Eventually, he could only give the rights that would allow the development of life. It appears that evolution does not signify the lack of creation. Therefore, the speech by John Paul II to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in 1996, in which, quoting his predecessor, he stated: 'there is no conflict between evolution and the doctrine of faith about man and his vocation, provided that some indisputable truths would not be lost', is logically correct and completely consistent with the present science. The Oxford professor of history and theology, Alister McGrath, and Joanna Collicutt McGrath, express the similar view in the polemic book against Dawkins' theses: 'The God Delusion?: Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine' (endorsing the conclusions of the Oxford professor, the propagator of evolutionism, Stephen Jay Gould), maintaining that 'nature can be interpreted in a theistic or in an atheistic way — but it demands neither

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<sup>33</sup> Karol Darwin, *O powstawaniu gatunków...*, s. 515. The intention of this statement is undermined in another Dawkins' work. Regardless of any argument, the sentence presented by Dawkins may be true, therefore, it is a counter-example that evolution does not lead to atheism.

of these<sup>34</sup>. Dawkins describes evolution on many pages of his book and, by such an abundance of content, he intends to suggest that there is the contradiction between religion and evolution. It should be declared, nevertheless, that such a conflict does not exist.

### The unproven statements

The biological evolution is the key to Dawkins' atheism. At the beginning of his deliberations, he stated: "This book will advocate a [...] view: any creative intelligence, of sufficient complexity to design anything, comes into existence only as the end product of an extended process of gradual evolution"<sup>35</sup>.

Referring to the book *The God Delusion* (including in particular chapter 4 – Why there almost certainly is no God), it should be stated that a 'defence' proclaimed by the Oxford professor was unsuccessful because, in the content of his work, Dawkins did not present the analysis confirming that 'any creative intelligence... can arise exclusively as a product... of gradual evolution'. So he did not prove that evolution is the only way that allows the creation of such 'intelligence', including God.

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<sup>34</sup> Alister McGrath, Joanna Collicutt McGrath, *The Dawkins Delusion?: Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine*, InterVarsity Press, Canada, 2007, p. 34.

<sup>35</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 52. The meaning of the sentence was given.



In the next sentence, the author said: 'Creative intelligences, being evolved, necessarily arrive late in the universe, and therefore cannot be responsible for designing it'<sup>36</sup>.

It is tacitly assumed in the above statement that before the creation of the universe there was no other reality. However, such an argument requires a proof, which is missing in the analysis of a scholar. It should be remembered that in religion (e.g. Christianity) the transcendence rather than immanence of God towards the universe is assumed. Therefore, 'creative intelligences, being evolved' do not have to 'arrive late in the universe'.

Richard Dawkins, in his other works, did not prove the abovestated theses as well. The introduction to the Polish edition of his book *The Blind Watchmaker* is the perfect illustration of this assumption, namely, how evolution proves that the world was not planned, wrote by Anthony Hoffman (1950–1992), one of the Polish greatest paleontologists and evolutionists. It reads: 'I am content with the Polish edition of *The Blind Watchmaker* as I almost completely agree with this book and such consensus of views is not frequent among the contemporary evolutionists. In the last paragraph, however, I highlight the word almost. The main thesis of *The Blind Watchmaker* is indeed that neo-Darwinian paradigm of evolution explains the whole diversity and all properties of living beings, and so, there is no need to believe in their Creator. And I cannot agree with this Dawkins' conclusion. The fact that the concept of evolution can explain the existence of organisms and species signifies only that it is not necessary to refer to the actions of their intelligent Creator in order to justi-

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<sup>36</sup> Ibidem, p. 52.

fy their presence. Nevertheless, it cannot be unquestionably concluded – as it Dawkins does – that evolution actually provides such an explanation<sup>37</sup>.

It is difficult not to agree with the above opinion of Hoffman, who alerts to the mistake of atheisation of evolution.

### About the complexity and improbability of God

‘Any God capable of designing a universe, carefully and foresightfully tuned to lead to our evolution, must be a supremely complex and improbable entity who needs an even bigger explanation than the one he is supposed to provide’<sup>38</sup>.

Dawkins frequently repeats the above argument in the different configuration, drawing the atheistic conclusion on God from it. However, it should be realized that the improbability of the existence of the particular object (it must be added that Dawkins determines the improbability of God’s existence purely intuitively), does not signify the lack of its existence. Furthermore, this observation is, in fact, the theistic argument because it helps to understand why God is such a challenging and elusive object of the investigation for the scientists.

To prove Dawkins’ atheistic theses, considerably stronger and more relevant arguments are required.

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<sup>37</sup> Richard Dawkins, *Ślepy zegarmistrz, czyli, jak ewolucja dowodzi, że świat nie został zaplanowany*, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, przełożył i wstępem opatrzył Antoni Hoffman, wyd. I, Warszawa 1994, s. 9.

<sup>38</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 176.

## Who designed the Designer?

The author of *The God Delusion* is seeking different arguments formulating the question: 'who designed the designer?'<sup>39</sup>. It can be answered: 'it is unknown how God was created' – and it does not reduce the correctness of religious beliefs in any way. God may be subject to laws that have not been discovered by humanity yet and will not be explored for a long time, as they stand far beyond its cognitive borders. Many questions cannot be answered and such situation is totally acceptable.

Dawkins continues: 'We started from the fact that we wanted to explain the improbable, therefore, it is obvious that we cannot offer the solution, which seems even more improbable'.

In this paragraph the author accepted the correctness of argumentation based on 'obviousness'. It should be stated that the above assertion is not 'obvious' and the content of the Oxford professor's views is not supported by any evidence demonstrating that the improbable structures cannot be explained by even more improbable phenomena. Thus, it is noticeable that the principles of the proper chain of command are severely violated in the presented case.

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 188.

## **The Book of Genesis, the Gospels and the creation, other dimensions**

We can agree with the part of the interpreters of the Old Testament that the story of creation should be read metaphorically. The Book of Genesis as well as other books acquire symbolic, historic or didactic character in many places and, hence, their content needs to be understood in such spirit. Gospels, especially the words of Christ himself, constitute the basis of the Christian perception of God. There are no statements made by Jesus concerning the creation of the world, with the exception of some special and very general ones. In His teachings, however, He referred to life after death and the other world, where His kingdom is. He also warned that there is life full of gloom and anxiety in this other world. Summing up teachings of Christ, it can be concluded that He preached that besides 'dimensions' within which a human exists, there are also other dimensions, in which life has evolved and which would justify our earthly existence.

### **The claim of Porphyry of Tyre**

What does the word 'saved' signify? Does it refer to the person who will live with Jesus despite his physical death? Is there any other world beyond our, where could be life? This question relates to the life issues in different dimensions. Since we exist in three of them (spatial), then why intelligent creatures could not live in the higher ones?

In the third century, Porphyry of Tyre, set the complaint to Christians, saying: 'these words uttered by Jesus are frightening: »Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out«. [...] If you claim that there is another world somewhere, where the aforementioned ruler will be thrown out, then present the source of such an assertion. However, if there is no other world – and the existence of two worlds is impossible – in that case, where this ruler could be expelled?<sup>40</sup>.

Porphyry criticizes Jesus for teaching about the existence of other worlds. The above issue becomes incredibly fascinating when you look at it from the perspective of contemporary science that examines the properties of different dimensions. It appears that these theories have the interesting justification, which mathematical model was presented in the nineteenth century by the scientist Bernhard Riemann. Albert Einstein used his achievements while working on the theory of relativity. The reality that surrounds us is becoming easier to understand, the deeper we comprehend the nature of the multidimensional space. Analyzing its properties, scientists came to the surprising discovery, namely, the creature from the higher dimension would be able to perform extraordinary activities in our world. Penetrating through the walls, traversing the huge distances in the fraction of a second, operating with no surgical tools – these are only a few skills of the multidimensional being<sup>41</sup>. Therefore, the structure of our reality seems weird. Accordingly, it appears

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<sup>40</sup> Porfiriusz z Tyru, *Przeciw chrześcijanom*, tłum. P. Ashwin-Siejkowski, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków 2006 (ks. II 26 1 i 3), s. 73.

<sup>41</sup> Michio Kaku, *Hiperprzestrzeń. Naukowa podróż przez wszechświaty równoległe, pętle czasowe i dziesiąty wymiar*, tłum. E. Łokas, B. Biernok, Prószyński i S-ka, Warszawa 1996, s. 73-74.

that the unusual actions performed by Christ gain scientific acceptance provided that they are done by the person 'from the different dimension'. In this context, evangelical testimonies acquire the completely new meaning.

The existence of the higher dimensions may be confirmed by people who had survived the so-called clinical death. They claim to have seen the tunnel. Was it this 'wormhole' to a higher dimension?<sup>42</sup>

## Conclusion

The surrounding reality is characterized by the great complexity and the phenomena and laws that occur in it are frequently extremely difficult for the unambiguous scientific validation. Dawkins's arguments not only do not give the right to negate the concept of God, but most importantly, they are scientifically unjustified and they lack the elementary consistency.

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<sup>42</sup> R. Moody, *Życie po życiu*, Limbus, tłum. I. Doleżał-Nowicka, Bydgoszcz 1992 s. 35. The examples of testimonies delivered by people who survived the clinical death: 'I stopped breathing. First, I found myself in the black void [...] it could be perhaps compared to a tunnel [...]'. p. 29: 'all words I know are three-dimensional. «[...] I was taught on the geometry lessons that there are only three dimensions [...] but my teachers were wrong. There exist more dimensions»'.

## CHAPTER 2

### IS CONSISTENT ATHEISM THE SOURCE OF EVIL?

The previous considerations concerned the scientific issues. Dawkins, justifying his worldview, presented the arguments, which became the subject of the preliminary analysis, considering their logical correctness as well as the reliability of the research method, which he adopted.

The God Delusion also deals with other problems that are fundamental to the system of values of many people. In the section of his book, titled 'The dark side of absolutism, Dawkins criticized the philosophy of absolutism, which he mainly associates with religious beliefs: 'It has to be admitted that absolutism is far from dead. [...] it rules the minds of a great number of people in the world today [...]. Such absolutism nearly always results from strong religious faith, and it constitutes a major reason for suggesting that religion can be a force for evil in the world'<sup>43</sup>.

Dawkins claims that religion, by its fusion with moral absolutism, is at the service of evil. Yet, is it true? Or maybe the opposite – consistent atheism, through its link with moral Darwinism, relativism and nihilism, aims to the pathological, amoral system that is deprived of any rule?

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<sup>43</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 324.

Either of the sides of the argument maintain that there is a 'struggle for existence' in nature, in which the stronger wins. The element of Darwinism understood in such a way is accepted by both parties. However, his interpretations are completely dissimilar and lead to the extremely different attitudes.

### **Moral Darwinism**

To begin with, the concept of moral Darwinism, understood as the attitude of man guided by the cruel principles of the 'struggle for existence', regardless of the moral consequences of his behavior, should be taken into consideration. The reasoning of such a person is as follows:

'The laws of nature' are brutal and cruel. However, these laws are incorporated in the nature of the world and, therefore, the nature of a human being, who is just the element of the universe. The strongest has the right to live, the weaker dies. There is no such a concept as morality or compassion. The value of particular deeds is estimated on the basis of their effects. Thus, only the person who, thanks to his intelligence and strength, is able to survive, behaves properly. The standard «end justifies the means» sets the guideline of conduct'.

### **Consistent atheism vs. moral Darwinism**

Considering the fact that the unbelievers justify their existence by the laws described by Darwin, it should be conc-



luded that consistent atheism tends towards moral Darwinism. There is only the material world for the consistent atheist and life, that is the fact, derives its cause from the spontaneous generation, which shaped the species existing today, through the process of natural selection. The consistent atheist, whose beliefs, as he claims, originate in science, presents the following reasoning:

‘It is assumed that everything appeared as the result of the Big Bang, which initiated the existence of the universe, known in its present form. The natural forces have shaped the galaxies and stellar systems. The solar system also has its place among many others. Planets revolve around the sun and they are also the result of purely physical interactions, the blind laws. After a very long period, on one of these planets, the Earth, the first signs of life appeared, and began to evolve. However, the birth of life was not smooth. So, in order to survive, a single individual had to defeat his competitors through the violent »struggle for existence«. Thanks to this fight, the stronger and better adapted individuals were promoted, whereas, the weaker ones were killed. These »better ones«, when begetting the progeny, passed on the »perfect« properties of their organism, and, thereby, the development took place. A human being emerged only at the end of evolution. He is the animal that has evolved from other animals and, just due to the violent fight, became able to survive. Therefore, this law is incorporated in the nature of the world and it is the scientific law. The atheist, being the scientist, knows that moral Darwinism is merely the consequence of the investigated findings. Thus, using the methods of moral Darwinism becomes acceptable. There is no other life than

the purely material one. There is no God and no life after death. Emptiness<sup>44</sup> is the real meaning of life and every action is assessed through the prism of its effect’.

In the presented concept, the reception of moral Darwinism as the philosophy of life constitutes the integral part of consistent atheism. The attitudes of the members of the communist and the National Socialist systems, domineering in the twentieth century, represent the empirical fundament of the postulated observations.

### **The apogee of morality of consistent atheism**

Dawkins puts aside the essence of Darwinism, that is the absolute ‘struggle for existence’, which completely prevents the derivation of morality from Darwinism, and in the chapter entitled Does our sense of morality have a Darwinian roots, he focuses on four issues, from which he attempts to derive the ‘Darwinian roots’ of ethics. It seems that these four examples are already the peak of the moral aspirations of Darwinism, however, in reality, each of them is burdened with the stigma of amorality<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibidem, p. 403.

<sup>45</sup> Dawkins presents his ideology in a very unclear manner, which makes it difficult to interpret the system of values propagated by him. On the one hand, he describes his chapter (pp. 245-254) as relating to ‘Darwinian origin’ of ‘our moral sense’, that is our human value system, yet, on the other hand, he enumerates ‘four good Darwinian reasons’, which do not constitute the aforementioned ‘moral sense’, but the egoistic animal amorality. Next, he presents his reasoning as such that seems to refer only to our ancient ancestors, and finally, he concludes that this ‘rule of thumb’ still ‘persists’ valid (p. 253).

'We now have four good Darwinian reasons for individuals to be altruistic, generous or 'moral' towards each other. First, there is the special case of genetic kinship. Second, there is reciprocation: the repayment of favours given, and the giving of favours in 'anticipation' of payback. Following on from this there is, third, the darwinian benefit of acquiring a reputation for generosity and kindness. And fourth, if Zahavi is right, there is the particular additional benefit of conspicuous generosity as a way of buying unfakeably authentic advertising'<sup>46</sup>.

In this division it is visible that the objective values do not exist for the Darwinian, but only his own interest. The moral Darwinian must be paid for every generous deed. Anyone who receives anything good from the unknown Darwinian 'for free', must realize that he is obliged to return the favor, if only it turns out that the benefactor has not acquired the desired reputation or promotion. Dawkins, deriving his morality from the animal world, simultaneously stood in opposition to the teachings of Jesus, according to whom, all four Dawkins' postulates, concerning moral behavior, forge nobility and are devoid of the deep values. It should be taken into consideration that, at the same time, the author states in another part of his book that he values teachings of this philosopher, saying: 'Jesus' ethical teachings were admirable', and 'It was not for

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Bearing in mind problems with interpretation of Dawkins' ethical views (not only in *The God Delusion*, but also in other works written by this author), it was assumed that the focus will be on 'four good Darwinian reasons' for moral behavior perceived as the source of the contemporary human moral behavior.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 251.

nothing that I wrote an article called ‘Atheists for Jesus’<sup>47</sup>, while, the fact is that he stands in opposition to it.

Dawkins proclaims four Darwinian reasons to make ‘morality’ domineer in relations between people. The first is kinship. For this author, altruism is the kind of morality due to the kinship, while for Jesus such an attitude is only the semblance of the true nobility. He teaches: ‘For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?’<sup>48</sup>.

It appears that Jesus understands these issues diametrically differently than Dawkins. Namely, love, for people who are not connected by any form of kinship or friendship, seems to be the essence of true morality.

Another Darwinian reason why you should be ‘moral’ is reciprocation. Darwin again stands in opposition to Jesus’ ethics. Jesus, as we read, taught: ‘When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you’<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, por. pp. 283-284. It should be highlighted that Dawkins does not accept Jesus’ teachings on family.

<sup>48</sup> Mt 5, 46. *Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu – w przekładzie z języków oryginalnych ze wstępami i komentarzami*, oprac. zespół pod red. ks. M. Petera i ks. M. Wolniewicza, Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, Poznań 1975, t. III.

<sup>49</sup> Luke 14, 12.

This passage cannot be interpreted as if Jesus did not approve of celebrating dinner with friends. In this teaching He only wishes to highlight the moral grounds while preparing the symbolic feast. According to Jesus, the one who does the good deed, in order to obtain reciprocation, acts morally imperfect. However, Dawkins considers such a form of morality as correct.

The third and fourth premises of Dawkins' derivation of moralism from Darwinism are the acquisition of the good reputation and promotion. In other words, doing the right things to get the positive perception in the society. Nevertheless, this attitude, propagated by Dawkins, is nothing more but Pharisaic hypocrisy. Christ proclaims: 'Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them [...]. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. [...] But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret'<sup>50</sup>.

The Pharasaic attitude is based on the deep impelementation of moral Darwinism in life. Any pharisaic, seemingly honest behaviors, have the subtext of selfish interests. Therefore, although evolutionism does not contradict Christianity, its Darwinian interpretations of morality, however, are in the complete opposition to it. It should be clearly stated that Darwinian altruism used in the world of humans is the vileness combined with hypocrisy. All such systems are devoid of true values, and eventually, they result in crimes.

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<sup>50</sup> Mt 6, 1-4.

From the Christian standpoint, Jesus totally reversed the world of Darwinian values. He promotes the principles of mercy, justice, friendship, sacrifice, selflessness. It appears that the closer we are to Jesus' teachings, the further we get from moral Darwinism. The world of moral values is the exact reversal of Darwinist purely selfish interests.

One more Dawkins' statement should be taken into consideration: 'Indeed Jesus, if he existed [...] was surely one of the great ethical innovators of history'<sup>51</sup>. – How is it possible that Dawkins, being in the direct opposition to Jesus' beliefs, at the same time respects His universal, ethical authority?

### **Absolutism vs. the opposing views**

Plato noticed the significant division of the world of the presented values about two and a half thousand years ago and expressed it, inter alia, in the work *Gorgias*. Socrates was the absolutist recognizing objectively the highest values that should guide a man in his life. However, Polus and Callicles, as the relativists-nihilists, claim that objective values do not exist and you can behave in any given way. The dispute that arose initially concerned the rhetoric and whose interests it should serve - the interests of the citizens or the ruling group. The absolutist view of Socrates, mocked and ridiculed, preached that politicians should serve the state and the citizens. Nevertheless, the relativists clearly declared that the rethoric is just the tool to fulfill personal objectives. When possible, they seek power – preferably the

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<sup>51</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 283.

tyranny so that they could 'let go of the reins of their lusts', whenever they want, and so they could rob and kill whoever they want with impunity. Polus admires the dictatorial power of Archelaos. Socrates, in turn, refers to this Macedonian despot as the wretch because he is unfair. Polus tells the story of this ruler:

*Polus:* 'That he is wicked I cannot deny; for he had no title at all to the throne which he now occupies [...] he himself therefore in strict right was the slave of Alceatas [...] under the pretence that he would restore to him the throne [...] after entertaining him and his son [...] and making them drunk [...] he carried them off by night, and slew them, and got both of them out of the way [...] then a younger brother, a child of seven years old [...] and to him of right the kingdom belonged [...] he threw him into a well and drowned him [...]. And I dare say that there are many Athenians, and you would be at the head of them, who would rather be any other Macedonian than Archelaus!'<sup>52</sup>

Polus, as the prominent orator, used his skills inflicting harm on the public interest in order to get personal benefits. Socrates condemned such a behavior claiming that deceitful people are the wretches. Then, Polus expressed the view that the happiest and the best is not the person who is honest, but the one who is successful. Archelaus is the perfect example of the attitude of the relativist and moral Darwinist, preferred by Polus. Polus states that the king Archelaus is the happy person and he himself, if possible, could take his place despite the fact that he has been guilty of criminal acts

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<sup>52</sup> Plato, *Gorgias*, XXVI 471, trans. B. Jowett, pp. 87-88.

in order to achieve power. Polus accepts crimes provided that they bring personal benefits in effect. Socrates stands in opposition to this attitude. He recognizes justice as the highest and unchanging value – he does not accept Archelaus' behavior and does not desire his power.

Statements of another moral Darwinist, Callicles, even more precisely set the boundaries between absolutism and relativism:

*Callicles:* What do you mean by his ruling over himself?

*Socrates:* [...] that a man should be temperate and master of himself, and ruler of his own pleasures and passions [...].

*Callicles:* Quite so, Socrates; and they are really fools, for how can a man be happy who is the servant of anything? Nay, Socrates, for you profess to be a votary of the truth, and the truth is this: that luxury and intemperance and licence, if they be provided with means, are virtue and happiness – all the rest is a mere bauble, agreements contrary to nature, foolish talk of men, nothing worth.

*Socrates:* [...]for what you say is what the rest of the world think, but do not like to say<sup>53</sup>.

The quoted statement shows that the attitude of the Greek Sophists was criminal, but as Callicles proclaims - compatible with nature. So, may the fate of Socrates and his tragic death be surprising, since some of his judges undoubtedly shared such beliefs? We can agree with Callicles that the attitude of justice is against the laws of nature, because the 'struggle for existence' is brutal and does not ac-

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<sup>53</sup> Ibidem, XLVI 492, pp. 111-112.



cept such a possibility. Socrates, however, recognizes in man something more than just the animal instinct and demands the implementation of the rule of law in life. For Polus and Callicles, there are no objective values that should be respected but they estimate every act through the prism of the effect, which should be personally beneficial. By the same token, they reveal their moral relativism. It is also worth mentioning that Socrates appreciates Callicles' honesty because 'for what he said is what the rest of the world think, but do not like to say'. In the presented conversation, Socrates provoked Callicles to say that, but as for the tactics, such a statement is not favorable, therefore, the Darwinist frequently claims that he sticks to the principles of the independent ethics and the law.

