

ETIKA A EXISTENCIÁLIZMUS

PODNETY A VÝZVY PRE SÚČASNOŠŤ



Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre
Filozofická fakulta
Katedra všeobecnej a aplikovanej etiky

(2011)

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Predhovor

Kniha *Etika a existencializmus: podnety a výzvy pre súčasnosť*, predstavuje výsledok úsilia, iniciovaného pracovníkmi Katedry všeobecnej a aplikovanej etiky Univerzity Konštantína filozofa v Nitre. V spolupráci s ďalšími významnými univerzitami a inštitúciami, najmä Torontskou univerzitou, sa podarilo úspešne zorganizovať a uskutočniť medzinárodnú vedeckú konferenciu pod rovnomenným názvom *Etika a existencializmus: podnety a výzvy pre súčasnosť*. Konferencia sa konala v dňoch 23. – 24. septembra 2010 v Nitre, pod záštitou viacerých významných osobností spoločenského života a participovali na nej prispievatelia z 10 krajín sveta.

Kniha *Etika a existencializmus: podnety a výzvy pre súčasnosť* (2011) spolu s knihou *V tieni Kierkegaarda* (2011), je výsledkom aktivít domácich a zahraničných vedeckých pracovníkov, ktorí participovali na tejto medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencii.

Zborník je rozdelený do dvoch častí, s názvami *Cesty a zmysel* a *Duchovné rezonancie*.

V prvej časti sa môžeme stretnúť s príspevkami, ktoré primárne reflektujú rôzne aspekty existencialistickej filozofie, najmä francúzskej (Camus, Céline, Sartre), španielskej (Unamuno, Ortega y Gasset) a nemeckej (Heidegger) proveniencie. Objavujú sa tu aj reflexie existencialistických motívov v literárnych dielach Dostojevského (Mária Bal-Nowak), Burgessa (Petra Muráriková) a Leikerta (Zdenka Mechurová).

Posledné tri príspevky tejto časti zborníka pojednávajú o koncepte slobody v myslení Luigiho Pareysona (Andrej Rajský), Chardinovom evolučnom pohľade na človeka a ľudstvo (Radovan Garaj) a myšlienkovom odkaze Rousseaua (Miriam Zibolenová).

Druhá časť knihy, ako už názov napovedá, ponúka príspevky so širokým tematickým zameraním. Môžeme tu nájsť príspevok zaoberajúci sa existencialistickými aspektmi globalizácie (Veronika Ježková), zamyslením sa nad kyberpriestorom ako novým existenciálnym rozmerom človeka (Slavomír Gálik), skúmaním dvoch protikladných spôsobov individuálnej existencie človeka, v kontexte komunity a tradície ako niekoho „*en masse*“, resp. sebauchopujúcim spôsobom v zmysle utvárania sebaidentity v intenciách slobody a zodpovednosti (Peter Korený).

V tejto časti knihy sa ďalej stretáme so skúmaním otázky, či v existenciálnej skúsenosti súčasného človeka sú nejaké nové momenty, alebo iba aktuálne reálie konkretizujúce invariantnosť základných línií ľudského bytia vo svete. V tomto kontexte skúma autorka (Olga Sisáková) napríklad aj otázku, akým spôsobom súčasnosť zmenila existenciálny konflikt. Podnetmi existencializmu pre uplatňova-

nie genderového hľadiska pri zabezpečovaní sociálnej integrity organizácie je predmetom záujmu autorky (Mária Jacková), ktorá reflektuje uvedené skutočnosti na pozadí existencialistickej filozofie Gabriela Marcela. Aktuálnou filozofiou výchovy, ktorá sa podľa autorky (Sabína Gáliková Tolnaiová) môže inšpirovať tradíciu existencialistického prístupu je venovaný príspevok, v ktorom sa skúmajú impulzy súčasnej doby, súvisiace najmä s fenoménom médií, ktoré špecificky pôsobia na formy našej bežnej skúsenosti (nemediálneho sveta) a ktoré z existencialistického hľadiska menia naše doterajšie vnímanie, prežívanie sveta.

Nasledujúce dva príspevky sa zaoberajú úlohou a atribútmi slobody v zmysle tvorivej výzvy pre postmodernú spoločnosť (Zuzana Žilová) a dvoma fenoménmi tolerancie – koncepciou povolenia a koncepciou rešpektu (Hana Kostolníková).