Indeed, moral Darwinism had to be extremely influential and generate huge desolation since the teaching of Christ, contrary to this pathological attitude, was widely accepted with the great enthusiasm. Let us compare the words of Callicles and Christ, so that everyone himself can estimate which are closer to him:

'You have heard that it was said: »An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth«. But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also'. 'Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you'. 'And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away'. 'Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me'<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>54</sup> Mt 5, 38; 5, 42; 5, 30. Mk 9, 37.

## **Atheistic moral Darwinism vs. Christian morality in practice**

Similarly, like absolutism is close to Christians, just so relativism, nihilism and moral Darwinism are close to consistent atheists. And as the first calls for brotherly love, so the second proclaims concern for egoistic objectives. Atheism, in its consistent form, through its system of values - or rather the lack of it, is the worst of the existing systems of morality, because it allows the possibility of doing everything.

The dispute between moral Darwinism and Christian moralism was visualized in the approach to the issues of life and death. Completely different reasons and completely different effects of these beliefs confirm previously mentioned theses<sup>55</sup>. Dawkins supports both, abortion and euthanasia, however, not his attitude itself is surprising, because such a view constitutes the natural consequence of his system of values. It is the justification, appearing internally inconsistent, that is surprising.

### **Abortion**

As for abortion, Dawkins said: 'The evolutionary point is very simple. The humanness of an embryo's cells cannot confer upon it any absolutely discontinuous moral status. It cannot, because of our evolutionary continuity with chimpanzees and, more distantly, with every species on the pla-

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<sup>55</sup> Abortion and euthanasia are only the empirical examples and evidence that the ideology of moral Darwinism aims at reducing life. It should be noted that the Christian philosophy aims at protecting life.

net. To see this, imagine that an intermediate species, say *Australopithecus afarensis*, had chanced to survive and was discovered in a remote part of Africa. Would this creature 'count as human' or not?<sup>56</sup>

It appears that, for Dawkins, there is no fundamental notion that was not previously derived from evolutionism. The person with moral aspiration must totally reject the whole command presented by Dawkins. What connection with our ancient ancestor gives the right to kill currently living human being through abortion? Dawkins, writing about the evolutionist point of view, referred to the issues, which are not connected with the content of the discussed problem, because abortion is performed on a human being and not on his unspecified ancestor. It is true that the transitional species would be debatable as to its specific, moral status; however, homo sapiens species are not so controversial. We know that the embryo of homo sapiens – is homo sapiens, and not *Australopithecus afarensis*. To explain this idea more precisely, we can use the simplest example. If someone bought the piano with no keys and strings, would he still buy the piano? Here, the issue would be debatable. However, if someone bought the piano with all its elements, would he buy the piano? Here the answer is obvious – he bought the piano. Therefore, Dawkins' reasoning is wrong at this point. Abortion certainly concerns a human being and not his ancestor that is not fully evolved and we have no moral dilemma whom the author mentions.

Absurdity of the quoted statement can be demonstrated in another way. Maintaining the sense of the thought in the

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<sup>56</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 340.

sentence, the words, ‘embryo’s cells’, should be replaced by ‘Dawkins’ cells’<sup>57</sup>, and as a result we get: “The evolutionary point is very simple. The humanness of Dawkins’ cells cannot confer upon it any absolutely discontinuous moral status. It cannot, because of our evolutionary continuity with chimpanzees...?”

We should ask Dawkins: if he does not derive his own humanity from evolution, is there anything else that he derives it from? Where does he stem from, if he does not make God, absolute values and evolution responsible for his existence? Dawkins’ beliefs indicate on his moral nihilism.

But it was the Darwinian interpretation of evolutionism. This statement, however, can be reversed and gain the completely different meaning: ‘The absolutely special moral status of homo sapiens and its embryo (as well as Dawkins’ cells) is derived from evolution’. This belief, contrary to the previous one, has the logical and scientific justification. Thus, a human being, and hence his descendants, are at the top of the hierarchy of evolution and they are the only entities able to think, self-awareness and morality – and these count on their absolute uniqueness.

Nevertheless, Dawkins does not stop there, and continues:

‘A consequentialist or utilitarian is likely to approach the abortion question in a very different way, by trying to weigh up suffering. Does the embryo suffer? (Presumably not if it is aborted before it has a nervous system; and even if it is old enough to have a nervous system it surely suffers less than, say, an adult cow in a slaughterhouse). Does the pregnant woman, or her family, suffer if she does not have an

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<sup>57</sup> Incidentally, Richard Dawkins was an embryo’s cell in his ontogenesis.

abortion? Very possibly so; and, in any case, given that the embryo lacks a nervous system, shouldn't the mother's well-developed nervous system have the choice?<sup>58</sup>

As claimed by the abortionists, such as Dawkins, an embryo can be killed because it does not suffer, and it does not suffer cause it lacks the nervous system. Let us say then that nasciturus has the nervous system. However, it does not signify that it must suffer. If it does not suffer, then, according to this reasoning, even the one that has the shaped nervous system can be killed. Let us imagine that nine-month old nasciturus loses consciousness in the accident. In this situation killing him is acceptable for the consequentialist. Dawkins allows also the possibility of murdering the adult human, provided that you apply 'humane' conditions of killing. Since the lack of suffering justifies the murder, we can imagine the adult lonely person who was the burden for others (just like an embryo for his mother). According to the aforementioned standpoint, painless killing of such a person becomes acceptable. Moreover, the text quoted by Dawkins indicates that he would accept the abortion even if an embryo suffered. Thus, where does the author of *The God Delusion* mark the border of suffering? It appears that he dangerously expands his own point of view on this extremely significant issue – namely, he accepts pain of an embryo, saying, that it suffers less than an adult cow in a slaughterhouse.

The human embryo disappeared from the surface of the earth, it was destroyed, deprived of its existence and, for

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<sup>58</sup> Ibidem, p. 331.

Dawkins, this situation is totally acceptable - as long as it did not suffer at all or just a little.

Reducing all statements to just a few phrases, the issue of abortion should be presented as follows: in Y there is his descendant X – a human embryo is the obstacle because you would have to take care of him, feed him, work, earn money, walk him to school – Y does not want that, Y wishes to have peace so he must get rid of his descendant when it is still small and vulnerable. He justifies his murder by claiming that you can kill a human being because it does not suffer. Since you can kill a human who does not suffer, then you can also kill an embryo. So, he performs this act. The real intention of abortion is to avoid responsibility, effort and sacrifice. The justification acquires any argument and can be absurd just as Dawkins' beliefs, however, as it turns out, it is not the reason to reject it.

Logically speaking: the fact that X does not suffer does not signify that it can be killed. Additionally, the fact that Y suffers does not mean that not suffering X can be killed. Therefore, depriving someone of life cannot arise from the incorrect reasoning.

## **Euthanasia**

Dawkins' consequentialism is the belief that allows killing everyone. Each and every human being, indeed, either suffers or not; when he suffers – you can murder him, so that he no longer feels pain, and when he does not suffer – then you can kill him, because he does not suffer. Thus, if we have a sick

man – you can kill him because he suffers<sup>59</sup>; and if we have an embryo – you can kill it because it does not suffer.

Dawkins quotes the following argument to support his views: 'Being dead will be no different from being unborn'<sup>60</sup>. He claims that his attitude to euthanasia, to some extent, stems as a consequence<sup>61</sup> from the above reasoning. Therefore, Dawkins' opinion should be specified as follows: 'Since I have not existed and since I won't exist and I will be the same as what I used to be – nothing (loose particles), then the acceleration of death is acceptable<sup>62</sup>. It is the fully defected reasoning because the acceleration of death, justified so, is simply the murder. Can the murderer state that he only brings the person back to the state in which he was before the birth? Yes – he does, however, this act is called the murder. Therefore, if there was a crime and the accused while defending himself said: I did not do anything wrong, what do you want from me? (– What do you mean anything wrong? You murdered a human!) But I did not kill him, I just brought him back to the state in which he was before the birth! Why won't you hold liable other people, who permitted that this person had been in the same state, to which I brought him from the beginning of the world, until the moment of his birth?' – everyone would consider him as the man of bestial

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<sup>59</sup> These deliberations focus on euthanasia on demand of a suffering person. However, this problem is much broader – T. Pietrzykowski, *Etyczne problemy prawa. Zarys wykładu*, Naukowa Oficyna Wydawnicza, Katowice 2005, wyd. I, rozdz. 5.

<sup>60</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 399.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 399.

<sup>62</sup> It is not a quotation from *The God Delusion*, but the essence of the reasoning therein contained.

views. Dawkins himself would presumably sentence this murdered to prison, despite the fact that they express similar beliefs. Nothingness precedes the birth of a human being and the death precedes life, and the gap between these two states is tremendous.

This view can be illustrated a bit differently. Thus, the particles which have built us, would scatter after the death and our being, held in matter, would no longer exist – they would once again be in the state similar to the one, in which they had been before our birth. It is undoubtedly true. However, these particles, although scattered, would not be the same particles as they were before the human birth, namely, organized in the specific form and influencing human life. Therefore, even though Paul's particles were scattered and, from this perspective, he could be indifferent about it, Justine, in turn, does not have to be so indifferent because she can see something special in Paul. The above nuance is reduced to the following division: euthanasia performed on a human being is nothing more than the change of his state to the one preceding his life, and it is the proper and morally acceptable action – atheistic Darwinism; human euthanasia is the annihilation of a particularly significant being and is morally unacceptable – Christian moralism.

Therefore, when the suffering mother of the atheist-Darwinist asks for help – he obviously can offer her death, explaining, that her particles would merely change their physical state. A Christian, in turn, would never think this way. But does it mean that he disregards suffering?



Absolutely! He is completely against it. He demands deciding steps to make the progress in science, in the field of palliative medicine and making it available for human achievements. In case of suffering that cannot be relieved, he becomes helpless, because every action that he takes would affect morality: either principles of mercy in the face of suffering, or principles of love in the face of life.

Essentially, the entire dispute between Christians and moral Darwinists boils down to the fact that eventually, Christians accept the primacy of love over suffering, whereas consequentialists, such as Dawkins, recognize the supremacy of suffering over love. For the former group, 'love conquers death', while for the latter, 'death conquers love'.

Additionally, Dawkins strongly supported the morally questionable side, stating: 'But, it might be said, isn't there an important difference between having your appendix removed and having your life removed? Not really; not if you are about to die anyway'<sup>63</sup>. Dawkins doesn't notice the contrast between the surgery and simply killing someone ('if you are about to die anyway'), which causes the strong objection among people who differentiate these acts. He carelessly responded to the issues of life and death, which requires the serious consideration, if this man promotes the well established and properly shaped value system.

And what does the word 'soon' mean? How to define it? Can 'soon' denote the period of one year? Five years? Ten? Twenty? Or maybe depriving someone of life is just depriving him of something objectively unimportant because he would die 'soon', anyway? What is seventy years to the

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<sup>63</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 400.

billions? Undoubtedly something shorter than 'soon'. Thus, Dawkins presumably did not refer the word 'soon' to the 'objective' time, but to the subjectively comprehended life. If someone was ninety, and he suffered from the incurable disease, killing him would be acceptable since it would take him away 'just' several months of life, after which, the natural death would happen. We can assume that this man would lose one year of his existence on Earth, which would constitute  $1/90$  of his entire life. Is it this 'soon' death?! And Dawkins' philosophical position, which is not adequate to reality, is based on such extreme cases. Another situation illustrates the gap of the reasoning presented by Dawkins. For instance, the fifty-year old person is suffering and his natural death would come after five years. Therefore, this 'soon' would relate to  $1/10$  of his life, which absolutely cannot be considered as the short and insignificant period of time. And what would we say if this person lived for ten more years? Isn't  $1/5$  of life its huge part?

If the aliens arrived on our planet and their life expectancy would be one million, and they decided to have mercy on people and kill everyone in humane conditions, because 'each person would die soon anyway' – we would have the grounds to accuse them of the moral crime. From their perspective, killing a newborn baby would be killing someone, who would die soon anyway, and if this view was valid in the objective system of values, aliens would find the justification. If Dawkins was the president of Earth, he could lack arguments to save humanity. Therefore, it is not difficult to notice that the death that is about to come does not reduce our right to live.

We can reflect on the above problems in a different context. Dawkins claims that deprivation of life of a human being, through euthanasia, is acceptable for two reasons: suffering and the upcoming 'soon' death. These are two fundamental arguments, which justify the performance of euthanasia. Does it signify that Dawkins' ideology will not destroy a man who does not suffer and has the whole life ahead? As it turns out – not. It also kills such people – and calls it abortion.

Every person has problems and they are frequently extremely serious and complicated. However, a moral being does not want to destroy them through the physical elimination of the members of the human community. A moral being wishes to solve problems of individuals so as not to force them to self-destruction. If Dawkins, as he says, respects Christ and regards Him as one of the great ethical innovators of history<sup>64</sup>, then he should answer the questions: Would Jesus perform abortion? Would Jesus perform euthanasia?

### **The moral Darwinist and the Christian, can you be both at the same time?**

Philosophies of moral Darwinism and Christianity are standing in contradiction. The logic shows that it is impossible to accept the opposing views at the same time, so it is not possible to simultaneously adhere to the values preached by Christ, and the cruel laws of moral Darwinism.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibidem, p. 283.

Nevertheless, sometimes it happens that the atheist or the moral Darwinist claim to be Christian, in order to achieve particularistic goals. Such people should be distinguished from Christians and not assigned to the disciples of Jesus. Dawkins himself wrote: 'It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the majority of atheists I know disguise their atheism behind a pious facade. They do not believe in anything supernatural themselves, but retain a vague soft spot for irrational belief. They believe in belief'<sup>65</sup>.

After reading such arguments, one may only appeal: atheists, leave the Church! The attitude of hypocrisy towards your true beliefs isn't humane, indeed!

### **About the inconsistent atheism and the inconsistent Christianity**

The richness and diversity of life and emerging prospects make it impossible to draw a rigid distinction into those, who are guided by the principles of the rule of law, and those, who are not guided by these principles. Admittedly, it can be theoretically determined that the extreme attitudes of the merciful Christian are morally positive and Darwinist inclinations of the consistent atheism are negative. However, in everyday life we encounter the inconsistent attitudes of both, atheism and Christianity. The atheist may realize that using the principles of 'a brutal struggle for existence' in the human world is morally reprehensible, and thanks to such awareness, he becomes capable of ethically

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<sup>65</sup> Ibidem, p. 395.

positive behaviors. The situation looks diametrically opposite when the Christian does not realize principles of the Christian morality and becomes capable of morally negative behaviors. It should be highlighted, however, that the inconsistent attitude of the Christian, as for the essence of the evangelical message, decides on excluding from the Christian community under the law. As a matter of fact, every Christian is obliged to act ethically correct.

### **About education in religion**

Dawkins criticizes the believers that they support a certain religion because of education. A Christian was raised in a Christian family, and hence, he is a Christian. If he was born in a Muslim society, he would be a Muslim<sup>66</sup>. This way of reasoning points to the educational origins of religion and not the objectivity in its understanding. The same argument can be applied in case of atheism. Many atheists come from the atheistic families and were brought up in the atmosphere that favored atheism. Thus, if the presented reasoning was correct with respect to the believers, it would also apply to the non-believers. Then non-religiousness would have its roots in education.

Nevertheless, it seems that the described problem is much more complex. We could try to explain the above issue on the basis of reflexivity and the lack of reflexivity in the adoption of the particular worldview. The essence of such an explanation is the attempt to meet the noticeable

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<sup>66</sup> Ibidem, p. 25, and other.

trends that the man who thoughtlessly accepts any view, whether religious or atheist, whether scientific or superstitious, whether political or philosophical, may be tempted to its propagation, while the reflection may lead to its negation. Thus, religion does not constitute the only life philosophy that should be spread by a man, but it is one among others that he frequently spreads. Accordingly, those, who investigate the worldview in which they grew up, are not under the determining influence of education on the formation of their religiousness or atheism. And we often notice that Christians become the non-believers as well as atheists become the believers, due to considerations that have the impact on them. It appears that education does not determine the views of the philosopher.

### **Redundant statements**

Dawkins quoted the passage of the mail, in which one person claiming to be the believer, spoke in a very aggressive tone<sup>67</sup>. Commenting her posts, the author of *The God Delusion* states: 'I find it genuinely puzzling that a mere difference of theological opinion can generate such venom'.

However, Dawkins himself does not respect the attitudes and the beliefs of other people, so his astonishment bears the stigma of the completely misunderstood feeling. He is vulgar about religion while citing Winston Churchill's son, referring to God of the Old Testament: 'God, isn't God

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<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, pp. 242-243. It should be emphasized that if a person claims to be a believer, does not mean he really is. This letter could also be written by a non-believer, whose aim was simply provocation.

a shit!<sup>68</sup>. He publicly and constantly shows his contempt for the countless number of people who believe, when he mockingly says, for instance:

‘As Ken’s Guide to the Bible neatly put it, if his epistles can be seen as John on pot, then Revelation is John on acid’; ‘Hartung puts it more bluntly than I dare: »Jesus would have turned over in his grave if he had known that Paul would be taking his plan to the pigs«; ‘When one person suffers from a delusion, it is called insanity. When many people suffer from a delusion, it is called Religion’; ‘Pope John Paul II created more saints than all his predecessors of the past several centuries put together [...]. His polytheistic hankerings were dramatically demonstrated’; ‘The resulting contradictions are glaring, but consistently overlooked by the faithful’<sup>69</sup>.

Saint John was not the drug addict, but the apostle. Paul of Tarsus did not preach to the pigs, but people. Religion is not a symptom of the mental illness, but convictions. John Paul II did not create saints, but acknowledged the holiness of others. He also did not have the polytheistic hankerings, but he represented the monotheistic Church. The believers don’t notice contradictions mentioned by Dawkins because they are not there. The thinker himself, therefore, publicly criticizes in the aggressive tone, so his complaints cannot be justified.

Moreover, the author of *The God Delusion* wrote a number of accusing and bizzare conceptions about religion, without any explanation, which is scientifically required. He

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<sup>68</sup> Ibidem, p. 51.

<sup>69</sup> Ibidem, in sequence pp. 292, 28, 56, 120.

assumed, for example: 'The religious behavior may be a misfiring, an unfortunate by-product of an underlying psychological propensity which in other circumstances is, or once was, useful'<sup>70</sup>. It is hard to understand why Dawkins discussed such issues using the theory of evolution for his own purposes<sup>71</sup>. Applying the same reasoning we can create the contrary thesis: 'Perhaps the atheistic behavior may be a misfiring, an unfortunate by-product of an underlying psychological propensity which in other circumstances is, or once was, useful'.

## Derision

In another part of his work, Dawkins cites the theological statement that he finds ambiguous, and then criticizes it with the words of Thomas Jefferson: 'Ridicule is the only weapon which can be used against unintelligible propositions [...]'.<sup>72</sup> From the scientific point of view, it is desirable to bring someone's beliefs to contradiction, and not to ridicule, so Dawkins' reference to Jefferson's opinion is the total misuse of the fundamental principles of the proper chain of command.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibidem, p. 202.

<sup>71</sup> The book *The God Delusion* constitutes the author's psychological-emotional analysis in its vast part. It contains not only the euphoric elements, but also frustrating and invidious. Sometimes, you can notice the attempts to reduce the cognitive dissonance between the actual state and its representation through mechanical references to evolution and science, which do not reflect the reality.

<sup>72</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 55.



It is observable in the book that the author uses the above method to combat the opposing beliefs. (For example, he was glad to hear that the Gospel according to the Flying Spaghetti Monster, published in a form of the book, has gained the huge popularity, and that 'a Great Schism has already occurred, resulting in the Reformed Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster'<sup>73</sup>, thus, depreciating the original text of the Gospel by the scandalous, outrageous and shocking rhetoric, which, indeed, separates his investigation from the scientific reasoning).

### **Richard Dawkins vs. Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

Professor Richard Dawkins started the attack on the icon of the contemporary philanthropy, as he does not deal with religion in 'kid gloves'<sup>74</sup>:

'Mother Teresa of Calcutta actually said, in her speech accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, »The greatest destroyer of peace is abortion«. What? How can a woman with such cock-eyed judgement be taken seriously on any topic, let alone be thought seriously worthy of a Nobel Prize? Anybody tempted to be taken in by the sanctimoniously hypocritical Mother Teresa should read Christopher Hitchen's book *The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice*<sup>75</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibidem, s. 76.

<sup>74</sup> Ibidem, p. 50.

<sup>75</sup> Ibidem, p. 330. Receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in December 10, 1979, Mother Teresa said: "I believe, however, that nowadays, the greatest threat to peace is abortion, because it is a direct war, a murder, a massacre performed by a mother herself (...) if a mother can kill her

However, we should trace the whole life of this missionary, and not only its part, which is separated from the historical context. Mother Teresa received numerous prestigious awards and honors. In 1962, she received the great national award Padmashree from the President of India, Rajendra Prasad, and also Magsaysay Award from the President of the Philippines. In 1971, she was honored with prestigious awards: the Good Samaritan in Boston and the International Prize of John F. Kennedy in New York. In 1972 she was again honored by the Government of India, and she received the Pandit Nehru award. In the following year she received the Templeton Prize in England. During the award ceremony Prince Philip said: 'Mother Teresa, we know very well that you are the last person in the world who would seek rewards and recognition, but I also know that you are the first person that deserves all of that'. In 1973 she was awarded the Ambrogino d'Oro prize in Italy. Then, in 1975, the United Nations for Food and Agriculture awarded the Mother Teresa Albert Schweitzer's Award. In 1979, she received the International Award of Balzan Foundation from the Italian President Sandro Pertini and the Nobel Peace Prize, which Dawkins strongly opposed. Then - in 1980 - the Government of India honored Mother Teresa with the greatest Hindu reward, the Jewel of India. In 1983, she received the Australian award, Ordine d'onore, handed over by the Queen Elizabeth II. Another honor

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own child, then does it matter to me if I kill you, and to you - if you kill me? Nothing stands against". Kathryn Spink, *Matka Teresa. Autoryzowana biografia*, tłum. Maria Grabowska - Ryńska, Andrzej Wojnowski, Grupa Wydawnicza Bertelsman Media, Warszawa 2002, s. 368.

was the Canadian Peace Prize, and then the American Order of Freedom, received from the U.S. President Ronald Reagan in 1985. She was also awarded the doctoral title *honoris causa* at the Jagiellonian University (the proposal recognizing the undeniable works of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, granting her the title of honorary doctor of this University, was signed by a number of successful scientists: prof. W. Stróżewski, prof. J. Pawlica, prof. W. Pawluczuk, prof. J. Samek, prof. T. Marek, prof. B. Urban, prof. F. Adamski, prof. A. Paluch, prof. S. Palka, prof. T. Goban-Klas, prof. A. Pelczar, prof. W. Czyż, prof. K. Dyrek, prof. H. Krzanowska, prof. S. Wójcik and several other professors, associate professors and researchers<sup>76</sup>). Mother Teresa was awarded the doctoral title *honoris causa* at other universities as well – Cambridge, New Delhi, Philadelphia, San Diego, Madras, Shantiniketan. She received a number of other honors, prizes and awards for taking steps to save people from the mass killing<sup>77</sup>.

The whole world values the works of Mother Teresa. Dawkins, on the contrary - claims that Mother Teresa is the ridiculous, sanctimonious and hypocritical figure. And in his thesis, he not only refers to the anti-abortion views, but also concentrates on the gossip book by Christopher

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<sup>76</sup> *Matka Teresa z Kalkuty – Doktor Honoris Causa Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego – W dniu Beatyfikacji – W dziesięciolecie nadania godności Doktoru Honoris Causa*, Kraków 19 października 2003, Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Zakład Poligraficzny, s. 6, 7.

<sup>77</sup> Grzegorz Łęcicki, *Matka Teresa. Misjonarka Miłości i Miłosierdzia*, Wydawnictwo Patmos, Warszawa 1998; Renzo Allegri, *Matka ubogich – Rozmowa z Matką Teresą z Kalkuty*, tłum. B. Piotrowska, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków 2002, s. 150-152.

Hitchens, who made the quasi-criticism of her work, focusing on the presumption of malice and a number of undocumented assertions.

You should ask yourself questions then, which factors decided that that she was granted all those awards? Why did the missionary arouse so much admiration and respect among people? Everyone himself can judge whether the person of such system of values deserves awards and honors.

Mother Teresa started her activity being a serial nun, having no assets and no income. She decided to oppose the terrible poverty and the plight of thousands of people. Starting her work in the slums, she was developing her charitable organization by opening more and more new institutions for many years. At the end of her life, she could be proud of 445 centers located in 95 countries. In India alone, the nuns took care of more than 150 thousand of the lepers. Missionaries deal with beggars from the poorest regions of the world, abandoned children, homeless people, the hungry, sick of AIDS, and primarily, they help people dying and pleading for mercy and charity to the present day<sup>78</sup>.

*The conversation of Mother Teresa with Malcolm Muggeridge:*

*Mother Teresa:* [...] In the beginning I had just five rupees [...]. The first woman I saw, I picked up myself from the street. She was half-eaten by rats and ants. I took her to the hospital, but they could do nothing for her. [...] The health inspector

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<sup>78</sup> Renzo Allegri, *Matka ubogich – Rozmowa z Matką Teresą z Kalkuty*, s. 130, op. cit.

took me to a temple dedicated to the goddess Kali. [...] In less than a day we put there our patients, and this is how a home for the sick and dying, deprived of any other care started to operate. [...] We took care of more than twenty-three thousand of people of Calcutta, [...] the house is intended exclusively for people from the street and for those who won't be admitted to any hospital, namely, people about whom absolutely no one cares.

*Malcolm:* Some people maintain that there are too many children in India, and yet you are saving the children [...].

*Mother Teresa:* Yes, many of them would have died, especially those, who are unwanted. Presumably they would have been either abandoned or killed. But we do not accept this path; our path is to preserve life, life of Christ in the child's life [...] most of our sisters have special training to work among the the lepers. And thanks to new drugs [...] we can already inhibit disease processes<sup>79</sup>.

Dawkins' allegations against Mother Teresa are absurd and cannot be preserved in elementary logic and fairness. The author of *The God Delusion* demonstrated intolerance, not only of the views and the whole value system of the missionary, but also of the undeniable works that she did

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<sup>79</sup> Malcolm Muggeridge, *Matka Teresa z Kalkuty*, tłum. S. Zalewski, wyd. II, Instytut Wydawniczy Pax, Warszawa 1975, s. 78-88.

and which, in fact, are saving the lives of many dying people around the world to the present day.

### **Delusional views of Richard Dawkins**

Dawkins frequently proclaims views that are difficult to accept even by his most sympathetic readers. Reading the introduction to the second edition of *The God Delusion*, we can find the following passage:

‘If only such subtle, nuanced religion predominated [...], I would have written a different book. [...] this kind of understated, decent, revisionist religion is numerically negligible. To the vast majority of believers around the world, religion all too closely resembles what you hear from the likes of Robertson, Falwell or Haggard, Osama bin Laden or the Ayatollah Khomeini’<sup>80</sup>.

Does Dawkins consider the vast majority of people who believe in God as those who exhibit extreme aggression, who are ready even to carry out military actions, kidnappings and suicide attacks? These opinions can be criticized with his own words:

What? How can the man with such cock-eyed judgement be taken seriously on any topic, or even deserve any honor or award? (if anyone was tempted by his parascientific non-religiousness, he should necessarily read the book *Dawkins' God: Genes, Memes, and the Meaning of Life* by Alister McGrath).

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<sup>80</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 15. About Osama bin Laden pp. 342, 343.

## **Conclusion**

The ethical standards postulated by Dawkins lead to the denial of the fundamental human principles. It is hard to notice any cohesion or the relevance of reasoning in his argumentation, therefore, the normative system that the author of *The God Delusion* represents, should not serve as the model of human morality.

### CHAPTER 3

## ATHEISTIC MORALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF TOTALITARIAN REGIME

To a large extent, the previous chapter dealt with the fundamentals of human morality. Dawkins presented his worldview, which received polemical criticism. As it turned out, the differences between the adopted value systems are tremendous and lead to extremely distinct attitudes.

Human deeds derive their inspiration from the moral philosophy, namely, philosophy, which going through its severe crisis in the last century, faced the powerful front of the deadly, anti-Christian and anti-religious ideas. And these ideas should be taken into the deep consideration, in order to understand the mechanism of evil.

On the pages of his book *The God Delusion*, Dawkins conducted the frontal attack on religion, presenting it as the threat, which is responsible for the immensity of human misery. Meanwhile, he portrayed atheism as the belief, which frequently accompanies ‘humanism’<sup>81</sup>, that is highly

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<sup>81</sup> Ibidem, p. 262: ‘I am not necessarily claiming that atheism increases morality, although humanism – the ethical system that often goes with atheism – probably does’. In fact, Dawkins is very imprecise. On the one hand, he says that he doesn’t claim that ‘atheism increases morality’, on the other, however, he presents religious people as immoral, which means that atheists should be also immoral, and, if so,



valued moralism. He perceives religion as the major threat<sup>82</sup> to moral order in the world and presents the non-believers in the crystal clear light, not recognizing any reasons for the slightest criticism. Boasting about atheism, he wrote: 'Another good possibility is that atheism is correlated with some third factor, such as higher education, intelligence or reflectiveness, which might counteract criminal impulses'<sup>83</sup>.

## Communism

The first thought that comes to mind of a citizen living under the influence of the purely atheistic, communist system of oppression of mind and the body, the powerful ideological front, which had the impact on all countries in the world in the twentieth century, is as follows: What kind of atheistic humanism did Dawkins write about? Which factor that prevents the impulsive involvement of atheists in criminal acts, did the author of *The God Delusion* mention? Don't we know this worldview, and aren't we aware that communism, by allowing hecatomb, became the most criminal political system that has ever been created in the world? Terror resulted in mass killings, deportations, resettlement, escalating poverty and malnutrition, and the state authorities concentrated their power on intimidation and propaganda psychosis, preparing the nations for a world revolution. They performed illegal court decisions

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it would contradict the assumption that 'humanism' often goes with atheism.

<sup>82</sup> Ibidem, for example ch. 7, 8, 9.

<sup>83</sup> Ibidem, p. 262.

(often preceded by the abuse and exquisite tortures, committed by public officials), sentencing victims of the system to prison; they persecuted a countless number of people, using organs of not only the direct, but also administrative coercion; they realized utopian projects, and censorship, deception and violation of human rights were included in the party ideology<sup>84</sup>.

Dawkins practically ignores these tragedies, bringing the whole system of communist totalitarianism to short references, confirming that Stalin was indeed an atheist<sup>85</sup>. The historical and philisophical considerations cannot be limited to the individual and banal statements. It appears that every communist officer of the higher rank was connected with atheism. The doctrine of communism assumed the national atheism and they pursued this goal by using murders and terror against countless numbers of people. Even in the satellite states, atheisation concerned most levels of the career. Therefore, this belief can and should be assessed systematically, as the tendency to conduct oneself. Communism gave researches the tool, thanks to which it is possible to know the value of the atheistic individual, who without any restraint of the democratic state, could show his true colors.

In the Communist Manifesto we read: 'Communism abolishes eternal truths, religion, morality instead of giving them the new form, therefore, it opposes the entire historical

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<sup>84</sup> Aleksander Solżenicyn, *Archipelag GULag 1918-1956, próba dochodzenia literackiego*, tłum. J. Pomianowski (Michał Kaniowski) t. 1, 2, 3 (cz. 1-7), Rebis, Poznań 2008, passim.

<sup>85</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*. 'There seems no doubt that, as a matter of fact, Stalin was an atheist', p.309.

development heretofore<sup>86</sup>. It is observable that communist atheists got rid of the faith. Nowadays, many people are able to understand it, yet why did they get rid of morality as well? It is difficult to answer this question. Imagine the world, in which there would be no bloody revolution in Russia. Imagine that there would be no Polish-Bolshevik war, famine and collectivization in the Ukraine; there would be no 'great purge' of the thirties, no concentration camps, the Soviet invasion of Finland, there would be no crimes committed on the Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and Polish citizens, there would be no extermination of the Orthodox and Catholic clergy; there would be no such a great tragedy of World War II, for which the Third Reich is responsible, almost to the same extent as the Soviet Union, through the war trade with Germany, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the aggression of September 17, 1939 against Poland. Imagine that there would be no threat of the Cold War and World War III, there would be no poverty and intimidation of hundreds of millions of people, there would be no censorship, backwardness, indoctrination, there would be no violation of human rights in China and Tibet, there would be no 'great leap' and the 'cultural Revolution', there would be no war in Cambodia, Vietnam and Afghanistan and a number of other tragedies. Literature reports that the communist

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<sup>86</sup> Karol Marks, *Dzieła wybrane*, Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza KSIAŻKA, Warszawa – oddział w Łodzi 1947, t. I: Karol Marks, Fryderyk Engels, *Manifest komunistyczny*, s. 187.. (The authors of Manifesto proclaim that the communist revolution brings the most radical separation form traditional ideas).

atheists killed approximately the following number of people in particular countries<sup>87</sup>:

China – 65 million<sup>88</sup>  
the Soviet Union – 20 million  
the North Korea – 2 million  
Cambodia – 2 million  
Africa – 1,7 million  
Afghanistan – 1,5 million  
Vietnam – 1 million  
the East Europe – 1 milion  
Latin America – 150 thousand

As history shows, atheists constituted the most dangerous illegal group that committed all, including those worst, crimes. Communism appears as the bloodiest system that humanity has ever seen. Mao Tse-tung massacred the Chinese citizens as he relied on the communist view. Namely, he propagated that: "The theoretical basis guiding our thinking is Marxism-Leninism"<sup>89</sup>. Waldemar Dziak and Jerzy

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<sup>87</sup> S. Courtois, N. Werth, J. Panne, K. Bartosek, J. Margolin, *Czarna księga komunizmu – zbrodnie, terror, prześladowania*, tłum. K. Waker, Prószyński i S-ka, Warszawa 1999, s. 25. The communist crimes are describes in most of historical books referring to the history of the twentieth century, e.g. Norman Davies, *Europa – rozprawa historyka z historią*, Znak, Kraków 1998, s. 1025; *Nasz wiek XX – kronika stulecia*, red. Manfred Leier, tłum. M. Kęcka, Świat Książki, Warszawa 1996; et al.

<sup>88</sup> W. Dziak, J. Bayer, *Mao. Zwyrodnienie, nadzieje, kłeski*, Trio, Warszawa 2007, s. 10 (s. 185-186).

<sup>89</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *Wyjutki z dzieł przewodniczącego Mao Tse-tunga (Czerwona Książeczka)*, Wydawnictwo Książki Niezwykłej XXI, Wrocław 2005, rozdz. Partia komunistyczna.

Bayer portray the actions of Mao Tse-tung concerning one of several of his nationwide campaigns in China, which peak was between 1966-1968, in the following manner:

»The cultural revolution«, in fact, was to create a new man of the communist era: authoritarian, intolerant, fanatical and totally dedicated to the chief and his ideology, a man devoid of all moral principles, lacking religious, spiritual and consumer needs, who does not realize that there exists such a realm of aspirations and desires at all<sup>90</sup>.

It is hard to find humanism in the Chinese atheism, which mentions the author of *The God Delusion*. Dawkins' concealment of criminal behaviors of the non-believers appear to be the wrong way of presenting his belief. The quoted alarming statistics, as well as historical sources, do not support the views of the Oxford professor. Atheism, in the field of morality, as the above example shows, proved to be the degeneration of humanity. So, Dawkins' digressions on atheistic humanism are not properly justified.

## **Lenin and his work**

Vladimir Lenin, alongside Karl Marx and Joseph Stalin, the leading representative of communism, wrote, inter alia: 'We should fight against religion. This is the alphabet of the entire materialism, and thus, also of Marxism. [...] This struggle must be linked to the specific practice of the class movement, which aims to remove the social roots of religion. [...] And so - away with religion, and long live athe-

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<sup>90</sup> W. Dziak, J. Bayer, *Mao. Zmierzch...*, op. cit. s. 213.

ism, our main goal is to spread the atheistic views. [...] The Marxist must be a materialist, that is the enemy of religion, [...] who is rooted in the issue of combating religion [...] through the concrete ongoing class struggle[...]<sup>91</sup>.

The words of the master of communism were put into practice, and the battle begun. The only difference was that just one side was fighting, whereas the other was being repressed. In the countries of the Eastern block, especially in the first half of the twentieth century, thousands of clergy were killed or terrorized. Sample data indicate that in about four years, from 1945 to 1949, 246 bishops and priests died a violent death, 404 were deported to Siberia, 1065 were imprisoned, 585<sup>92</sup> were lost. We also know that the majority of human harm has never seen the light of day.

Many people do not perceive communism through the prism of approximately a hundred million victims, because this number is too monumental as to be even imagined. However, these figures conceal real human tragedies, some of them are available now in the form of long lists, created on the basis of the extant documents, and carried out by researchers of that period. During Stalin's reign, countless murders on the imaginary enemies of the socialist system were committed, in the areas conquered by the Red Army in Poland. The communist atheists introduced national

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<sup>91</sup> Włodzimierz Lenin, *O stosunku partii robotniczej do religii*, [w:] Karol Marks, Fryderyk Engels, *Włodzimierz Lenin – O religii. Wybór*, red. J. Kniaziolucki, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1984, s. 430, 434.

<sup>92</sup> *Leksykon duchowieństwa represjonowanego w PRL w latach 1945-1989. Pomordowani – więzieni – wygnani*, praca zbiorowa, red. Jerzy Myszor, Verbinum, Warszawa 2002.

terror to the judicial system. Among many sentenced to death and executed were:

Wysocki Eugeniusz – 19 years, Kleja Leon – 19 years, Jurak Adam – 20 years, Bocian Zdzisław – 20 years, Chiszczynski Zygmunt – 19, Różański Józef – 19 years, Szarka Roman – 22 years, Kończugowski Edmund – 21 years, Grabowska Kazimiera – 23 years, Grochowski Alojzy – 24 years, Kulikowski Tadeusz – 27 years, Łebowski Mieczysław – 26 years, Bialik Alojzy – 37 years, Borowiecki Tadeusz – 20 years, Gadzala Franciszek – 31 years, Jankowski Antoni – 43 years, Kielasiński Aleksander – 43 years, Kroch Bronisław – 33 years, Kukula Józef – 33 years, Kulakowski Aleksander – 28 years, Lisiecki Tadeusz – 34 years, Misiurek Władysław – 26 years, Osiński Stefan – 41 years, Paszkowski Zygmunt – 20 years, Piwko Jan – 27 years, Rutkowski Sylwester – 31 years, Siwiec Stanisław – 31 years, Smoła Waclaw – 24 years, Sowa Wincenty – 30 years, Szmeding Konrad – 36 years, Tipelt Stefan – 33 years, Tomaszewicz Aleksander – 30 years, Warecki Stanisław – 40 years, Witkowski Henryk – 32 years, Jamroz Tadeusz – 23 years, Szydelski Romuald – 22 years, Jaroszyński Eugeniusz – 20 years, Bujalski Franciszek – 23 years, Barszewski Zbigniew – 22 years, Mlyniak Witold – 25 years, Krawiec Ryszard – 18 years<sup>93</sup> [...] [...] [...].

The countless number of people were sentenced to prison and the Church representatives were opposed ruthlessly. For instance, in September 24, 1949, in Wrocław, Fr. Władysław Lorek was sentenced to 8 years in prison because

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<sup>93</sup> Marek Kielasiński, *Raport o zabicianiu. Zbrodnie sądów wojskowych na Zamku w Lublinie*, TEST, Lublin 1997, passim.

‘he urged young believers to commit [...] dangerous crimes, [...] hostile to our system of the reactionary foreign measures operating under a cover of religious propaganda’<sup>94</sup>.

In his book, Dawkins presented a number of incidental cases ridiculing faith or such that would convince the reader about the non-existence of God. And yet, the above quoted judgment, in the context of the entire history, is no longer the incident, but the rule depreciating atheism. Atheists reveal their true colors when they remain the unpunished members of the system. In September 15, 1951, Fr. Dominik Milewski was sentenced to prison for 7 years because ‘he did not condemn’ the illegal youth organization, ‘which mission is to fight with the present regime in Poland’<sup>95</sup>. The main accused in this case, Bronisław Kozak, was sentenced to death and executed in the prison at Kleczkowska Street in Wrocław. We can mention countless number of examples of the clergy – victims of the communist system, imprisoned on the basis of political verdicts, who frequently were brutally tortured: Fr. Dryja Józef, Fr. Dziędział Ignacy, Fr. Dziondział Czesław, Fr. Faryś Stefan, Fr. Fertak Kazimierz, Fr. Forkiewicz Władysław, Fr. Gadomski Zbigniew, Fr. Gajda Robert, Fr. Godlewski Marian, Fr. Gradolewski Roman, Fr. Grajner Jan, Fr. Hrynyk Bazyle, Fr. Iwanicki Aleksander, Fr. Jakubassa Leonard, Fr. Bp. Kaczmarek Czesław, Fr. Bp. Latussek Paweł, Fr. Lorek Władysław, Fr. Łowejko Piotr, Fr. Pawlikiewicz Ignacy, Fr. Pawlina Leon, Fr. Piława Karol, Fr. Rzemie-

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<sup>94</sup> *Represje wobec Kościoła katolickiego na Dolnym Śląsku i Opolszczyźnie 1945-1989*, red. S. Bogaczewicz, S. Krzyżanowska, IPN KŚZPNP, t. IV, Wrocław 2004, s. 54.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 56.



niec Stefan, Fr. Oborski Piotr, Fr. Peik Tadeusz, Fr. Rapacz Michał, Fr. Sapeta Tomasz<sup>96</sup> [...] [...] [...].

The victims of this cruel system are counted in millions, so even quoting just the names of the clergy who were deprived of life or their rights, is not possible. In January 22, 1951, in Cracow, Fr. Piotr Oborski was sentenced to life imprisonment because – as the verdict says – ‘he used force trying to change the people’s-democratic regime of the Polish State’. He was imprisoned in Rawicz and executed a year later. Terror was constantly used during the whole period of socialism in Poland. The biggest opposition among Polish people arose in 1984, as a result of the brutal murder of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko. Even at the end of the communist regime in 1989, priests, such as Stefan Niedzielak, Stanisław Suchowolec and Sylwester Zych, were killed.

Cruelty of the communist rulers had no boundaries. The accused were constantly tortured during the investigation. One of the convicts in the process of Fr. Milewski testified: ‘In the office of the head of UB [...] they started to hit me in my face [...] they stretched me on my back on the floor and beat me with a gum in my heels until I lost consciousness [...] they tied my hands with a string and told me to stand on the swollen feet that burned terribly for the whole day [...] then again I was beaten with a gum and a saber and they did the same every night. They beat me alternately [...] one in the face, the other in the neck, not to mention kicking with shoes, which was frequent<sup>97</sup>’.

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<sup>96</sup> *Leksykon duchowieństwa...*, passim.

<sup>97</sup> *Reprezje wobec...*, p. 56.

Dawkins describes atheism as the ‘humanistic’ approach to life. However, this belief is in the service of darkness. It seems that atheism perceived in such a way, results in humanism exclusively in case, when the atheist individual is forced to the lawful behavior, or when dishonesty is not beneficial for him. When the liability is suspended, the individual becomes capable of the most horrendous acts.

### The ruined temples

In the further part of his argumentation, Dawkins did not show the greater understanding of the attitudes of his colleagues atheists. Namely, he stated that he doesn’t believe ‘there is an atheist in the world who would bulldoze Mecca – or Charters, York Minster or Notre Dame’<sup>98</sup>, whereas in reality, a large number of Orthodox churches was demolished or replaced by warehouses, the clergy were murdered and the believers terrorized<sup>99</sup>. Yuri Boriew described one of such events in the tragicomic tone:

‘One day, Stalin was passing by the beautiful, white-stoned Orthodox Church of the Savior in the Forest (XV century). There was wood by the church. »It’s scandalous, clean it up« – muttered dissatisfied Stalin. Unfortunately, nobody dared

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<sup>98</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 283.

<sup>99</sup> R. Dzwonkowski, J. Palyga, *Za wschodnią granicą 1917-1993. O Polakach i Kościele w danym ZSRR*, Wspólnota Polska Pallotinum II, Warszawa 1993, s. 120: ‘In Belarus, between 1937 and 1939, 3247 of »cerkwini-kow i sektuntow«, were arrested, among them being 400 priests and monks, one metropolitan, 5 bishops and archbishops. These last ones were shot to death’.

to ask him what he exactly meant – wood or the church. As a precaution wood was removed and the church ruined'<sup>100</sup>.