Ďalší príspevok sa zaoberá fenoménom dôvery, ktorý sa podľa autorky (Daniela Navrátilová) stáva tým základným elementom ľudského bytia, ktorý potvrdzuje potrebu znovuoživenia etiky cnosti, ktorá sa opiera o aktívne formovanie charakteru človeka ako subjektu mravného rozhodovania a konania.

Nasledujúce štyri príspevky reflektujú existenciu človeka, resp. ľudské bytie predovšetkým vzhľadom na fenomén smrti. Zamyslenie nad smrťou, umieraním a strachom v európskom kultúrnom okruhu nájdeme v prvom z nich (Katarína Gabašová). Autori ďalších troch príspevkov tematizujú spomínanú problematiku v kontexte inoeurópskej kultúry (India, Egypt). Miroslava Obuchová nám vo svojom príspevku ponúka buddhistický pohľad na ľudskú existenciu, jej strastnú povahu a finálnu fázu osemdielnej cesty, ktorá vedie k eliminovaniu utrpenia. Autorka tiež vysvetľuje kľúčové pojmy ako *samsara*, *kamma*, *nibbana*, ktoré sú nevyhnutné pre pochopenie buddhistickej koncepcie. Do indickej tradície patrí aj príspevok, ktorý skúma využitie symboliky pri poznávaní multidimenzionality bytia a existencie na príklade indickej mystiky. Autor (Ivan Souček) nám okrem iného, na príklade symbolu lotosu ukazuje, že posvätný jazyk náboženstva a mystiky, plný symbolických obrazov a vyjadrení nemožno ponímať doslovne, ale iba spôsobom analógie. Posledný príspevok z mimoeurópskej kultúrnej tradície sa zaoberá ľudským bytím a etikou v starom Egypte. Autor (Radovan Garaj) v ňom skúma „povahu“ človeka a snaží sa poukázať na multidimenzionalitu ľudského bytia cez prizmu mystiky staroegyptského náboženstva. V druhej časti príspevku nám podáva stručnú charakteristiku etiky a morálnych hodnôt, ktoré boli starovekými Egypťanmi preferované.

Posledné tri príspevky zborníka sa zaoberajú existenciou človeka v možnej posthumánnej budúcnosti (Elena Matějková), podobami lásky u Ericha Fromma (Katarína Jarolíková) a kritickou analýzou vybraných pojmov fenoménu teológie oslobodenia (Marián Cabada).

Časť I.
Cesty a zmysel

ABSURDITY OF LOGICAL SUICIDE. THE CHARACTER OF 'POSSESSED' BY DOSTOYEVSKY IN THE EVALUATION OF A. CAMUS

Mária Bal-Nowak

Abstract: *It seems that the condition of absurdity which is presented through the engineer Kirillov, is the same both in the character from „The Possessed“ by F. Dostoyevsky and the figure in „The Myth of Sisyphus,“ by A. Camus. But it is not. This is evident when we look at the problem of suicide. For Kirillov, the absurd is a manifestation of human freedom. It is freedom from the omnipotence of God. The consequence of such freedom is to replace a Man instead of God, the creation of Human-god, instead of Christ: the God-man. Kirillov killed himself to become like God – the one who can do everything. But French existentialist absurdity does not arise from replacing God with Man, because God does not exist. Therefore, suicide does not change anything. For Camus the removal of absurdity from human life is impossible due to the inability to reconcile man with the chaos of the world. This leads to rebellion, not to committing suicide.*

Keywords: *Dostoyevsky, Camus, suicide, absurdity, freedom, rebellion*

“THERE is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy.”¹ With these words Albert Camus (1913-1960) begins one of his works: *The Myth of Sisyphus*. By this statement he emphasizes not only range of his considerations but rather dignity of the problem. Suicide is treated here as a key-word, skeleton key that opens references which are so important to the creator of absurd philosophy.

At this point we will not analyse all ideas of French philosopher, who himself did not want to be called existentialist; didn't think he deal with ideas or create a system.² After all, he was only interested in the fate of individual, which is contained and presented through the existential experience of the individual, its condition in a world that is here and now. This is space-restricted and limited area

¹ CAMUS, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus, and other essays*. Translated by Justin O'Brien. New York. Vintage International, Vintage Books, A Division Random House Inc. 1991, 224 p. ISBN 0-679-73373-6, p. 3.