We can refer several other examples of the works' of the atheistic destruction of sacral buildings, including historical monuments of a significant cultural value: Beautiful churches in places such as: Płoskirów, Gródek (four sacred objects at the same time: St. Stanislaus Church, St. Anne Church, the Orthodox Church, and a synagogue), Zwiachel and Satanów. In Tynna the church was torn down to the brick'<sup>101</sup>. Many temples were also blew up with a dynamite in Poldole: Sołobkowice (a temple of the sixteenth century), Berezdów (the eighteenth century), Mohylev Podolski (the eighteenth century), Orynin (the twentieth century), Kaziatyn (the twentieth century), Dunajowice (the seventeenth century), Deraźnia (the eighteenth century)<sup>102</sup>. People who remember those times are still alive, thus, these actions were perofrmed by the contemporary humans. The destruction of religious buildings was part of the fight of the communist ideology against religion, so theses proclaimed by Dawkins are unhistorical.

## Censorship

It is staggering that Dawkins follows the spirit of the communist oppression – as if the modern history did not teach him anything. Quoting the psychologist Nicholas

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<sup>100</sup> Jurij Boriew, *Prywatne życie Stalina*, tłum. Darima i Dionizy Sidorscy, Oficyna Literatów „Rój”, Warszawa 1989, s. 98.

<sup>101</sup> R. Dzwonkowski, *Za wschodnią granicą...*, s. 113.

<sup>102</sup> Ibidem, p. 254.

Humphrey, he suggests that we should go back to censorship, that is to what we recently overcame with great difficulties, in the countries of the socialist block, regarding it as the sign of contempt for human freedom: 'to argue in favour of censorship for the special case of children...»moral and religious education, and especially the education a child receives at home [...]. Children have a human right not to have their minds crippled by exposure to other people's bad ideas – no matter who these other people are. Parents, correspondingly [...] children have a right not to have their minds addled by nonsense, and we as a society have a duty to protect them from it«<sup>103</sup>.

The author of *The God Delusion* ignores the fact that the believers consider the atheistic views as 'a mutilation of minds with false ideas', therefore, proclaiming the above postulates leads to the discord. The right to bring up children in the spirit of parental beliefs is the fundamental human right. It was enshrined in the Constitution in Poland<sup>104</sup>: 'Parents have the right to secure their children education and moral and religious teaching in accordance with their convictions'. This is the right characteristic of democratic states. Humphrey, whose beliefs were quoted by Dawkins, wrote that essentially parents should be forced to bring up children contrary to their convictions. The main stream of the religious persecution would be conducted at home or in other human-friendly places. It should be noted that the attempt to introduce religious censorship must

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<sup>103</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, pp. 366-367.

<sup>104</sup> *The Polish Constitution* of April 2, 1997, art. 53, p. 3, FH. „Libellus”, Cracow 2005.

result in the shedding of blood. Hence, Dawkins by proclaiming such ideas, introduces evil to the premises, which aims at the mutual separation of the social classes that currently live in peace. Additionally, there is the intention of the compulsory imposition of atheism on children that is hidden in the extreme cases, which would have to convince the reader that Dawkins' argumentation is correct. Logical reasoning is as follows: Dawkins is the atheist so, to his mind, God is the false idea. False ideas shall not harm children. Thus, the concept of God's existence shall not harm children. A lawful legislator allows raising offspring in the outlook of their parents; in a state under the rule of law nobody forbids raising children in the atheistic spirit. Christians do not struggle against this foundation. Dawkins, however, did. By what right? Where is his humanity?

### **National socialism, Adolf Hitler vs. religion**

In chapter seven of his book *The God Delusion*, Dawkins seeks the connection between Nazism and Christianity. At first, he points to the Catholic faith of Hitler, then, he indicates on his faith not only in the Christian God, but rather a 'special form of divine providence', he even detects hatred for Jews among Christians, just to conclude that the horrific acts were performed by the soldiers and officers, who, as he says, 'undoubtedly were Christians' in the majority. Dawkins' theses and suggestions (although formulated in a chaotic manner in *The God Delusion*) are extremely significant, therefore, their content should be examined thoroughly.

Adolf Hitler's attitude to Christianity is expressed in terms of the murder of millions of people, including the Christian clergy<sup>105</sup>. Nevertheless, it is not enough for Dawkins, so he is still trying to prove that the leader of the Third Reich could have been the follower of Jesus' ethics. The author, mentioning Hitler's biography, makes a number of allegations, which he does not fully accept himself, and which could imply that Hitler was the practicing Catholic<sup>106</sup>. He wrote, for example:

'Hitler was born into a Catholic family, and went to Catholic schools and churches as a child. [...] But Hitler never formally renounced his Catholicism [...]. In 1920, when Hitler was thirty-one, his close associate Rudolf Hess, later to be deputy Führer, wrote in a letter to the Prime Minister of Bavaria, »I know Herr Hitler very well personally [...] He is religious, a good Catholic«. [...] Goering's remark about Hitler, »Only a Catholic could unite Germany« [...] But as late as 1941 he told his adjutant, General Gerhard Engel, »I shall remain a Catholic for ever« [...] and the same phrase was used by Hitler in a remarkable speech of 1922, in which he several times repeated that he was a Christian: »My feeling as a Christian points me to my Lord and Saviour as a fighter

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<sup>105</sup> Marek Budziarek, *Katedra przy Adolf Hitlerstrasse*, PAX, Warszawa 1984 s. 127. Among hundreds of murdered priests, we can mention the names of those that were killed in Lodz diocese: Aksman Juliusz, Bartkiewicz Bronisław, Bączek Jan, Bentkowski Kazimierz, Bieliński Wacław, Biernacki Feliks, Bińkowski Józef, Brzeziński Romuald, Brzózka Bohdan, Burzyński Tadeusz, Butkiewicz Bronisław, Cesarz Jan, Chmieliński Jan, Chojnicki Władysław, Chomiczewski Stanisław, Chylkowski Ludwik, Ciesielczyk Henryk, Ciesielski Władysław [...] – only some victims from this diocese are mentioned.

<sup>106</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, pp. 310-312.

[...]. As a Christian I have no duty to allow myself to be cheated, but I have the duty to be a fighter for truth and justice [...]. And if there is anything which could demonstrate that we are acting rightly it is the distress that daily grows. For as a Christian I have also a duty to my own people<sup>6</sup>.

However, is there any link between those declarations and his true beliefs? We can cite Adolf Hitler's private speeches, which were documented in 1941-1944: 'Christianity is the stupidest thing that has ever appeared in the sick human brain, a mockery of all that is divine. A Negro with his fetish is a sight beyond someone who seriously believes in the miracle of transubstantiation'. 'The greatest problem that humanity has ever encountered was the rise of Christianity. Bolshevism is Christianity's illegitimate son, and both of them - a product of the Jews. Christianity brought conscious falsehood in the religious matters to the world'. In any case, we should not wish ourselves that the Italians and Spanish got rid of Christianity. Whoever accepts it, remains infected by a virus!'. 'Pure Christianity [...] leads to the destruction of humanity. It is a bare Bolshevism put in the metaphysical package.' 'Christianity is the largest recurrence of darkness that humanity has ever experienced'<sup>107</sup>.

Hitler's apostasy of Christianity, expressed in the content of his anti-Christian beliefs, resulted in *latae sententiae* ex-

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<sup>107</sup> Adolf Hitler, *Rozmowy przy stole 1941-1944. Rozmowy w Kwaterze Głównej zapisane na polecenie Martina Bormanna przez jego adiutanta Heinricha Heima*, tłum. zespół, Wydawnictwo Charyzma, Warszawa 1996 (s. 147, 36, 148, 289). In Table Talk Hitler presents a number of references to pantheism, which is mentioned in the further part of the book.

communication, in accordance with the canon law<sup>108</sup>. The above signifies, that the leader of the Third Reich was excluded from the Christian community under the law, for 'the total repudiation of the Christian faith'<sup>109</sup>. The imposition of that kind of excommunication does not require any legal action, it is sufficient if a person, who formerly was a member of the Church, shares opinions similar to people derogating from the faith in Christ. Dawkins, trying to get around these facts, stated: 'it is possible that Hitler had by 1941 experienced some kind of deconversion or disillusionment with Christianity'<sup>110</sup>. The above authorial hypothesis can be subject to historical verification. In 1933-1934 Hitler stated in a circle of trusted people:

'Let fascism be in peace with the Church in the name of God. I also do it. Why not? But it will not stop me from eradicating Christianity with its roots to the last filament in Germany'. 'Either you are a Christian, or a German. You cannot be both'. 'Let the priests dig their own grave. They will betray their beloved Lord on our behalf [...] replace the cross with our swastika'<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> Code of Canon Law, canon 1364 § 1. (CCL of 1917 entrenched the apostasy by the sanction of *latae sententiae* excommunication. The apostasy was similarly sanctioned in the constitution *Apostolicae Sedis* by Pius IX of 1869, J. Syryjczyk, *Apostazja od wiary w świetle przepisów kanonicznego prawa karnego. Studium prawnohistoryczne*. Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, Warszawa 1984, s. 202).

<sup>109</sup> CCL, canon 751.

<sup>110</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 313.

<sup>111</sup> Hermann Rauschnig, *Rozmowy z Hitlerem*, tłum. J. Hensel i R. Turczyn, Iskry, Warszawa 1994, s. 58-60. Hitler presents a number of pantheistic references in the above text.



Criteria that the Oxford professor was guided by, assuming that Hitler changed his religious views in 1941, are completely unknown, which in turn, in the context of historical verification, strongly implies the unreliability of this scientist in the process of obtaining the source material. The above quoted words of Hitler from 1933-1934, reveal his absolute anti-Christian attitude. Hitler's personal secretary, who accompanied the leader of the Third Reich for 12 years, spoke about his hypocrisy in the field of religion:

'Hitler rejected every philosophical concept that did not put emphasis on integral materialism. He proclaimed that a role of a human ends with his death and while referring to life in the other world, he often used the most vulgar word-plays. I frequently asked myself the question, by whom, therefore, he felt called to fulfill his mission on earth. Similarly, I have never understood why he regularly ended his great speeches with a reference to the Almighty. I am convinced that if he did so, it was only to get sympathy of the Christian community of the Reich. And besides, he played a hideous comedy. Whenever the conversation turned to spiritual topics, he acted with cynicism against Christianity, which dogmas he opposed with the strong vulgarity. [...] Hitler remained a member of this Church till the end. He regularly paid the church tax. However, he promised himself that he would leave it after the victory. This action would be symbolic in the eyes of the world. It will also signify the closure of a certain page of the history for Germany. And for the Third Reich, in turn, it will open the new era'<sup>112</sup>.

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<sup>112</sup> Christa Schroeder, *Zeznania sekretarki. 12 lat u boku Hitlera 1933-1945*, tłum. A. Wróblewski, KDC, Warszawa 2005, s. 177-182.

Hitler officially remained a Catholic since it was politically beneficial for him. It was comfortable to deceive millions of people by this form of a lie. He decided to wait for the right moment to officially depart from this faith and give the Christian religion the final blow. Dawkins also let himself be misled by Hitler, quoting his statements, which would present him in the Christian light. However, the fact that even intellectuals succumbed to the rethorical authority of the leader of the Third Reich, implies his misleading power, the power that even after the war, when the Nazi anti-Christianity was conclusively proven, there appear people who submit to this manipulation.

Adolf Hitler was a materialist, so he rejected all spiritual forms, understood in terms of classical religiousness. The human sciences show that materialism is a variation of philosophy, primarily bound together with atheism. In practice, these ideologies constitute the unity and the mutual consistency. Hitler, thereby, rejected the Christian belief in life after death, hence, he expressed the fundamental assumption of atheism.

One might ask why Hitler played at being a Christian. Machiavelli explains this type of behavior, comparing a ruler to the Prince:

‘The Prince, therefore, does not need to possess all the virtues enumerated above, he only has to pretend to possess them. Naturally, I dare say that possessing them and regular practicing would not be beneficial, however, pretending that one possesses them is extremely favorable, thus, pretending to be merciful, faithful, hman, religious, fair’.

Machiavelli suggests that the efficiency of a ruler depends on his tactics of appearances. The appearance of religiousness is among the rules of this game. The philosopher stated:

‘Everything that the world would hear from him [the ruler]<sup>113</sup>, should appear merciful, faithful, humane, religious, upright. Nothing is more important than the preservation of the appearance of having those virtues, since people, in general, tend to make judgements more by the eye than by the hand, because everyone can see, whereas only a few can touch with their hand. Everybody sees who you seem to be, just some people feel, who you really are’<sup>114</sup>.

The Italian philosopher explains reasons why a number of militant and criminal rulers officially claimed to be Christians. In this way they tried to simulate their legitimacy, simultaneously getting tangible benefits. This strategy was also adopted by the German dictator. The album *Hitler Unknown*, contains the photo of Hitler coming out of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s church in Wilhelmshaven. Coincidentally, there was a gilded cross above the head of Führer at the moment of taking a photo. Rudolf Hess demanded that this picture was not included in the album prepared for publication. Heinrich Hoffmann, the Nazi leader’s photographer, who considered this image original, made the reference to Hitler. ‘Everything is fine – mocked Hitler. – This photo only shows that I visited the church. You could not take a photo of what I was thinking at that moment. And this cross, accidentally visible above my head, it doesn’t

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<sup>113</sup> The expressions in brackets are clarifications.

<sup>114</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *Książę. Rozważania*, tłum. W. Rzymowski, Unia Wydawnicza „VERUM”, Warszawa 2003, s. 101-102.

matter if they regard me as a believer. This photo can be easily enclosed in the album!<sup>115</sup>

It is not difficult to notice that Hitler was a person who could simulate his Christian religiousness. When it was beneficial for him, he wished to be seen as a Christian, however, at the same time, he constantly was fighting with this religion and committed cruel crimes on its followers. He simulated to be a believer, whereas he was not such a person. All Dawkins' suggestions which aim to portray this criminal as a Christian at least in the smallest fraction, are the attempt to falsify the history.

After discrediting the Christian religion and presenting the leader of the Third Reich as its follower, Dawkins eventually admits: 'It could be argued that, despite his own words and those of his associates, Hitler was not really religious but just cynically exploiting the religiosity of his audience'<sup>116</sup>. Further, he allows himself to make an unjustified statement: 'If this was his real motive for pretending to be religious, it serves to remind us that Hitler didn't carry out his atrocities single-handed. The terrible deeds themselves were carried out by soldiers and their officers, most of whom were surely Christian'<sup>117</sup>. Dawkins' evidence, confirming his predetermined conclusions, doesn't seem real. Thus, claiming that the Nazi criminals were Christians, he quotes the unproven expression: 'were surely Christian'. One might ask, where Dawkins came to his knowledge. However, we can assume that there 'were surely' Christians

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<sup>115</sup> Karol Grünberg, *Życie osobiste Adolfa Hitlera*, Troja, Toruń 1991, s. 60.

<sup>116</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 313.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 313.

in the Nazi army because it was the dominant religion in Germany at the time. Nevertheless, the above cannot lead to the conclusion that Christians committed crimes. Such a deduction is unjustified. Dawkins' false conviction is visible in Hitler's statement: 'I have six SS divisions that are totally anti-clerical, and yet they are going to death with great peace of the soul'<sup>118</sup>. We know that SS obeyed the most criminal orders. Dawkins should ask himself the question: What image of God would have an anti-clerical person? Doesn't he become an atheist? Hitler sought to create the elite SS troops separated from the Christian faith. Joining SS, one had to depart from religion. This fact is mentioned by Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski (SS higher police commander, SS Obergruppenführer), who states: 'Naturally, when I was in SS, from approximately 1930 till the end of the war in 1945, I couldn't practice. [...] Before I joined SS, I wrote and presented a certificate that I departed from the Lutheran Church. [...] As a leader of SS I had to deny religion. It was absolutely impossible for me to go to church in the SS uniform'<sup>119</sup>.

Similarly, Waldemar Machol, a Gestapo officer, also discusses issues of anti-religiousness of SS as well as the whole Nazi system: 'In SS and Gestapo I didn't go to church and I didn't pray, because nobody in these formations did. [...] Hitler and all power of the Third Reich were very hostile to the Catholic Church. Nazism and Catholicism couldn't be reconciled. It was assumed that this Church

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<sup>118</sup> A. Hitler, *Rozmowy przy stole...*, s. 146.

<sup>119</sup> Leon Goldensohn, *Rozmowy norymberskie*, tłum. A. Weseli-Ginter, AMBER 2004, s. 255.

has the authority, doesn't accept our regime and has the tremendous impact on its followers. So it was necessary to combat and destroy it wherever it was possible'<sup>120</sup>.

This is how the situation of anti-religiousness of SS and the vast Nazi terrorist organization, accused of performing the bloodiest orders, is presented. According to this witness, no one in SS and Gestapo neither participated in church services nor prayed to God, that is fulfilled the basic religious practices. Waldemar Machol talks about the total negation of Catholicism in Nazi Germany. Thus, Dawkins' presumption of the Christian religiousness among the Nazi criminals is contradictory to the historical record. The SS man couldn't be a disciple of Jesus because he had to depart from the Church and consequently, decline all principles of morality that are proclaimed in the religion of Christ. The commander of the German concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, Rudolf Höss, was also among these criminals, convicted of murdering in the name of Adolf Hitler at least 2,5 million people. He appears as the biggest direct executor of the mass exterminations and mental tortures in the history of mankind: conducting brutal, medical experiments, burying living people, stabbing with sharp tools, maltreating by backbreaking labor, freezing people, humiliating, breaking out joints, burning alive, crushing bones, baiting by dogs, elaborate punishment, infecting germs, digging, shooting, whipping, gassing, hanging, underfeeding, looting, beating, suffocating, poisoning, drowning, elec-

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<sup>120</sup> Aleksander Omiljanowicz, *Przed wyrokiem. Rozmowy z gestapowcem*, LUK, Białystok 1998, s. 15.

tric shocking and other sophisticated methods of terror. After the war he confessed his atheism:

‘My behavior in the service of this ideology was totally fake [...]. Therefore, it is completely logical that many doubts arose in my mind, whether my deportation from the faith in God wasn’t based on the false assumptions’<sup>121</sup>. ‘I departed from the Church in 1922, and my wife in 1935 [...]. I would like to see the Bible to find out what religion teaches an individual. When I left my home, I wasn’t already under the religious influence (of the family), I was too young and inexperienced to truly understand it’<sup>122</sup>.

He was an atheist while committing these cruel crimes, until the very end of his life he started to reflect on religion when it was too late for the examination of conscience.

Hitler also made strategic offices and functions in the country anti-clerical: ‘I don’t have to worry about people from my environment, who got rid of the collars of dogma along with me, the Church has nothing to look for here!’<sup>123</sup>. His close associates had no connection with Christianity. All those, who were on the decision-making positions in Nazi Germany, got rid of the essence of the Christian religion – namely, in practice, they turned to atheism or the ideology similar to atheism. Hitler clearly set the boundaries between the state and the Church: ‘It was good that I didn’t let the clergymen in the Party. In March 21, 1933, in

<sup>121</sup> Rudolph Höss, *The Letter to the Wife from April 11, 1947*, [in:] *Wspomnienia Rudolfa Hössa, komendanta obozu oświęcimskiego*, tłum. J. Sehn i E. Kocwy, wyd. III, Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warszawa 1965, s. 188.

<sup>122</sup> Leon Goldensohn, *Rozmowy norymberskie*, s. 282.

<sup>123</sup> A. Hitler, *Rozmowy przy stole...*, s. 78.

Potsdam, a question arose – with or without the church? I conquered the state despite the curse of both denominations<sup>124</sup>. The German dictator is proud to announce his accomplishment that in spite of the great opposition of the Catholic and Protestant Churches, he seized power over the state and, thereby, achieved his personal victory. He also added: ‘This is why I have always kept the Party away from the church and the clergy [...] we had nothing to do with »the service of God« of these churches<sup>125</sup>. The Church didn’t have even the slightest connection with the Nazi operations because the leader himself never allowed such a relationship.

Hermann Göring, the leading Nazi, expressed his attitude to religion in the following manner: ‘I don’t believe that I will go either to heaven, or hell after death. I don’t believe in the Bible and many other things that religious people believe in<sup>126</sup>. Additionally, Julius Streicher, the founder and publisher of the anti-Semitic newspaper ‘Der Stürmer’, sentenced to death, spoke in the atheistic spirit<sup>127</sup>. Fritz Sauckel, the plenipotentiary for Employment (hang in 1946) also mentions his department from the Church. According to H. Fritzsche, Alfred Rosenberg, one of the most influential Nazis, the author of the most significant racist theories and the Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, was totally non-religious<sup>128</sup>. Also, Martin Bormann, the chief of the Chancellery of the Nazi Party, pointed to his atheism expres-

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<sup>124</sup> Ibidem, p. 148.

<sup>125</sup> Ibidem, p. 76.

<sup>126</sup> Leon Goldensohn, *Rozmowy norymberskie*, s. 146.

<sup>127</sup> Ibidem, pp. 239-240.

<sup>128</sup> Ibidem, pp. 95.



sed in conducting a cynical campaign against the cross, especially in schools and common rooms in the South Germany, thereby, causing the great revolt against the faith<sup>129</sup>.

It is extremely hard to assess the real human religious beliefs. However, the deeds can tell a lot about a person. If someone kills another human being, he certainly is not a Christian, since such conduct is prohibited in this religion. Therefore, for that reason we can assume that Nazism didn't have supporters of this religion in its ranks. During the period of National Socialism, the old Christian religion was being repressed, whereas the new, never had a chance to evolve.

The French Ambassador in Berlin, André François-Poncet, wrote: 'Hitler [...] assured of his respect for religion, although he was neither a believer, nor a practitioner'<sup>130</sup>. Nevertheless, the atheistic views of Hitler can be recognized not only thanks to observations of the reliable, independent witnesses. During the war, he confessed that he lost his faith already in the youth period: 'Being thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, I no longer believed in anything, anyway, none of my friends believed in the so-called communion, except for a few totally stupid on top of the class!'<sup>131</sup>.

Although Hitler's atheism is beyond historical doubt, yet some wonder why he repeatedly referred to 'Providence' and the 'Unknowable'. As results from his statement, the above concepts were the variation of the pantheistic philosophy, because Providence and God, that he mentioned,

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<sup>129</sup> Christa Schroeder, *Zeznania sekretarki...*, s. 181.

<sup>130</sup> André-François Poncet, *Bylem ambasadorem w Berlinie*, tłum. S. Zabiello, Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, Warszawa 1968, s. 49.

<sup>131</sup> A. Hitler, *Rozmowy przy stole*, s. 291.

never had the personal nature, and to his mind, they were the same as nature and wildlife, the nation and blood: ‘What Bolshevism did to people, clearly demonstrates that the sense of respect – the respect for Providence, for the Unknowable, for Nature, whatever you would call it, must be rooted in education’<sup>132</sup>. ‘If the Christian idea of God was true, then [...] every animal would imagine God, meaning Providence or the law of nature, in its form!’<sup>133</sup>. It goes without saying that it is the deciding factor whether our nation accepts the Jewish Christian faith with its soft morality of mercy, or rather the strong, heroic faith in God in nature, God in our own nation, God in our own life, our own blood’<sup>134</sup>.

Hitler put an equal sign between nature, wildlife and God, which means that he expressed the pantheistic view that is the form of atheism. (Dawkins himself draws attention to the fact of recognizing pantheism as atheism: ‘Pantheists don’t believe in a supernatural God at all, but use the word God as a non-supernatural synonym for Nature, or for the Universe or for the lawfulness that governs its workings [...]. Pantheism is sexed-up atheism’<sup>135</sup>). In Hitler’s opinion, the concept of God was synonymous with nature, the nation, and even the Germanic blood. He also rejected the idea of life after death since his understanding of nature became so materialistic: ‘The Christian idea of life after death cannot be replaced, because it is too vague’<sup>136</sup>. The belief that

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<sup>132</sup> Ibidem, p. 66.

<sup>133</sup> Ibidem, p. 139.

<sup>134</sup> H. Rauschnig, *Rozmowny z Hitlerem*, s. 58-59.

<sup>135</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>136</sup> A. Hitler, *Rozmowny przy stole*, s. 147.

there is no 'other world', constitutes the fundamental notion of atheism, the notion fully shared by the Nazi leader.

There is also a number of statements made by the dictator that - as it seems - have religious overtones, however, they never come beyond the sphere of pantheistic interpretation. Therefore, assigning the atheistic worldview to Hitler is philosophically and historically justified.

Hermann Rauschnig, the president of the Senate of the Free City of Gdansk, who knew Hitler personally and was acquainted with the concept of the 'new faith' of National Socialism, mentioned: 'Just like other *bauernführers*, I received regular invitations to the new type of atheist meetings of the National Socialists, the »religious« evenings, during which new religions entered the arena'<sup>137</sup>. Religions that were to be introduced by the Nazis into the social life, were for him the product of the previously prepared atheistic meeting.

Concluding: Hitler at the age of fourteen 'believed in nothing'. God and nature, generally understood as the laws of nature, were one and the same thing to him. Hence, he expressed the pantheist worldview, which, in turn, is the kind of atheism. Providence appears as an impersonal force existing within the boundaries of a materialistically comprehended being. He didn't believe in life after death because it was a totally false idea that couldn't be substituted by anything else. The Christian doctrine itself was fake, including its concept of God. As Christa Schroeder said, the word 'Almighty' uttered by Hitler, was the form of manipulation of the nation. All his leading associates, as well as elite SS troops got rid of the Christian faith. He was gui-

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<sup>137</sup> H. Rauschnig, *Rozmowy z Hitlerem*, s. 66.

ded by the principles of moral and social Darwinism in his life, simultaneously expressing views typical of atheism, with the strong anti-Christian bias.

## The tool of totalitarian evil

In another part of his study, Dawkins discusses the issue that is immensely valuable from the point of view of morality. He considers the assumption that a person is an atheist and does terrible deeds, only because he is an atheist, irrelevant<sup>138</sup>. The above reasoning relates to Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. However, such a way of understanding certain facts should be opposed. The criminal acts of those people originated in moral Darwinism, which was the consequence of the consistent atheism. In this sense, atheism signified degradation of their personality. Hitler constantly repeated that he derives his morality from Darwinism: 'The stronger wins. This is the law of nature, and the world won't change, this law will remain in force' or: 'The selection through

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<sup>138</sup> R. Dawkins, (*The God Delusion*, p. 309, presents the following understanding: „(1) Hitler and Stalin were atheists [...] (2) they did their terrible deeds because they were atheists. [...] It is certainly illogical if it is thought to follow from (1)”).

The same reasoning may be presented in case of religious people: (1) X and Y (e.g. the inquisitors) were religious; (2) they did their terrible deeds because they were religious. According to Dawkins' logic, there is no correspondence between (1) and (2), and hence, the vast part of the book *The God Delusion* should be removed, because it contains a great deal of passages in which Dawkins tries to prove the validity of this reasoning with respect to religious people, e.g. the attacks on WTC, witch-hunts, Crusades... (*The God Delusion* p. 23 and other).

the fight takes place over and over again and this fact is subject to the law of nature. The right to exist requires continuous killing, so that the stronger survives'<sup>139</sup>. Hitler, as the representative of consequentialism, favored the ideology of aggressive Darwinism, because it justified his commands, which extremely violated human rights. Stalin proclaimed similar kind of Darwinism. In his article titled Dialectical and Historical Materialism, he referred, citing Engels, to the laws of nature described by Darwin, and stated:

'In contrast to metaphysics, dialectics assumes that the objects of nature as well as the phenomena of nature comprise internal contradictions because all natural objects and phenomena have their negative and positive side, their past and future, their elements of utilization and elements of development and the struggle between those extremes, the struggle between the old and the new, between what is dying and what is born, between what expires and what evolves, constitutes the internal content of the process of development'<sup>140</sup>.

The analysis of the statements made by two major dictators of the twentieth century clearly indicates their explicit reference to Darwinism, according to which, there is the ongoing brutal fight in the natural order of the world. For Stalin, there was the scientifically justified 'class struggle', which derived its origins from social Darwinism. Analogously, there was a 'race struggle' for Hitler, which also had its Darwinian justification, in his opinion.

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<sup>139</sup> A. Hitler, *Rozmowy przy stole*, s. 61, 70.

<sup>140</sup> J. Stalin, *Zagadnienia leninizmu*, Wydawnictwo Literatury w Językach Obcych, Moskwa 1940, s. 533, 534.

The existence of the non-believers, committing monstrous evil, leads to the conclusion that atheism doesn't stand in opposition to moral degeneration of an individual. It is also the sufficient reason to favor the Christian morality, which excludes any immoral human behavior.

Throughout the history, religiousness was emerging in all societies of the world. The Egyptians built the temples, created their myths and appointed their own priestly caste. Similarly, in Babylonia, Greece, Rome - all people had their temples, priests and holy books. Christians have many thousands of places of worship, a huge number of priests and holy books, the Gospels. However, what did the Nazi Germans believe in? Where were their holy places of worship? Where were their priests? What was their holy book called? Auschwitz-Birkenau, Dachau, Majdanek and many other concentration camps became their 'holy' place. The SS and Gestapo men were priests. Mein Kampf was the holy book. People were killed as a sacrifice. Joseph Stalin presented similar religiousness. His temples were labor camps, priests - NKVD men, a sacred book - the Communist Manifesto. Stalin also sacrificed people on his altar<sup>141</sup>.

In his book, Dawkins tries to impute the scandalous thesis about the relationship between Christianity, or religion, with Nazism, whereas it is not consistent with history.

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<sup>141</sup> It must be remembered that crimes of communist and Nazi atheism were never condemned publicly by Dawkins.

## Pius XII and the National Socialists

In *The God Delusion*, the Oxford professor attacked the leading figure of Christianity of the twentieth century:

'This support showed itself in various ways, including Pope Pius XII's persistent refusal to take a stand against the Nazis – a subject of considerable embarrassment to the modern Church'<sup>142</sup>.

Dawkins endeavors to overestimate the history with this objection, which evidently demonstrates that the atheists are responsible for World War II, on the one hand, Adolf Hitler, and on the other, Joseph Stalin, along with the multitude of helpers sharing the same worldview. An atheist has no moral legitimacy to make such a plea. How can he then criticize the Pope for not condemning the atheistic regime?! How dare he imply: 'Pope, you are immoral, because you remained silent when my fellow believers were killing people!'. Why isn't the author of *The God Delusion* shocked at Joseph Stalin's criminal attitude of cooperation with the National Socialism instead of being stunned by the attitude of silence of Pius XII? Why does Dawkins see the speck in the Pope's eye, but can't notice the log in his own eye?

Eugenio Pacelli took the name Pius XII as the expression of the conscious succession of achievements of his predecessor, Pius XI. Still in 1937, he co-edited the content of *Mit brennender Sorge*<sup>143</sup>, the encyclical condem-

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<sup>142</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 314.

<sup>143</sup> Giovanni Sale, *Hitler, Stolica Apostolska i Żydzi. Dokumenty z tajnego archiwum watykańskiego odtajnione w 2004 r.*, tłum. Z. Kasprzyk, WAM, Kraków 2007 s. 108.

ning Nasizm, according to which the German authorities initiate ‘conspiracies, which aimed solely at destruction from the very beginning’. Then, Pius XI wrote: ‘Fulfilling my pastoral mission – we would constantly resist mentality that suppress the indisputable law by the implicit or explicit violence’. As the above document presents, the Holy See had officially condemned the Nazi policy before the outbreak of World War II. The further part of the encyclical examines the atheistic bases of Nasizm, which reformulated and used the concept of God for their own purposes: ‘Whoever, cultivating pantheistic vagueness, identifies God with the world, who reduces God to something earthly and makes something divine out of the world, does not belong to people believing in God’<sup>144</sup>. The contemporary pope defined Nasizm as the atheistic movement since it identified God with the world.

The subsequent successor of the Holy See, Pope Pius XII, continuing the work of his predecessor, repeatedly opposed the aggression and war, as well as the imminent tragedy of the European nations. After the Nazi and Stalinist invasion on Poland in September 1939, the Holy Father spoke: ‘There are already thousands of people suffering, hundreds of thousands of miserable human beings whose body and soul experience horrible consequences of this war, the war that, as you know, our fierce and stubborn attempts – unfortunately, fruitless! – aimed to protect

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<sup>144</sup> *Encyklika Jego Świątobliwości Piusa XI, O położeniu Kościoła Katolickiego w Rzeczy niemieckiej z dn. 14 marca 1937 roku (encyklika Mit brennender Sorge)*, tłum. prof. A. Słomkowski, Towarzystwo Wiedzy Powszechnej, Lublin 1937.



Europe and the whole world. We can observe the scene of mad panic and despair: this countless crowd of refugees and exiles, all those who already have no fatherland, nor hearth and home. We can hear the touching weeping of mothers and wives, mourning their relatives, who died in the battlefield [...]. We can hear whimpering and crying of babies, who lost their parents, calling of the wounded and groaning of the dying [...]. We worry about their suffering, their misery, their grief as if were our own [...]'<sup>145</sup>.

The Pope tried to protect humanity from the terrible consequences of the military actions. When his attempts became vain, the whole world stood in the immensity of fear, despair and terrible suffering. The Holy Father was uniting with those grievances as if he experienced them himself. Pius XII's encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus*, of October 20, 1939 was the expression of the complete condemnation of Nazism, both, in its philosophy and actions:

'Can there be, Venerable Brethren, the greater or more urgent duty than to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ (Ephesians 3.8) to the men of our time? Can there be anything nobler than to unfurl the 'Ensign of the King' before those who have followed and still follow a false standard, and to win back to the victorious banner of the Cross those who have abandoned it? What heart is not inflamed, is not swept forward to help at the sight of so many brothers and sisters, who misled by error, passion,

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<sup>145</sup> Pius XII, *Speech to the Polish Colony in Rome*, September 30, 1939 (Announced in *A.A.S.* 1939, XXXI, pp. 393-396. *Oss. Rom.* October 1, 1939), [in:] *Papież Pius XII a Polska 1939-1946*.

temptation and prejudice, have strayed away from faith in the true God and have lost contact with the joyful and life-giving message of Christ? Each of us belongs to 'the Soldiers of Christ - some are ecclesiastic, some laic. Therefore, facing the increasing number of the enemies of Christ, everyone should feel incited and spurred on to the greater vigilance, to more determined resistance, in order to defend the common goal. Anyone can notice how false ideas and doctrines are spread, and how they either deny the fact that the Christian truths have redemptive power, or simply do not allow these truths to be implemented into the human life. People's impiousness leads not only to breaking the Tables of God's Commandments, but also substituting them with other tables and other standards, which constitute the negation of the fundamental moral principles, given in the Revelation on Sinai, as well as this divine spirit, which comes from the Cross and Christ's Sermon preached on the Mount. Indisputably, it is commonly known and painful, that such mistakes and errors brought about the tragic results. These people claimed to be the believers and the followers of Christs, as long as they didn't encounter any obstacles in life. However, these were Christians only by name. When it became necessary to fight against the cruelty, oppose the open attacks – they acted like cowards'<sup>146</sup>.

Pius XII condemned the war, crimes and terror as well as the whole philosophy of the National Socialism in refe-

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<sup>146</sup> Encyclical *Summi Pontificatus* (section 6) of October 20, 1939 (Acta Apostolica Sedis, vo. XXXI, Ser. II, v. VI; 28 X 1939, [in:] *Pius XII. Kościół i Papież wobec Drugiej Wojny Światowej*, tłum. M. Rękas, B. Stan, Wydawnictwo Dokumentów Nauki Kościoła, Londyn 1947, s. 11, 12).

rence to the Gospel, which didn't provoke the Nazi authorities to retaliatory actions. According to the encyclical *Summi Pontificatus*, there is the urgent matter, the necessity happening at a given moment, that humanity needs Christ, specifically, love and justice., Thus Christians should 'unfurl the standard', in other words, bear witness to pure morality to those, who have departed from it – for the sake of the National Socialism. In turn, people who abandoned Christ (the National Socialists), should go back to the 'Cross' as soon as possible – on the way of peace and penance. Then, Pius XII speaks of the evangelical love of enemies, that despite the fact that so many people – the Nazis – departed from the Gospel, Christians, however, have faithfully walked the way traced by this teaching. They should 'help', that is, convert the apostates to Christianity. And these commands apply to everyone, both the secular and the clergy. The Pope, seeing the terrible surge of enemies of Christ, the total immorality and perversion, demands that Christians object to this form of slavery and act against Hitler in unison. He says that not only they are breaking the rules of the Ten Commandments ( By committing robbery and murders), but also create a totally deviant, immoral science that denies God and the words uttered by Jesus 'on the Mount'. He simultaneously condemns the Nazis for committing murders, explicitly accusing them of crimes. However, those who claim to be Christians and actively participate in the war, are not Christians at all, because not opposing the front of anti-human values, they do not fulfill sacrificially the Ten Commandments of God.

The above analysis relates to the acts of the unequivocal condemnation of the National Socialism, the war, the mur-

der, the moral degeneration, Hitler and any, even coming from the east, communist turmoil of the war. However, this is the condemnation expressed by the person who refers to the Gospel, understood as morality, which is not clear and understandable for everyone. Dawkins criticizes the silence of Pius XII, because, like the Nazis, he considers references to the Gospel the unrealistic absurd and nonsense - nonsense which he completely eliminates from his consciousness. This complaint reveals that the contemporary aggressive atheism as well as the Nazi atheism express the common ideology. While Dawkins does not discern the words of condemnation of the National Socialism, legitimate Christians read the Holy Father's words as the expression of the full disapproval of the situation of Europe. "The main evil, because of which the modern world fell into spiritual and moral bankruptcy and ruin extremely fast, is the shameful and truly criminal attempt of too many people to steal the King's power from Christ"<sup>147</sup>.

In his encyclical *Summi Pontificatus*, the Pope, referring to Christ, fully condemns the National Socialism, both, in its actions and philosophy, blaming it for: evil, false, false doctrine, perversion, destruction, rejection of standards of integrity, anti-Christianity, disregard for the laws of nature, moral bankruptcy, selfishness, oppression, competition, fight, blindness, darkness, axiological emptiness, deification of the state, absolutism and totalitarianism, instigating nations against nations, moral relativism, crimes. It is difficult to specify the kind of evil, which was not condemned by Pius XII.

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<sup>147</sup> *Ibidem*, sections 15, 17 (pp. 16, 17).

On Christmas Eve of 1941, the Holy Father spoke on the radio: 'Although with the great concern, which overwhelms our soul, we think and look, as if in a dream, at this horrible fighting and bloodshed [...] at the miserable fate of the wounded and prisoners; the suffering of body and soul, the massacres, destructions and ruins [...] millions of people who suffer from poverty and starvation due to the cruel and merciless struggle [...] sometimes we can hear the assertion that Christianity has betrayed its mission [...]. No: Christianity hasn't betrayed its mission, but people have rebelled against real and faithful to Christ and His preaching Christianity [...] they formed the mask of dead Christianity, with no Christ's spirit; and they stated that Christianity has betrayed its mission'<sup>148</sup>.

Then, in his speech delivered by Vatican Radio to the nations of the world, on Christmas Eve of 1942, Pius XII condemns all crimes committed by the Nazis: 'Mankind owes this oath to the countless dead, who are buried on the battlefields [...]. Mankind owes this oath to the countless mourning mothers, widows and orphans [...]. Mankind owes this oath to the exiles [...]. Mankind owes this oath to hundreds of people who with no personal guilt, just because of their nationality or origin, were designated for death or gradual extinction'<sup>149</sup>.

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<sup>148</sup> *Oreduje radiowe Jego Świątobliwości Piusa XII we Wigilię Bożego Narodzenia 1941 roku*, 2nd ed., F. Milder & Sons, Herbal Hill, London, E.C.1, 1945, pp. 5-7.

<sup>149</sup> Pius XII Papież, *Podstawowe zasady ładu w państwach* (Allokucja wygłoszona przez Radio Watykańskie do narodów świata w Wigilię Bożego Narodzenia 1942 r.), Wydawnictwo Dokumentów Nauki Kościoła, Londyn 1943, s. 22, 23.

And once again, expressing the complete opposition to the Nazi crimes, through the adequate selection of words, the Pope did not provoke the Nazi authorities, which could result only in the bloody retaliation.

In June 13, 1943, in his speech to the delegation of Italian workers, the Pope condemned the revolution, the exploitation, the murder just to gain material goods, the sacrifice of human life, in favor of realization of the social ideas, the rape and social violence, discord, and many other criminal and amoral state concepts<sup>150</sup>. It can be observed that every speech of Pius XII was a moral opposition to evil and tragedy of the war.

The Pope did not stop only on the words, but he also organized the support for the most underprivileged. For example, in the letter to the archbishop of Cracow, Fr. Adam Sapięha, he mentioned: 'We did not omit anything, indeed, to make milder, if only possible, the bitter misery that your nation experiences. We made your pastor work easier through granting you extraordinary power; we helped your refugees, your exiles, your soldiers residing as slaves abroad through providing allowances; we sent various supplies to your compatriots scattered in Switzerland'<sup>151</sup>.

Some people, including the Israeli historian Pinchas Lapide, believe that Pius XII contributed to saving about 850,000 people, which is already the sufficient reason to acknowledge the allegations against him as totally unfounded.

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<sup>150</sup> *Przemówienie Papieża Piusa XII wygłoszone do delegacji robotników włoskich w dniu 13 czerwca 1943 r.*, tłum. J. Zembrzuski, Rex-Verlag, Luzern, passim.

<sup>151</sup> Pius XII, *List do Jego Ekscelencji ks. Adama S. Sapięhy Arcybiskupa Krakowskiego, 23 grudnia 1940*, [in:] *Papież Pius XII a Polska*.

Dawkins, claiming that 'Pope Pius XII has never condemned Nazism publicly', stands in opposition to the facts. Thus, the question narrows down to the issue why Pius XII did not express the words of the strong disapproval directly, by criticizing the dictator of the Third Reich, Adolf Hitler by his name or criticizing the Nazi Party by its name. First, we must relate to motivations presented by Pius XII himself: '[The Italians] know, they undoubtedly know how terrible things are happening in Poland! We must utter the words of the strong opposition to such events. We are refrained from doing it merely because of the awareness, that expressing our opinion explicitly, would only worsen the situation of those wretches'<sup>152</sup>.

The Pope expressed his personal and complete disapproval of the Nazi cruelty. At the same time he was aware that his public appearance could aggravate the situation of people who were in the hands of the Nazis. The words of the 'strong opposition' are so clear that they could only result in another bloodshed, without causing any positive effects. Therefore, the Pope declined this form of resistance.

Pius XII wasn't wrong with his assessment of the whole situation. The commander the German concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, Rudolf Höss, who was convicted of slaying at least 2,5 million people, after the war testified that he applied such tactics: 'However, I believed that it would be the right thing if those Jews, who were in our

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<sup>152</sup> G. Sale, *Hitler, Stolica Apostolska i Żydzi...*, s. 160.

hands, were punished for spreading the news about the horrors happening in the camps by their compariots<sup>153</sup>.

The actions performed by Adolf Hitler and genocide organized and supported by him with all his might, indicate that the papal appeal (condemning Hitler by his name or the Nazi party) would result only in the bloody revenge, because revenge was one of the Nazi basic principles of conduct<sup>154</sup>. If it took place, then Dawkins, or other atheists, would write: 'Pope Pius XII proved to be the mad and cruel man. He intentionally tensed the conflict with Hitler in order to brutally slaughter innocent people. Because what can he achieve by his pious appeals to the army of psychopathic murderers? Who did he direct these delusional requests to, if he knew that the Nazis killing for owning a radio, separated the most interested part of occupied Europe from the world?'

So, whoever criticizes Pius XII for his silence, takes himself the moral stigma of human blood that would stain the ground, if this Pope fulfilled the criminal demand and conducted the aggressive policy.

Therefore, Dawkins, accusing Pius XII of silence, requests, in fact, the escalation of Nazi terror<sup>155</sup>.

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<sup>153</sup> Rudolf Höss, *Wspomnienia Rudolfa Hössa*, s. 136. Theodore Eicke tortured the Jews in the camp due to the 'propaganda campaign' shortly before the war, p. 135.

<sup>154</sup> Aleksander Omiljanowicz, *Wyrok*, Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, wyd. II, Warszawa 1976, s. 10: 'The Nazis performed public executions, retaliations, burned villages and organized mass deportations to the concentration camps as a consequence of every partisan action'.

<sup>155</sup> In the Netherlands, the Dutch episcopate condemned the Nazi genocide (in the pastoral letter of July 26, 1942), and as a result there occurred



## Conclusion

The two largest political ideologies in history, based on anti-religious and anti-Christian values, brought the ineffable suffering to mankind, thereby, proving that atheism is open to moral degeneration of a human being. Dawkins' claim about atheistic humanism crumbles in the perspective of the fact, that the twentieth century was so cruel and ruthless.

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the mass arrests, for example of Edith Stein, who died in the gas chamber a few days later in Auschwitz-Birkenau, the German concentration camp. (Giovanni Sale, *Hitler, Stolica Apostolska i Żydzi*, s. 160-161).

## CHAPTER 4

### WHO A CHRISTIAN IS?

Totalitarian systems opposed Christianity with unusual determination and consequence, so far. Therefore, they revealed that the moral teaching of Jesus impeded the realization of their basic ideas and aspirations. The words uttered two thousand years ago had the power to stop the most cruel social processes, therefore, measures were taken to distort, replace or even destroy completely religion that aroused two thousand years ago. To achieve their objectives, the methods that fundamentally falsified the vision of Christianity were used. Many Christian leaders were killed as well. Various deformations, however, which have been propagated for a long time, permeated the social strata, to the extent, that numerous people have mistakenly perceived the followers of Christ until the present day.

#### **A Christian**

Who a Christian is? The explanation of the discussed issue is the key to understand one of the greatest philosophical concepts of humanity. In relation to history as well as the Gospel, a Christian appears as a being personally united with Jesus, who bases his moral system on principles given by Him.

The origin of the name 'Christian', Tacitus<sup>156</sup>, the Roman historian (I/II century), attributed to Christ, writing: 'The beginning of the name was given by Christ, who during the reign of Tiberius, was sentenced to death by the prosecutor Pontius Pilate'. However, what criteria must a person fulfill to be called a Christian? What system of values must he present? What way of life must he choose? It is necessary to take a look at the words of Jesus in order to discover both, the purpose and the essence of Christianity:

'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me', 'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another'<sup>157</sup>.

It is the principle of love, implemented with extreme determination, that decides about belonging to His teachings. The one who does not retain the rules of law and virtues, cannot be A disciple of Christ. The moral teaching of Jesus is the fundamental precept of human behavior for His followers. On the opposite side, there is the different morality, which constitutes the denial of the human dignity and universal values, and which accomplishment, generates the collapse of humanity. Jesus presents the dividing line between those values by saying the reprimanding words:

'inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food,

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<sup>156</sup> Tacyt, *Dziela*, tłum. S. Hammer, Warszawa 1957, Czytelnik, t. I, s. 461 [Roczniki, XV 44].

<sup>157</sup> Luke 9, 23; John 13, 34.

I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life'<sup>158</sup>.

According to this teaching, a human being should be guided by the principle of social altruism. The realization of the postulate of humanity is the divine order immediately resulting in the mystical life. Christ, as the fair judge, separates false and cruelty from truth and mercy, and in the Gospel proclaimed by Him, he warns against hypocritical religious

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<sup>158</sup> Mt 25, 34-46.

ness and the attempt of implementing the elements of injustice under the guise of it:

‘Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, [...] On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness!’<sup>159</sup>; ‘Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits’<sup>160</sup>.

Jesus, with these words, condemned any abuse arising from the attempts to simulate Christian religion. He rejects the apostates, simultaneously accusing them of violating His rights. A Christian is a person who recognizes the teachings of Christ both, in word and deed. Everyone, regardless of his social position, if identifies with Jesus, has the religious obligation to execute postulated by the Gospel moral and ethical precepts.

### **About the behavior of a Christian**

One of the biggest mistakes and complete misunderstandings made by critics of Christianity, is the false interpretation of the issues of belonging to the Church. This mistake is connected with ‘politicization’ of the institution and reducing the Church, which is spiritual, to the secular

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<sup>159</sup> Mt 7, 21.

<sup>160</sup> Mt 7, 15, 16.

organization, just like the political party, having strictly materialistic nature. Thus, the multitude of the opponents of Christ, make the accusations (usually criminally hyperbolic) of crimes committed by Christians in the history of the world<sup>161</sup>. It is concluded (implicitly), therefore, that since Christians have been guilty of crimes, then their religion, and the whole teachings of its founder, lose their reason for being, and we need to seek alternative solutions - here, Dawkins prefers atheism as the best form of the belief. Such reasoning features misunderstanding of the essence of Christianity. The belonging to the doctrine of Christ does not rely on formal membership, such as in political parties. The belonging to the Church is reflected in fulfilling the teachings of Christ in daily life. So, when someone formally belongs to the Church, whether by baptism or by performing the office, if he committs serious offenses - he excludes himself from the group of the followers of Christ. We are frequently dealing with the situation, when someone was excluded under the law of the Gospel, and in practice, he holds the office in the church, or is a religious practitioner. He remains indeed outside the community. Such a person, however, has the chance to spiritually return to the Church through expressing genuine regret, penance or atonement.

Dawkins' atheism is the worldview fundamentally attacking Christianity. He not only proclaims absurdity of its basic ideas, but also accuses its followers of immoral behaviors, including crimes and murders. Nevertheless, one who understands correctly the principles of Christian morality, cannot accept the allegations of the Oxford profesor,

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<sup>161</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, for example: pp. 23, 54, 58-59, 64... 401.

because crimes and unethical behaviors are not included in the doctrine. Thus, when atheists talk about terrible Christian murders, they do not mean Christians, but at most those, who pretend to be Christians. It is worth analyzing the example below in order to better understand this problem. The Polish Constitution declares that in case of refusing to swear the allegiance by the MP, he loses his parliamentary seat by law. One MP refused to pledge. Then, he attended the Parliament and took part in the vote during the deliberations. Will his vote be valid? Of course, not. This man voted with no permission. Similarly, like this MP, who under the Constitution has no right to sit on the parliamentary bench, many people, by the power of the Gospel, have no right sit on the bench of the church. And these people, who do not have any right to call themselves disciples of Jesus, are willingly attacked by atheists, despite the fact that they constitute the philosophical monolith along with them.

Christ warned against people, who being included in the religious structure, still would depart from the principles of pure morality<sup>162</sup>. He also warned against the pharisaic attitude and referred His comments not only to the clergy, but also ordinary members of His Church:

“Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear,[a] and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them

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<sup>162</sup> Mt 7, 15.

with their finger. They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi[b] by others. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers'<sup>163</sup>.

The Gospel clearly portrays that Judas himself excluded from the membership in the Church. We should remember that this man was not the apostle of Christ in the moment of the betrayal, yet he served his own egoistic interests. The accusations against Christianity derive their origins from the full ignorance of its basic moral principles.

You can commit evil incidentally, or unconsciously, or in principle. Although being incidental and being unaware of evil are common to both, Christians and atheist, doing evil in principle corresponds only to the consistent atheism, however. A Christian, in principle, is obliged to act morally blamelessly because he commits himself to respecting such a law. Meanwhile, an atheist is not restricted by any moral law.

### **Where do crimes ascribed to the Church come from?**

You can ask yourself the question: who are the people calling themselves Christians and yet doing evil? The words of Dawkins himself should be quoted at this point: 'The reason so many people don't notice atheists is that many of

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<sup>163</sup> Mt 23, 1-8.



us are reluctant to »come out«<sup>164</sup>; 'the majority of atheists I know disguise their atheism behind a pious facade'<sup>165</sup>.

Atheists hide among Christians. Sometimes hypocritical people, referred to by Dawkins in the above quotation, sit on the church benches. They most frequently justify their system of values with moral Darwinism. This Darwinism does not allow them to reveal themselves, as they derive much greater benefit from remaining concealed. They may even fear to state clearly and explicitly: 'I'm sick of Christ, I don't believe in any of His words! More – He never existed!'

Why would the atheists, who are so immoral to live in conscious hypocrisy, be therefore, moral enough to selflessly fulfill the law of the Gospel? Discerning any premise does not entitle us to claim that those people fulfill commands of Jesus and generally, rules of independent morality. Just the opposite – these 'hiding' ones would be becoming more and more hypocritical in the course of the increasing obstacles, and thereby – even greater wickedness.

Dawkins noticed that the official participation in the religious rituals (such as marriages and funerals) does not contradict atheism, as long as a person internally gives up the veracity of the belief in God<sup>166</sup>. The consequences of this phenomenon are very unfavorable to the Church, however, because such a person can be seen as a Christian, even though he actually does not feel the obligation to respect the law of the Gospel. When hard times occur, such a hidden atheist makes desolation around him as well as

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<sup>164</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 27.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 395.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 387.

inside the church. Thus, the whole responsibility is assigned to Christians, and presumably - to Christ himself.

Since the first century, apostles and their successors have obeyed the rules given by their Master. They warned against the false prophets, in other words, the usurpers claiming to be the disciples of Jesus:

‘If someone comes and teaches you everything what has been stated above, accept him. However, if he changes something and starts to teach new things in order to destroy, do not listen to him [...]. Every apostle that visits you, welcome as the Lord himself. He won’t stay with you any longer than for one day, and if necessary for two days. If he stays for three days, then he is a false prophet. When this apostle leaves, please give him just the bread: if he requests money, he is a false prophet [...]. Not everyone who speaks under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is a prophet. He is one only if he lives in harmony with the Lord’s will. Thus, you can recognize if a prophet is false or true after his way of life. Every prophet who tells under the inspiration of the Spirit to set the table, won’t eat of it, otherwise, he is a false prophet. Every prophet who teaches the truth and doesn’t act the way he teaches, is a false prophet<sup>167</sup>.

Besides, other statements coming from the later period, reflect the constant activities of the Christian community in favor of preserving purity of values, which they represent. The canon of the 9th Council of Nicea says: ‘If some priests have been granted their dignity without any trial, or, if

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<sup>167</sup> *Didache*, [w:] *Pierwszi świadkowie. Pisma Ojców Apostolskich*, tłum. A. Świderkówna, Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne Sandomierz, Kraków 1998, s. 38-39.

during the trial period the investiagetd confessed to the crime, however, in spite of sins, to which they admitted, some people acting against the canons gave them Holy Orders, they are deemed invalid. The Catholic Church, in fact, wants people of immaculate reputation'<sup>168</sup>.

From the very beginning, the teaching ministry of the Church have struggled with people who prefer selfish goals to the teachings of Christ. Canon XVII was the attempt to restore the fundamental standards:

'Since numerous priests, motivated by greed, pursue the wicked earnings while forgetting the words of the divine book, which says: »who does not put out his money at interest« and lending money they demand percentages, the holy and great council decides justly that whoever, after the enforcement of this law, is involved in usury, or cultivates this procedure in other way, or demands himolia, or conspires anything else, just to get disgraceful profits, should be removed from the group of clergymen and remain beyond the law'.

Any attempt to transform the sacramental office into the financial institutions is clearly prohibited. The announcement of the above regulations in the conciliar document shows the importance and magnitude of the problem. These exhortations were later repeated many times. The fight against the deviations from the teaching of Christ has acquired several forms over the centuries. The second canon of the Council of Chalcedon is the condemnation of the emerging practice at the time:

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<sup>168</sup> *Dokumenty Soborów Powszechnych*, tłum. A. Baron, T. Wnętrzak, WAM Księży Jezuici, Kraków 2005, t. I, s. 35.

‘If a bishop administers the sacrament of Holy Orders for money and simultaneously makes grace, which cannot be sold, the subject of trade, if he ordains a bishop, or a presbyter, or a deacon, or any other person from the group of clergymen for money, or led by filthy profits, he appoints an administrator, an attorney, a curator [...] he risks [...] the loss of office. As for the ordained, they would not have any benefit from the bought orders or promotion, because they are to be deprived of the illegally gained dignity or the position. Whoever was the mediator in this shameful and illicit trade, if he is a priest, he will lose his position, and if he is a secular person, or a monk, he will be excluded from the community’<sup>169</sup>.

The next, third canon, was the expression of another opposition to the attempts of misusing their social status by the clergy that sometimes depart from the Christian rules:

‘The Holy Synod found out that some members of the clergy, led by the desire of obtaining filthy profits, lease somebody else’s goods and burden themselves with worldly affairs, and neglecting the service of God, they run to secular people’s houses and guided by greed, accept various assets. The present holy synod declared that in the future any bishop, a cleric, or a monk, shall not lease assets, or be involved in temporary matters, or accept the management of someone’s goods. One exception is allowed, namely, when the law forces to take care of the minors or a bishop of the city entrusts the duty of caring for the church property, or he tells, for fear of the Lord, to protect orphans and widows without custody or other people who need help of the Church.

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<sup>169</sup> Ibidem, p. 225.

Who will try to break these rules in the future, will be given the ecclesiastical penalty<sup>170</sup>.

The presented conciliar documents explicitly show the continuous concern of the teaching ministry, of the Christian community, for the purity of the faith and fidelity to the Gospel.

## **Conclusion**

Undoubtedly, calling yourself a Christian entails various commitments, as it is directly connected with the necessity of the implementation into life the essential ethical values. At the same time, standing in opposition to the basic principles of the Gospel, decides about the spiritual separation from the Christian community, and finally, mystical rejection by God.

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<sup>170</sup> Ibidem, p. 227.

## CHAPTER 5 HISTORICAL SOURCES OF CHRISTIANITY

The vision of Christianity presented in the previous chapters constitutes the essential reference to the fundamental evangelicac truths.

The representatives of atheism not only interpret principles of Christian morality incorrectly, but also, most importantly, they reject everything that may be connected with the person of Jesus. They have ideological interest to distort the historical record about Him, because in this way, they can prove the legitimacy of philosophical lines that they represent. All sources, all data, all information that relate to this figure, they consider false and hypocritical - being completely subject to the unequivocal and evident rejection. However, is this rejection based on the reliable interpretation of the historical sources? It is worth examining the most crucial allegations against Christianity, which are quoted by Dawkins.

### **The canon of the Gospel**

Dawkins proclaims: 'Ever since the nineteenth century, scholarly theologians have made an overwhelming case that the gospels are not reliable accounts of what happened in

the history of the real world'<sup>171</sup>. The author of *The God Delusion*, however, did not present these 'reliable accounts', as well as the names of these 'scholarly theologians'. The content of this assumption, therefore, can be regarded as internally empty. 'All were written long after the death of Jesus, and also after the epistles of Paul'<sup>172</sup> – Dawkins continues. Meanwhile, as for the formation of the Gospel, we have the sufficient amount of reliable information in order to confirm the correctness of the accepted canon known in its current form. However, the non-believers tend to claim that the Gospels were created very late and are of the unknown authorship. Nevertheless, no one provides any evidence to prove this fact, instead creating the endless acrobatics of subjective speculations and hypotheses.

Dawkins claims that the Gospels were created 'long after the death of Jesus' and 'after Paul's writings', but does not rely on any, even the slightest historical premise. He conducts his criticism in this spirit: 'Nobody knows who the four evangelists were, but they almost certainly never met Jesus personally. Much of what they wrote was in no sense an honest attempt at history'<sup>173</sup>. These passages initiate the main conflict between atheists and Christian theists. Christians consider the Gospels as the historical works, whereas atheists have exactly the opposite opinion. Thus, we should refer to the existing sources to explain the arising doubts. As assumed, there lived the witness of the earliest events between AD 60 and 135. He wrote down his testi-

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<sup>171</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 118.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 118.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 122.

mony, which preserved in the writings of, inter alia, Eusebius of Caesarea, until now. According to this historian, in Expositions of Oracles of the Lord, Papias wrote: ‘Since wherever I met one of those who accompanied presbyters, I asked them what Andrew, or Peter, or Philip, or Thomas, or James, or John, or Matthew, or any other of the disciples of Jesus, said, moreover, what Arystjon and John presbyter, the Lord’s disciples say. It seemed that I will not benefit as much from the books as from the words vibrating with life’<sup>174</sup>.

Papias, the early Christian writer, wrote in his letter, that he knew the disciples of Jesus personally and he talked with them, therefore, thanks to their teachings he got to know the Gospel. Thus, he gave humanity the testimony of those events, adding that reading ‘books’ wasn’t so much favorable as the contact with a living word. Accordingly, these books were already written down during his lifetime and their reliability was verified by him. Then, if Dawkins claims that the Gospels do not reflect historical events, he must refer to Papias’ statements. Meanwhile, he omits this significant figure in his book, setting the reader of *The God Delusion* in the complete confusion.

Papias, referring to the creation of the Gospel, wrote: ‘This is what the presbyter said: Mark was Peter’s translator, he precisely wrote down everything that he kept in mind, but not in the order in which the Lord’s words and actions occurred. He neither heard the Lord, nor belonged to His disciples, and only later, as it is said, he accompanied Peter [...]’.

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<sup>174</sup> Papiasz, *Słów Pańskich objaśnienia*, [w:] Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia Kościelna*, tłum. ks. A. Lisiecki, Fiszer i Majewski Księgarnia Uniwersytecka, Poznań 1924, s. 141 (III 39 3-4).



He tried only one thing, namely, not to skip anything from what he heard and not to write anything untrue<sup>175</sup>.

Thus, the witnesses of those events claim that the Gospel of Mark was written down by the one, to whom it is currently assigned. According to this description, it is true that this writer did not know Jesus, however, he was Peter's translator, so that he acquired the reliable source of information about the events that were happening at that time. In addition, Peter was crucified<sup>176</sup> for his convictions, hence, his testimony sounds authentic.

Evangelical statements of Jesus were quoted in the first century by Clement of Rome (died in AD 101), ordained by Peter himself<sup>177</sup>: 'Remember [...] the words of Jesus [...]. He said: »Be merciful, for you shall receive mercy. Forgive, for you shall receive forgiveness. Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them«<sup>178</sup>. These thoughts are identical with texts of Matthew (5, 7; 6, 12 i 14; 7, 1-2 i 12), Mark (11, 25; 4, 24) and Luke (6, 37).

<sup>175</sup> Ibidem, pp. 143-144 (III 39 15).

<sup>176</sup> Klemens Rzymski (zm. ok. 100 r.), *List do Kościoła w Koryncie*, V 4; (*Pierwsi świadkowie...* op. cit., s. 53); Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia Kościoła*, II 25, 5.

<sup>177</sup> Tertulian Kwintus Septymiesz Florens, *Wybór pism – Preskrypcja przeciw herezykom* (cz. 32), tłum. E. Stanula, Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, *Pisma Starochrześcijańskich Pisarzy*, t. V, Warszawa 1970, s. 67.

<sup>178</sup> Klemens Rzymski, *List do Kościoła w Koryncie*, XIII, 1-2, op. cit.

Clemens, in his letter (part XXIV, 5), quotes the evangelical contents concerning the sower, which are convergent with the writings of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Next, he cites the whole passage of the thought of Jesus himself: 'It would have been better for that man if he had not been born. Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea'<sup>179</sup>.

Thus, the quoted passages illustrate that the evangelical contents were already known quite early, in the first century AD.

In the second century, in his *Apology and Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*, Justin (c. 100-165 years) cited significant amount of quotations, as he said, the Apostolic Memoirs, which is the Gospel: 'However, in the Memoirs, arranged, as I said, by the apostles and those who followed them, it was written that His sweat fell down like drops of blood while He was praying and saying: »if you are willing, remove this cup from me«<sup>180</sup> Next, Justin assumes: 'For when Christ was giving up His spirit on the cross, He uttered: »Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!«, as I have learned from these Memoirs. For He exhorted His disciples to surpass the pharisaic way of living [...], He told them, as recorded in the Memoirs: »Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven«<sup>181</sup>, 'Moreover, Christ

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<sup>179</sup> Ibidem, XLVI, 8 – a list of quotes from: Mt 26, 24; Mk 14, 21; Mt 18, 6; Mk 9, 42; Luke 17, 1.

<sup>180</sup> Święty Justyn, *Dialog z Żydem Tryfonem*, 103, 8; Luke 22, 42.

<sup>181</sup> Ibidem, 105, 5.

changed the name of one of His apostles to Peter, as recorded in his *Memoirs*<sup>182</sup>. The preserved writings of Justin show that he was the prominent intellectual, who confirmed the truth of the evangelical message with his authority. This philosopher, in his works, frequently makes references to the contents derived from the Gospel of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. He presents life of Jesus as the real history, assigning the authorship of the Gospels to the apostles and disciples of Christ. He was convinced of its veracity and for this reason, he was martyred. Dawkins' assumption undermining the historicity of the Gospel, does not find the proper justification.

Clement of Alexandria also wrote about the Gospels: (c. AD 150-215): The Gospels containing the genealogies, he says, were written first. The Gospel of Mark, however, was meant to be created for the following reason. When Peter preached the Word publicly at Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, many who were present requested that Mark, who had accompanied him for a long time and remembered his sayings, should write them out. And having composed the Gospel he gave it to those who had requested it. When Peter learned of this, he neither directly forbade nor encouraged it. But, last of all, John, perceiving that the external facts had been portrayed from the materialistic perspective in the Gospel, being urged by his friends, and inspired by the Spirit, composed the spiritual Gospel<sup>183</sup>.

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<sup>182</sup> Ibidem, 106, 3.

<sup>183</sup> Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia Kościelna*, s. 268 (VI 14, 5-7), z dzieła Klemensa Aleksandryjskiego *Zarysy*, op. cit.

According to this information, Mark wrote his work still during Peter's lifetime (died in approx. 67 year), reflecting faithfully the content of Peter's sermon, the disciple of Christ himself.

Soon after, the prominent scholar, Origen (c. 185-254) wrote: 'On the basis of tradition I learned about four Gospels, which are considered unquestionable, only by the divine church, existing under the sky, that the first one was written by this publican, later an apostle of Jesus Christ, Matthew, that he issued it for believers of the Jewish origin, and wrote in Hebrew. The second is the Gospel according to Mark, who arranged it in harmony with Peter's instructions [...]. The third is the Gospel of Luke, confirmed by Paul, and wrote for those, who come from Gentiles. Finally, the the Gospel of John is the last'<sup>184</sup>.

The credibility of the Gospel canon should not raise any larger historical doubts. Dawkins maintains, that 'no one knows who the four evangelists were', whereas there are reasons to conclude that Matthew was a disciple of Christ (evangelical publican), and Mark, a disciple of Peter. Luke, however, accompanied Paul from Tarsus. According to the Muratorian Canon<sup>185</sup>, he did not know Je-

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<sup>184</sup> Ibidem, pp. 280, 281 (VI 25, 4-6), op. cit.

<sup>185</sup> The Muratorian Canon (II c): '... The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. Luke, the well-known physician, after the ascension of Christ, when Paul had taken with him as one zealous for the law, composed it in his own name, according to [the general] belief. Yet he himself had not seen the Lord in the flesh; and therefore, as he was able to ascertain events, so indeed he begins to tell the story from the birth of John. The fourth of the Gospels is that of John, [one] of the disciples', Bruce Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987, p. 305.

sus directly but he wrote his work on the basis of available sources. Luke himself deduced: 'Since many have endeavored to describe events that took place around us, and as witnesses and servants of the Word told us, I, who have examined everything from the very beginning, also decided to report it to you, eminent Theophilus'<sup>186</sup>.

John is the last evangelist, who saw the death of Christ on the cross<sup>187</sup>. John, the disciple of Jesus, is ascribed the authorship of the Gospel by: Polycarp of Smyrna (c. 69-82, d. 156, a disciple of John the Apostle), Melito of Sardis (the second century AD), Irenaeus (c. 140-202), Polycrates of Ephesus (the second century AD), Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215), the so-called Muratorian Fragment of the second century<sup>188</sup>.

Dawkins' claim that 'no one knows who the four evangelists were' is false. Similar credibility is presented in his next statement: 'almost certainly none on them met Christ', because two of them 'almost certainly' were the disciples of Christ. The author leaves his theses without providing the proper historical justification, therefore, they can be regarded internally empty.

Dawkins approaches the genesis of the Gospel with ignorance and disregard: 'Later, all the Gospels were copied and rewritten, again and again, by the subsequent »Chinese whippers generations« [...] – fallible scribes, most of whom, in addition, had their own religious interests'. One can rightly ask: where does this information come from? We can fol-

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<sup>186</sup> Luke 1, 1-4.

<sup>187</sup> John 19, 35.

<sup>188</sup> Daniel Rops, *Kościół pierwszych wieków*, tłum. K. Ostrowska, wyd. I, PAX, Warszawa 1968, s. 297.

low history or at least rely on reliable premises to claim that since the first century the Church has constantly possessed the evangelical canon, including writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The pages of the history of Christianity also contain little known and rarely mentioned figures, whose writings and life greatly contribute to the assesment of the described events. Ignatius of Antioch (c. 30-107) belongs to such figures. In his letter to the Church in Tralleis, he described life of Jesus, stating that he died on the cross and was risen, and Ignatius himself is going to Rome to die to testify the vericity of this teaching. Affirming the content of the Gospel with his death, he wrote: Remain deaf when people talk about something other than Jesus Christ, of the house of David, Son of Mary, who was trully born, who ate and drank and who was really persecuted by Pontius Pilate, who was really crucified and died [...]. He also was resurrected'. Next, he gets angry with people like Dawkins, as he writes: 'But if, as some irreligious, that is, the unfaithful, say, that He only seemingly suffered – then they themselves seemingly exist! – Why am I a prisoner? Why do I desire to be exposed to wild animals? Do I therefore die in vain!<sup>189</sup>. We should remember that the teaching of Christ and His history were confirmed by Ignatius of Antioch, who lived at that time, got to know Jesus' life and proved its historical tone with his own life. There is no such teaching in the history of humanity that would be defended with such determination.

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<sup>189</sup> Ignacy Antiocheński, *Ignacy do Kościoła w Tralleis*, IX-X, *Piernsi świadkowie...*, s. 126, op. cit.

The author of *The God Delusion* did not present any reasonable argument to confirm his theses. The content of his assumptions is totally empty and does not carry any cognitive values. In spite of this, Dawkins is constantly attacking Jesus, trying to equate false with truth, as if between one and the other did not occur any difference:

‘The four gospels that made it into the official canon were chosen, more or less arbitrarily, out of a larger sample of at least a dozen including the Gospels of Thomas, Peter, Nicodemus, Philip, Bartholomew and Mary Mgdalen. Some of these gospels, the known Apocrypha of the time, were the additional gospels that Thomas Jefferson was referring to in his letter to his nephew: »I forgot to observe, when speakinf of the New Testament, that you should read all the histories of Christ, as well of those whom a council of ecclesiastics have decided for us, to be Pseudo-evangelists, as those they named Evangelists. Because these Pseudo-evangelists pretended to insiration, as much as the others, and you are to judge their pretensions by your own reason, and not by the reason of those ecclesiastics«<sup>190</sup>.

It is presumed that the Gospel of Thomas was created in the second century, similarly to the Gospel of Mary Magdalene and Peter; the Gospel of Philip is dated to the third century, whereas the Gospel of Bartholomew, to the fourth century<sup>191</sup>. The situation of apocryphal writings is clear, almost all of them come from the second, the third

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<sup>190</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 121.

<sup>191</sup> *Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu*, cz. 1, red. M. Starowieyski, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków 2003, s. 180-181; cz. 2, s. 615; *Encyklopedia katolicka*, KUL Lublin, 1973.

and the fourth century. However, the canonical Gospels: according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, were already written in the first century and this dating is confirmed by serious scientific discourses. For instance: Carsten Thiede, the biblical scholar and papyrologist, the researcher of the Dead Sea scrolls of Qumran, the professor of the History of the New Testament Department in Basel, the director of the Epistemological Research Institute in Paderborn, presented analyses proving that 'Magdalenian' papyrus stems from the middle of the first century and is an excerpt from the Gospel of Matthew<sup>192</sup>. Similarly, papyrus 7Q5, dated by this papyrologist to the first century (before 68 year), including excerpt from the Gospel according to Mark<sup>193</sup>.

Confidence in the canonical writings increases due to the precedence of their creation. In addition, the canonical Gospels are referred to by fathers and simultaneously historians of the Church, confirming them with their authority, however, there is no one respectable to give the genuine testimony of other writings, and also it is impossible to reproduce the process of their creation. Eusebius said: 'The Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias and several others as well as the Acts of Andrew, John [...]. Throughout the history, none of the church men has regarded these writings worthy of mention. Besides, their style differs from the apostolic custom, and thoughts and the presented rules [...] appear quite clearly as forged heretic works. Thus, they shouldn't be even

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<sup>192</sup> C. Thiede, M. d'Ancona, *Jezusowy Papyrus*, Amber, wyd. I, Warszawa 2007, s. 121.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 58.



included into the rejected writings, but they ought to be completely cast aside as absurd and impious'<sup>194</sup>.

Proclaiming that 'any clegry congregation' made, more or less, arbitrary choice, as for the evangelical canon, does not find its historical legitimacy. Everyone can assess himself: is it possible that Thomas, Peter, Philip, Bartholomew or Mary Magdalene wrote the Gospel in the second, the third or the fourth century after their death? Accusing the Church of the variability and inaccuracy of the value assessment of the pseudo-Gospel is unfounded.

## The genealogies of Jesus

The genealogies of Jesus constitute the obstacle that seems difficult to overcome for Dawkins: 'Why don't they notice those glaring contradictions? Shouldn't a literalist worry about the fact that Matthew traces Joseph's descent from King David via twenty-eight intermediate generations, while Luke has forty-one generations? Worse, there is almost no overlap in the names on the two lists'<sup>195</sup>.

Commenting on his allegations, the Oxford professor wrote: 'the resulting contradictions are glaring, but consistently overlooked by the faithful' and 'Do these people never open the book that they believe is the literal truth?'<sup>196</sup>.

Nevertheless, history does not confirm the quoted complaints. Origen (c. 186-254) already wrote: 'Though evangelists present differently the pedigree of Jesus, and this fact

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<sup>194</sup> Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia Kościelna* (III 25, 6-7), op. cit.

<sup>195</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 120.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 140.

greatly concerned some people<sup>197</sup>. Similarly, Eusebius of Caesarea, said: ‘Many people claim that the [pedigrees] are in mutual contradiction’, and also: the believers ‘with the lack of knowledge, force themselves to detect the significance of those places’<sup>198</sup>. The existing difficulties were already described in the ancient Christianity, therefore, Dawkins’ assumption that the faithful do not perceive them, is incorrect.

The previously quoted complaint concerns two genealogies of Jesus, given by Matthew (1, 1-17), and presented by Luke (3, 23-38). How to explain the existence of two different family trees of Jesus in the Gospels? The issue of these genealogies was examined by Julius Africanus in the ancient times at the turn of the second and the third centuries<sup>199</sup>. The Jewish levirate law, commonly known in the history, served as the explanation for those discrepancies<sup>200</sup>. Children subject to this law could be proud of the two pedigrees, legal and natural, in the special situations.

| Matthew (1, 15-16) | Luke (3, 23) |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Jesus              | Jesus        |
| Joseph             | Joseph       |
| Jacob              | Heli         |
| Matan              | Matthat      |
| [...]              | [...]        |

<sup>197</sup> Orygenes, *Homilia o Ewangeliu św. Łukasza*, *Homilia* 28-1, tłum. i oprac. Stanisław Kalinkowski, *Pisma Starochrześcijańskich Pisarzy*, Tom XXXVI, Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, Warszawa 1986, s. 110.

<sup>198</sup> Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia Kościoła* (I 7,1) op. cit.

<sup>199</sup> Ibidem (I 7, 1-10).

<sup>200</sup> *Deuteronomy* 25, 5-10.

Matan got married, according to tradition, to Esta, they had a child named Jacob, and then he died. Esta, as a widow, being able to remarry, married Matthat. She gave birth to Matthat's son - Heli. So Jacob and Heli were from different families and fathers, while being brothers of the same mother. One of them, Jacob, after the death of his childless brother, Heli, married his wife, according to the levirate law, and therefrom, Joseph was born. He was his son but on the legal basis he belonged to Heli. Therefore, there are two genealogical trees in the history of Jesus.

The fact of presenting varying pedigrees indicates that the evangelists, Matthew and Luke, derive their knowledge from different sources. They express contrasting points of view, which authenticates them as historians, in the context of the rational explanation of the discrepancy. The allegations proclaimed by Dawkins prove to be unfounded.

### **Further questions concerning Jesus' origin**

'[...] if Jesus really was born of a virgin, Joseph's ancestry is irrelevant and cannot be used to fulfil, on Jesus' behalf, the Old Testament prophecy that the Messiah should be descended from David'<sup>201</sup>.

In other words: Jesus was born to Mary of God, and not of Joseph, so discussing the genealogies of Jesus is pointless, because Joseph wasn't the father of Jesus anyway.

Nevertheless, we know that Joseph actually considered Jesus as his offspring, which is equivalent to adoption.

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<sup>201</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 120.

Thereby, he became his legal father, so Jesus could be proud of his pedigree. Such recognition can be proved by the fact that people used to say: 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?'<sup>202</sup>. People, as can be seen, were convinced of the ties between Jesus and Joseph. Jesus, therefore, was the son of Joseph in the legal sense, however, as for Mary – legal and natural. Nowadays also, when a man regards a woman's child as his own, following the specific procedure, he becomes his legal father, even though he is not his natural father.

Furthermore, on the basis of the Book of Numbers (36, 5-12), it is believed that Mary also came from the family of David, because women 'shall marry within the clan of the tribe of their father'. 'The inheritance of the people of Israel shall not be transferred from one tribe to another, for every one of the people of Israel shall hold on to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers'.

### **The registration during Quirinius' government**

The author of *The God Delusion* notices unexplainable imprecision in the evangelical description of the birth of Jesus: 'Moreover, Luke screws up dating by tactlessly mentioning events that historians are capable of independently checking. There was indeed a census under Governor Quirinius – a local census, not one decreed by Caesar Augustus for the empire as a whole – but it happened too late: in AD

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<sup>202</sup> John 6, 42.

6, long after Herod's death. Lane Fox concludes that »Luke's story is historically impossible and internally incoherent«<sup>203</sup>.

The problem presented by Dawkins can be specified as follows: since Jesus was born during Herod's the Great reign, who died in c. 4 BC<sup>204</sup>, then how is it possible that he was also born during the period of registration conducted by Quirinius in AD 6?<sup>205</sup> Thus, to clarify this issue, it should be noted, that the evangelist Luke and the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius, inform about two different registrations. Luke stressed, however, that he meant 'the first registration' (Luke 2, 2), when Quirinius governed Syria, and it was the imperial registration that, as we know, took place during Herod's the Great reign in Judea. Meanwhile, Josephus Flavius described census conducted by Quirinius<sup>206</sup> during Coponius' rule in Judea, which was the local registration. Thus, two separate occurrences were illustrated, and not one and the same. Josephus Flavius doesn't claim that Quirinius conducted 'the first registration' in AD 6, nor he excludes the possibility of his previous office in Syria. Thus, there is no contradiction between these two historical records. Josephus Flavius' account of the simultaneous governing of Syria by Saturninus and Vo-

<sup>203</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 119.

<sup>204</sup> The date of Herod's death is disputable.

<sup>205</sup> Józef Flawiusz, *Danne dzieje Izraela*, tłum. Z. Kubiak i J. Radożycki, Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, Poznań 1962 (XVIII, II, 1), s. 837: 'Quirinius had now disposed of Archelaus's money, and the taxings were come to a conclusion, which were made in the thirty-seventh year of Caesar's victory over Antony at Actium'.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibidem* (XVIII, I, 1), p. 835: '[Quirinius] being sent by Caesar to be a judge of that nation, and to take an account of their substance. Coponius also... was sent together with him, to have the supreme power over the Jews'.

lumnus<sup>207</sup> assumes the possibility of the dual management of this province. However, in his work *Against Marcion*<sup>208</sup>, Tertullian, presents Sentius Saturninus as the consul, who conducted census, in which evangelical Joseph took part. Giuseppe Ricciotti<sup>209</sup>, the leading Christian scholar, gave credibility to Luke's history by presenting hypothesis supported by relevant sources, that Saturninus was the ordinary legate of Syria, whereas Quirinius – the commander of legions in the war against the Homonadesians, which is mentioned by Tacitus<sup>210</sup>. According to this hypothesis, Saturninus and Quirinius would have jointly performed the management functions in Syria. Saturninus, as the ordinary legate, could have conducted the census in Judea (as Tertullian reported in his work). However, Quirinius, performing the office of the military legate, could have given credibility to Luke's and Tacitus' descriptions. The presented reasoning is not in contradiction with the historical record of Josephus Flavius, therefore, the solution adopted by Ricciotti gives the opportunity of explaining the existing discrepancies, within the limits of available sources.

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<sup>207</sup> Ibidem (XVI, IX, 1) p. 778: 'finally, the two presidents of Syria, Saturninus and Volumnius, were involved in the matter'.

<sup>208</sup> Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, IV 19: 'Also it is well known that a census had just been taken in Judaea by Sentius Saturninus, and they might have inquired of his ancestry in those records'.

<sup>209</sup> Giuseppe Ricciotti, *Życie Jezusa Chrystusa*, tłum. J. Skowroński, wyd. I, PAX, Warszawa 1954, rozdział 187, s. 193.

<sup>210</sup> Tacyt, *Dziela* [*Roczniki* III 48]: 'This Quirinius [...] won the consulship under the Divine Augustus, and subsequently the honours of a triumph for having stormed some fortresses of the Homonadenses in Cilicia'.

Dawkins' statement, that Luke 'mentioned several events, which authenticity can be verified by historians', cannot be accepted, because data on the management of Syria in 4-1 BC is missing<sup>211</sup>; it is also difficult to specify the duration of Titius' office in Syria<sup>212</sup> and other offices at that time. There is no precise data on the war waged by Quirinius against Homonadesians in Cilicia as well as offices performed by him and places where he used to stay. Additionally, we do not have clear answers to the question concerning the importance of inscriptions of Aemilius Secundus as well as from Antioch of Pisidia. The date of the Herod's death is debatable as well.

Dawkins claims that the census described by Luke can be historically verified, whereas in the course of analyses, a historian encounters uncertainties, which results in the purely hypothetical assessment of the described events. Therefore, this author should be asked for presenting more detailed information, on the basis of which, he shaped his opinion, because data that he provides, is not sufficient.

### **Whether population census was conducted according to the families of Israel?**

The history of the birth of Jesus, according to Dawkins, appears as the sequence of non-historical descriptions: 'Jo-

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<sup>211</sup> Daniel Rops, *Dzieje Chrystusa*, tłum. Z. Starowieyska-Morstinowa, t. I, wyd. III, PAX, Warszawa 1968, s. 120; G. Ricciotti, op. cit. rozdz. 186, s. 191, szacuje lukę na lata 3-2 p.n.e.

<sup>212</sup> G. Ricciotti, op. cit. rozdz. 186, s. 191; J. Flavius mentions only XVI, VIII, 6 in *Dawne dzieje Izraela*.

seph was »of the house and lineage of David, which is called Bethlehem«. That must have seemed like a good solution. Except that historically it is complete nonsense [...]. David, if he existed, lived nearly a thousand years before Mary and Joseph. Why on earth would the Romans have required Joseph to go to the coity where a remote ancestor had lived a millennium earlier? It is as though I were required to specify, say, Ashby-de-la Zouch as my home town on a census form, if it happened that I could trace my ancestry back to the Seigneur de Dakeyne, who came over with William the Conqueror and settled there<sup>213</sup>.

Dawkins considers the census described in the Gospel to be historical nonsense. At the same time he did not provide any historical evidence to justify his opinion. No, even the slightest, reference made by historians of that period, no suggestion, no mention, no excavation. The only 'proof' to confirm the validity of the arguments stated by the Oxford professor are his intuition and the personal experience with tax forms. Thus, the census conducted during Quirinius' reign in Syria, could have not been carried in the ancestral places, because, as he himself, also Dawkins is not obliged to list the ancestors from the period of Wilhelm the Conqueror in the tax form, similarly, Judeans would have not been required to go to their familial regions at that time just to be registered. It should be noted that Dawkins lives in the different legal system than the Jews being under the Roman hegemony. Although this author is not compelled by the

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<sup>213</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 119.



law to document his origin, Joseph, however, could have been forced to perform such an action.<sup>214</sup>

The author of *The God Delusion* claims that the census conducted according to the ancestry is devoid of any historical sense, therefore, it never took place. Nonetheless, historians, in fact, do not resolve whether something does or doesn't make sense. Historians ask whether something did or it did not occur. The Roman historian, Suetonius, did not ask if the command of the Roman emperor Caligula to level mountain ranges for building infeasible palaces, did have sense, but whether this fact did take place. A historian also does not ask whether spending two milliard seven hundred million sestertii by this ruler throughout a year made sense – a historian asks whether such prodigality really happened<sup>215</sup>. The question about the undertaken actions is deliberate, yet it does not determine the non-existence of facts. Thus, we should primarily focus on the presentation of facts.

The passage of the Book of Numbers (1, 2-3), in which Moses conducts registration in agreement with the Lord's recommendation, can be quoted to support Luke's description of events from that time: "Take a census of all the

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<sup>214</sup> The enormous importance was attached to genealogies quite recently in Germany, and people documented their ancestry as far as it was possible. It was the period of the Nazi domination in the twentieth century, and not the times of yore.

<sup>215</sup> Gajus Swetoniusz Trankwillus, *Żywoty ceszarów*, tłum. J. Niemierska-Pliszczyńska, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, wyd. VI, 1987, s. 193 (Kaligula 37): 'Artificial embankments raised the plains to the height of mountains. Mountain ranges were leveled, cutting the peaks and filing the chasma [...]. In less than a year he used the enormous wealth of 2.7 billion of sestertii'.

congregation of the people of Israel, by clans, by fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male, head by head. From twenty years old and upward'. After the completed registration, the descendants of the sons of were distinguished: Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Menasseh, Benjamin, Dan, Asher and Naphtali. The similar procedure was carried out by Moses, while registering the sons of Levi (Numbers 3, 15). The Second Book of Chronicles also contains information about conducting the Jewish procedure of population census (25, 5): 'Then Amaziah assembled the men of Judah and set them by fathers' houses [...]. He mustered those twenty years old and upward, and found that they were 300,000 choice men, fit for war, able to handle spear and shield'. The description of the ancestral census is also included in the Book of Nehemiah (7, 4): 'The city was wide and large, but the people within it were few [...] Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles and the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy'. Therefore, high credibility of the evangelical description of the population register is noticeable, because it concerned people living during the dominance of the Law of Moses and the Old Testament laws<sup>216</sup>. Then, we read significant in-

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<sup>216</sup> While talking about the Old Testament, it should be mentioned that Dawkins considers God Yahweh as the unpleasant character (p. 51). As an example, he presents 'human sacrifice' made by Jephthah (on his own initiative, Judges 11, 31 and 11, 35) of his daughter (pp. 275-276). In fact, God didn't look forward to 'human sacrifices', yet the author of 'The God Delusion' never mentions it (Isaiah 1, 10-20; Am 5, 22); Dawkins claims that 'God incited Moses to attack the Midianites' (pp. 277-278) – in reality, God speaks about His rights through Isaiah as

formation in the First Book of Chronicles (9, 1): 'So all Israel was recorded in genealogies, and these are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel'. Thus, there existed genealogical books, which is mentioned in the cited Chronicle. Joseph, hence, since the census was conducted according to families, could have gone to Bethlehem to fulfill the official procedures. Hence, the evangelists present his genealogy so long. The ancestral towns are referred to in the Boog of Joshua (19, 10): The third lot came up for the people of Zebulun, according to their clans [...]. Then their boundary goes up westward and on to Mareal and touches Dabbesheth, [...] and Bethlehem — twelve cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the people of Zebulun, according to their clans — these cities with their villages'.

Therefore, Luke's statement that Jesus went to Bethlehem because He belonged to the house and family of David, is justified. However, Dawkins' allegations seem internally empty.

### **The inconsistency of the evangelical descriptions of the birth and the early years of the life of Jesus**

Some people, including Dawkins, remarkably imprecisely and ambiguously, criticize that there is contradiction between Luke's and Matthew's descriptions of the early years of Jesus: 'Matthew has Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem all along,

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follows: 'nation shall not lift up sword against nation' (Isaiah 2, 4), which was omitted in *The God Delusion*. Dawkins presents a number of allegations, mixing historical and parabolical themes with the alleged God's law.

moving to Nazareth only long after the birth of Jesus, on their return from Egypt where they fled from King Herod and the massacre of the innocents. Luke, by contrast, acknowledges that Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth before Jesus was born. So how to get them to Bethlehem at the crucial moment<sup>217</sup>.

Some people maintain that such a story is internally inconsistent, because according to Matthew, Mary and Joseph lived in Bethlehem, then they left to Egypt and then, to Nazareth. Meanwhile, Luke reports that Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth, then in Bethlehem and again in Nazareth. Contradictions, if anyone is even able to notice, can be only apparent, and the description presented by the evangelists adds credibility to them as historians, because it seems that they derive information from various sources. As stated by the evangelists, the first years of Joseph and Mary are illustrated as the sequence of the following events:

|           |            |              |
|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Nazareth  |            | Luke (2, 4)  |
| Bethlehem | Mt (2, 1)  | Luke (2, 4)  |
| Jerusalem |            | Luke (2, 22) |
| Egypt     | Mt (2, 14) |              |
| Nazareth  | Mt (2, 23) | Luke (2, 39) |

Thus, Matthew omits the early stay of Joseph and Mary in Nazareth and the ritual ceremonies in Jerusalem, Luke, however, omits the fact of Jesus' escape to Egypt. Both, Matthew and Luke do not claim that the events reported by

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<sup>217</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 118.

them constitute the only facts from the life of Mary and Joseph, hence, they are not inconsistent with each other.

The example can be used to better illustrate this problem. A tourist visited five places: first, Nazareth, second, Bethlehem, then Jerusalem, Egypt, and in the end he came back to Nazareth. A mother of the tourist knew only about several facts and she wrote down in her diary: 'my son has been to Bethlehem, Egypt and then Nazareth'. A father of the tourist knew different facts and he noted in his diary: 'my son has been to Nazareth, then Bethlehem, Jerusalem and then again to Nazareth'. Are those reports in conflict with each other? No. The omission of the specific fact does not lead to contradiction. A mother does not claim that she reported all events in the order that they occurred, neither does a father. Therefore, it can be concluded that both, Matthew and Luke can simultaneously describe real events.

### **Herod the Great and 'the massacre of the innocents'**

The Oxford biologist continues his critique of the New Testament descriptions: 'A good example of the colouring by religious agendas is the whole heart-warming legend of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, followed by Herod's massacre of the innocents'<sup>218</sup>.

In the above statement, Dawkins accuses the evangelist of 'the colouring the history', however, he simultaneously doesn't mention the most crucial historical references to the actions of the Jewish king at that time – Herod the Great.

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<sup>218</sup> Ibidem, p. 118.

A series of stories shedding light on the Roman history can be found in the work 'Saturnalia', by the Latin writer Macrobius (IV/V c.). Quoting anecdotes from the works that are currently lost and wrote by historians who preceded him, he noted: 'Learning that among small children, whom Herod ordered to kill in Syria, there was also Herod's son, and alluding to the Jewish tradition of refraining from pork, Augustus stated: – It is better to be Herod's pig than his son'<sup>219</sup>.

The massacre of children carried out by Herod the Great was described in the work of the respected non-Christian writer, who was never considered the 'historical colourist'. Meanwhile, the fact that Dawkins does not refer to the above source in the vital point of his critique, puts him himself in the light of the 'historical colourist'.

In accordance with Josephus Flavius' record, there prevailed the Pharisaic prophecy, proclaiming that 'Herod along with his descendants, as judged by God, are to lose their power'. Namely, this prediction triggered the subsequent set of events: 'so the king slew such of the Pharisees as were principally accused, and Bagoas the eunuch, and one Carus, who exceeded all men of that time in comeliness, and one that was his catamite. He slew also all those of his own family who had consented to what the Pharisees foretold'<sup>220</sup>. Thereby, the world history confirmed the evangelical descriptions in the context of two important facts:

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<sup>219</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia* (2, 4, 11), [in:] *Antologia anegdoty antycznej*, tłum. J. Łanowski, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1984, s. 180.

<sup>220</sup> Józef Flawiusz: *Dawne dzieje Izraela* (XVII, II, 4), s.798.

- there was the prophecy saying that the new ruler will be born in the land of Israel<sup>221</sup>,
- Herod the Great killed innocent children<sup>222</sup>.

The history of Jesus' birth constitute, therefore, the logical and historical whole.

Dawkins' concealment and the lack of the elementary historical references of this writer to the existing sources, severely infringe on his credibility as the reliable critic of Christianity.

## Josephus Flavius, history and the Gospels

'The rationalists', being also the atheists, make the frontal and multithreaded attack on the Gospels. They most frequently refer to the population census conducted by Quirinius, considering it the key argument. Additionally, they criticize the series of unreasonable and purely speculative issues. Meanwhile, the Gospels allude to numerous facts and events that could be verified by historical works. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles mention many historical figures, whose lives can be traced, at least to a certain extent. It refers to personalities such as Annas, Caiaphas, Pontius Pilate, Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Archelaus, Lysanias, Philip, Tiberius, John the Baptist, Herodias, and other. The Gospels and the Acts include a variety of places: Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Caesarea Philippi, Capernaum, Emmaus; mention lands: Judea, Galilee, Abilene, Decapo-

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<sup>221</sup> Mt 2, 3-6 – por. Józef Flawiusz: *Dawne dzieje Izraela*, (XVII, II, 4).

<sup>222</sup> Mt 2, 16 – por. Macrobius, *Saturnalia* (2, 4, 11).

lis; provide information about the customs, like washing hands before meals; rituals and cults, such as the feast of the Passover, tents, worship of the Samaritans at the top of Gerizim; rights, such as paying tribute to the temple. They also discuss historical events, such as the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, famine during Claudius' rule and the long-term construction of the temple. They communicate about the civic and moral problems, as the obligation to pay taxes to Caesar or severity of the religious principles among the Pharisees and Sadducees.

The New Testament, including the Gospels, mentions hundreds of details, which are difficult to notice while cursory reading, and which credibility can be verified only to some extent. As it emerges, these details are perfectly incorporated in the historical background and it is extremely challenging to make any serious allegation against descriptions of the New Testament.

The similarities between the general history and the Gospels are sometimes quite striking. The Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus Flavius read:

‘Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly, as a punishment of what he did against John, that was called the Baptist: for Herod slew him, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away [or the remission] of some sins [only], but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righ-



teousness. Now when [many] others came in crowds about him, for they were very greatly moved [or pleased] by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, (for they seemed ready to do any thing he should advise) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it would be too late. Accordingly he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death. Now the Jews had an opinion that the destruction of this army was sent as a punishment upon Herod, and a mark of God's displeasure to him'.

'But Herodias, their sister, was married to Herod [Philip], the son of Herod the Great, who was born of Mariamne, the daughter of Simon the high priest, who had a daughter, Salome; after whose birth Herodias took upon her to confound the laws of our country, and divorced herself from her husband while he was alive, and was married to Herod [Antipas], her husband's brother by the father's side, he was tetrarch of Galilee'.

'But Herodias, Agrippa's sister, who now lived as wife to that Herod who was tetrarch of Galilee and Peres, took this authority of her brother in an envious manner, particularly when she saw that he had a greater dignity bestowed on him than her husband had; since, when he ran away, it was because he was not able to pay his debts; and now he was come back, he was in a way of dignity, and of great good for-

tune. She was therefore grieved and much displeased at so great a mutation of his affairs<sup>223</sup>.

The quoted passages of Josephus Flavius' work correspond to the Gospel:

'For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her". And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet. But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company and pleased Herod, so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter!". And the king was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given. He sent and had John beheaded in the prison, and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went and told Jesus.<sup>224</sup>

The comparison of the texts of Josephus Flavius and Matthew, the evangelist, might be evidence of the high credibility of the Gospel:

- according to Matthew, Herod imprisoned and killed John – Josephus Flavius reported that John was taken to Macherus, where he was put to death,
- according to Matthew, Herod married his brother's wife

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<sup>223</sup> Józef Flawiusz: *Dawne dzieje Izraela*, XVIII, V, 2 (p. 846), next: XVIII, V, 4 (p. 846), next: XVIII, VII, 1 (p. 858).

<sup>224</sup> Mt 14, 3-12.

- Josephus Flavius provided the same information,
- according to Matthew, people supported John – Josephus Flavius stated likewise,
- according to Matthew, Herodias had a daughter – Josephus Flavius reported that Herodias' daughter was named Salome,
- according to Matthew, Herodias is morally guilty of this murder – Josephus Flavius claim that Herodias was a jealous woman, internally embittered, getting angry, and even devoid of deeper values,
- according to Matthew, people perceived John as a prophet, and consequently, a righteous man – Josephus Flavius claimed that John was a noble, virtuous man,
- according to the Gospel narratives, John conducted public activities and baptized<sup>225</sup> – according to Josephus Flavius, John taught people and had a nickname the Baptist.

While comparing these texts, essential similarities can be observed, which is the evidence of credibility of the evangelical and Josephus' record. It is worth quoting Dawkins in this context again: 'Nobody knows who the four evangelists were [...]. Much of what they wrote was in no sense an honest attempt at history'<sup>226</sup>. Thus, taking into account the historical sources, it is impossible to agree with Dawkins' unsubstantiated opinion.

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<sup>225</sup> Luke 3, 3.

<sup>226</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 122.

As another example, we can compare the description presented by the Christian authors with the report included in the *Antiquities* by Josephus Flavius:

“Therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned”<sup>227</sup>.

Hegesippus, however, reports the contemporary events as follows: ‘James, the brother of the Lord, succeeded to the government of the Church in conjunction with the apostles [...]. So they went up and threw down the just man, and said to each other, ‘Let us stone James the Just.’ And they began to stone him, for he was not killed by the fall’<sup>228</sup>.

The descriptions of Josephus Flavius and Hegesippus are consistent. They recall simultaneously and independently James, the brother of Jesus, who was sentenced to death, and then stoned. However, the most significant fact is that James was mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew (13, 55) and the Gospel of Mark (6, 3), and also in The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (1, 18) as well as several other places.

The provided examples illustrate credibility of the presented sources, so there is no reason, not to consider the Gospel as the description of the actual events.

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<sup>227</sup> Józef Flawiusz, *Dawne dzieje Izraela*, XX, IX, 1, s. 956.

<sup>228</sup> Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia Kościoła*, II, 23, op. cit.

Undoubtedly, here appears the clear dividing line between Richard Dawkins' atheism and contemporary Christianity. His work does not contain any references to numerous vital historical facts concerning the early Christianity. He does not mention figures such as Papias, Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, Ignatius of Antioch, James, brother of Jesus called the Christ, John the Baptist and Polycarp of Smyrna, substituting them with the distorted image of Paul of Tarsus<sup>229</sup>. The professor's analyses completely lack references to the writings of Eusebius of Caesarea, Julius Africanus, Origen, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Macrobius, Josephus Flavius, Tacitus, Suetonius, or Irenaeus of Lyons. He even omits scientists such as Giuseppe Ricciotti or Daniel Rops, whose works clarify a great deal of his concerns and doubts. Instead, his worldview relies on intuition that is devoid of historical bases, biased statements, or even the religious thought of the American politician, Thomas Jefferson. He does not derive his knowledge neither from archeology, nor papyrology, nor any other serious sources that count in the field of science.

Such a state of affairs constitutes the dividing line between atheism and Christianity, which is drawn by Dawkins in his book *The God Delusion*.

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<sup>229</sup> Dawkins maintains that 'Christianity was founded by Paul of Tarsus as a less ruthlessly monotheistic sect of Judaism' (p.58); this information is distorted as Christianity originated from Christ. (Tacyt, *Dziela*, s. 461 [*Roczniki*, XV 44], op. cit.).

## Jesus preaches to the world

The Oxford writer raised his objections also to the teaching of Christ: 'Jesus limited his in-group of the saved strictly to the Jews'. 'Jesus was a loyal Jew. It was Paul who invented the idea of taking the Jewish God to the Gentiles'<sup>230</sup>.

The words of Jesus, given in the Gospels, 'absolutely unambiguously' oblige to direct them to the whole humanity, and not to a randomly selected national group: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations'. 'And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem'. 'Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her'. 'I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness'. 'And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also [...]. So there will be one flock, one shepherd'. 'For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues [...]. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations'<sup>231</sup>.

A series of such statements can be quoted. Dawkins' assertions are unjustified, and the content of his book reflects superficiality of the formulated allegations and postulates.

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<sup>230</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 288, 292 (citing Hartung).

<sup>231</sup> Mt 28, 19; Luke 24, 47; Mt 26, 13; Mt 8, 11; John 10, 16; Mk 13, 9-10.

## The interpretation of the New Testament

Dawkins began his criticism of Christ from a few flattering statements: 'Indeed Jesus, if he existed (or whoever wrote his script if he didn't<sup>232</sup>) was surely one of the great ethical innovators of history. The Sermon on the Mount is way ahead of its time<sup>233</sup>'.

Dawkins' statement that Jesus is most probably a historical figure, and at the same time (if he really thought so) truly misled as to his divinity<sup>234</sup>, sets the author of *The God Delusion* in the group of moderate and perhaps more open to the dialogue critics of Christianity. Further along he wrote, however:

'Jesus' family values, it has to be admitted, were not such as one might wish to focus on. He was short, to the point of brusqueness, with his own mother, and he encouraged his disciples to abandon their families and follow him.

– »If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple«.

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<sup>232</sup> Unhistorical presumption.

<sup>233</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 283.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 117. The observation that Jesus was truly mistaken as to His deity is beyond criticism, because healthy and honest people do not make such mistakes. Dawkins also states that 'there is no good historical evidence that he [Jesus] ever thought he was divine'. The Shroud of Turin and the marks from the crowning with thorns are proof that the historical Jesus viewed Himself as King. Divided opinions exist as to which aspects of the relics should be considered as evidence, but nevertheless, serious scientific evidence points to its authenticity.

The entire passage of Christ's statement, that Dawkins took out of context, becomes clearer in the synoptic juxtaposition:

Luke 14, 26-27: 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple'.

Mt 10, 37-38: 'Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me'.

Matthew's text, reflecting Luke's idea but, in other words, dispels numerous doubts. Jesus doesn't call for hatred within the family circle, yet for serious approach to his teaching, which should be put in the first place in life. This 'hatred' means exclusively the lower place in the value hierarchy of everything that is not included in Christ's teaching. 'A mother', 'a father', 'a son', or 'a daughter' stand for symbols of what is the most important for a human being. At the same time, what is the most significant should be less important than Christ. Jesus himself explains his words in this spirit a bit further (Luke 14, 33), adding: 'So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple'. The above statement is a symbolic and lapidary opposition to moral degradation of man and the entire nations.

The understanding of this idea becomes clearer, if one looks at the history of the world. When the Nazis achieved victory in Germany, the figure of Adolf Hitler became so important for the citizens of this country that many people



were ready to commit even the most brutal crimes in the name of their leader. They influenced people to the extent that the follower of Nazism was able to murder even his family<sup>235</sup>. Thus, a human being faced the horrible dilemma: authority or morality? Christ responds to the above dilemmas: 'if you love your leader more than me, you are not worthy of me'. In this way a symbolic family mentioned by Jesus became a metaphor of what is the most important for man.

The foundation of the teaching of Christ is love of neighbors, including the family. He preached: 'Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself', and at the moment of crucifixion he said to his disciple: 'Behold, your mother!', and to Mary: 'Woman, behold, your son!'<sup>236</sup>.

Jesus, therefore, doesn't call for hatred, but love. In addition, he doesn't call for the abandonment of relatives – it is assumed that the apostles wandered with their families. It results from, inter alia, The First Epistle to the Corinthians (9, 5): 'Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?'. Hence, it can be observed that Dawkins understands the words of Jesus differently than the apostles, as he doesn't distinguish what is symbolic from what is literal.

The book *The God Delusion*, due to its serious substantive deficiencies, is to be dismissed as the result of unscientific and biased creation.

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<sup>235</sup> R. Höss, *Wspomnienia Rudolfa Hössa*, s. 92, op. cit. „SS-man must be able to kill even his closest relatives, once they act against the state or Adolf Hitler's idea'.

<sup>236</sup> Mt 19, 19; John 19, 26-27.

## The salvation of man

‘But now, the sado-masochism. God incarnated himself as a man, Jesus, in order that he should be tortured and executed in atonement for the hereditary sin of Adam?’ ‘Oh, but of course, the story of Adam and Eve was only ever symbolic, wasn’t it? Symbolic? So, in order to impress himself, Jesus had himself tortured and executed, in vicarious punishment for a symbolic sin committed by a non-existent individual? As I said, barking mad, as well as viciously unpleasant’<sup>237</sup>.

Salvation and redemption are the most intractable problems in the Bible and – as it seems – there has been no final explanation of them until the present day. However, we can try to clarify these issues. The Old Testament Adam is the symbol of human nature, which, in the spirit of moral Darwinism, is prone to wickedness. Christ, however, redeeming the world, defied this nature, attracting huge crowds of people to his philosophy.

Jesus, as it appears, didn’t have the unlimited possibilities of action here on earth. Nevertheless, He broke down the wall of determinism with His teaching and suffering, giving all mankind the moral principles and the testimony of life in another world. The love of Christ to the world is reflected in His total dedication to the supreme values and stigmatizing these virtues with his own terrible death. Jesus predicted his death and he knew that it would be the important factor attracting billions of people, and therefore, he decided to take this step. Through His death, He actually gathered hundreds of millions of followers, who pursued

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<sup>237</sup> R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, pp. 286, 287.

his plan of salvation. Christ asserted that a man who will accept the evangelical teaching in the future, and consequently, will reject all misdeeds and crimes, is worth his tremendous suffering on the cross. Dawkins will die and this whole generation will also pass away, yet the death of Jesus will still affect millions of people, possibly till the end of the world. The cruel death was the price for a Christian soul. Jesus' teaching, thanks to his heroic sacrifice, incessantly attracts people, who acting in accordance with its principles, are becoming virtuous and achieve salvation. The cross is the kind of discussion between all crimes of the world and Jesus. This cross attracted the vast part of humanity and remained scandalous for historical criminals. It also attracted people to the great science, and this science distracts from sin. In this sense, this man-God carried the sins of the world on His arms. Speaking of the futility of the cross stands in the strong opposition to the history of the world.

## **Conclusion**

The Gospels and the general history form the coherent, harmonious whole. The basic Dawkins' allegations against their content didn't find the proper justification.

There is such a figure who emerges from the pages of history as the unique phenomenon and became the cause of the strong objection. He is the subject of incessantly recurring attacks, assaults and protests, and the history of this person is continuously being falsified. There appeared a great deal of understatements and confusion around Him. Some people simply denied Him out of their consciou-

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ness. There are also people who would pay the very high price sacrificing their own lives, and even could give a lot more. It is a figure that lived two thousand years ago, a figure of the great philosopher and moralist, the figure of Jesus Christ.

## SUMMARY

The God Delusion – the popular book written by Richard Dawkins – in the opinion of many, delivers strong evidence to support the atheistic worldview. It convinces them that the burden of proof should rest on those, who assert, and not the ones, who deny the existence of God. It convinces them that the ‘infinite regress’ makes of God something greatly improbable. It convinces them that God is only the abstract human invention. It convinces them that the existence of God is so improbable that you don’t have to accept his existence at all. It convinces them that the religious miracles are just the natural phenomena, which are impossible to be explained at the present stage of the scientific development. It convinces them that the evolution denies the existence of God and the creation of the world by God. It convinces them that God can arise exclusively in the process of evolution. It convinces them that it is enough to reduce the vague religious idea to ridicule, in order to demonstrate its weakness. It convinces them that human morality has Darwinian roots. It convinces them that the Christian religion is responsible for the series of misbehaviors. It convinces them that humanism most frequently accompanies atheism. It convinces them that the Gospels are full of contradictions and constitute the unreliable record of historical events. As a matter of fact, a number of similar arguments convinces them as well.

However, there are people who do not agree with professor Richard Dawkins and his views. They are not convinced by the assumption that the burden of proof rests on those who assert, rather than those, who deny the existence of God, because this idea, in its consequence, leads to the absurdity. They are not convinced that the ‘infinite regress’ makes of God something greatly improbable, because the reasoning conducted in such a way is wrong. They are not convinced that God is only the abstract human invention, because Christianity relies on historical sources, which entitle to draw definite conclusions. They are not convinced that God is so little probable that we do not have to accept his existence, because the theory of probability does not apply to such kind of objects. They are not convinced that the religious miracles are natural phenomena, which are impossible to be explained at the present stage of the scientific development, because the given view relies on the assumption that can be randomly accepted or denied. They are not convinced that the evolution denies the existence of God and the creation of the world by God, because it simply does not. They are not convinced that God can arise exclusively in the process of evolution, because the above assumption was not proved. They are not convinced that it is enough to reduce the vague religious idea to ridicule in order to demonstrate its weakness, because ideas should be reduced to contradiction. They are not convinced that human morality has Darwinian roots, because Darwinian roots characterize human immorality. They are not convinced that the religious absolutism serves evil, yet it is the opposite – the consistent atheism serves evil. They are not convinced that Christianity is responsible for the series of misbehaviors,

because the lack of rule of law is prohibited in this religion. They are not convinced that humanism most frequently accompanies atheism, because the atheistic individuals in the twentieth century killed tens of millions of people. They are not convinced that the Gospels are full of contradictions and constitute the unreliable record of historical events, because they do not contain contradictions and are the record of events, that can be subjected to the historical verification. They are not convinced by the series of similar arguments.

Professor Richard Dawkins in his book *The God Delusion*, attempted to demonstrate that there is the contradiction between the Christian religion and science, however, the argumentation presented in this work does not lead to such conclusion. The mission of Jesus Christ, despite its uniqueness, still appears as noncontradictory to science and is consistent with the history.

Who is God? God, who could created the whole world, including nature and people, and would be such a powerful and intelligent being, as to hide its existence behind the barrier of the scientific undecidability. This observation indicates that Dawkins can never ever discover the mysteries of the faith, which is centered on God.

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There are also other works by dr. Paweł Bloch: *Ateistoteles* and *The Great Dictator*, yet still in preparation.