² T. Gadacz names Camus as philosopher of existence. GADACZ, Tadeusz. *Historia filozofii XX wieku. Nurty*, volume 2, Cracow. Wydawnictwo Znak 2009, 708 p. ISBN 978-83-240-0965-7, p. 493.

of human existence; place without God with empty heaven and indifferent world. Here we are, here we have to live and work. Camus says that philosophy always knew about it, always tried to interpret, explain it also rationally or, if this did not help – comfort by introducing the concept of God and eternal life.

Not judging or following such assumptions more than necessary, we will try to show the validity of the subject of suicide by analyzing the true nature of the problem, which explains what Camus has to do with Dostoyevsky and why it seems so essential to understand it. We will also explain the origin of the concept of *logical suicide* and describe its absurdity. In other words, ‘we will apply’ categories of existential description of individual, developed by Camus, to concept of *logical suicide* created by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Therefore we must find a common semantic space, where the absurd, suicide and logic will meet together.

Famous Russian writer Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoyevsky (1821-1881), whose novels are timeless moralities analyzing meaning of human life through choices made by characters, has already presented problem of logical suicide in ‘*A Writer’s Diary*’, and developed it in ‘*The Possessed*’. Pre-analyzing the attitude of suicide in ‘*A Writer’s Diary*’, he emphasizes that for someone who does not believe in immortality, life on earth must appear as humiliating, as a game forces of nature, which he can’t affect and which, at best, he despises. So, life is seen as an alternative: either immortal, or irrelevant. This kind of life annoys and irritates, causes suffering, so as he says: “*Underlying this confession of the man who is going to die “by logical suicide” is the necessity of the immediate conclusion, here and now, that without faith in one’s and his immortality, human existence is unnatural, unthinkable, and unbearable.*”³ This metaphysical *irritation* to life, which I do not understand, go further in refusing to participate in life up to suicide, that logically we mean absurdly must happen. What does this last sentence “logically i.e. absurdly” means? Are we talking here about a logic of absurd, where paradox provides a sequence of cause and effect? Or maybe adjective *logical* defines a suicide, which is not based on paradox but on consequence of given sequence of assumptions. We will not answer these questions now. An attempt to answer them will appear at the end of the article.

Engineer Alexey Nilych Kirilov, the central character of the novel *Possessed* is proper figure of the suicide theme. It’s he, who will accomplish the intention of suicide, only initially outlined by Dostoyevsky in ‘*A Writer’s Diary*’. Kirilov is one of Dostoyevsky’s Demons, one of evil spirits populating pages of the novel, which as in Gospel of Luke, cited by the writer at the beginning, were to come

³ DOSTOYEVSKY, Fyodor. *A Writer’s Diary 1873-1876*. Translated and annotated by Kenneth Lantz. Printed in USA. Copyright Northwestern University Press 1994, 805 p. ISBN 0-8101-1516-6, p. 733.

out of people, posses pigs and to finally annihilate. Here is the opposite: Demons possess human evildoers: Stavrogin, Verkhovensky, Kirilov, Lebyadkin and others, and annihilate them. Anarchists and revolutionaries who wishing to save Russia and the world, in fact are doing evil, because They themselves are evil. The novel is multi-threaded with variety of characters but motives of actions are always the same: pride, arrogance, swagger, salvation of the world in the name of higher goals, insensitivity of the heart. Dostoyevsky defines them as nihilists, people who reject traditional values and propose to postpone them without giving anything constructive in return. His recipe for 'creating' the nihilists alarms with sagacity. He says: "[...] *the teacher who laughs with the children at their God and their cradle is ours already. The barrister who defends an educated murderer by pleading that, being more mentally developed than his victims, he could not help murdering for money, is already one of us. Schoolboys who kill a peasant for the sake of the thrill are ours. The juries who acquit all criminals without distinction are ours. A public prosecutor, who trembles in court because he is not sufficiently progressive, is ours, ours.*"⁴ It is, therefore, thinking from inside the nihilism, which roots would require separate analysis, what is not our intention here.

Here we will only discuss our subject and our character. Engineer Kirilov, struggled by God for a long time, decides to kill himself, and indeed he does it. Despite how some people think he does not kill himself just because such a idea came to his mind. However suicide is Kirilov's idea or even obsession, but the reasons for such decision are not trivial. We could say that they are definitive. Kirilov is one of those tragic figures, seduced with the desire of salvation and happiness for the world, who follows the path created by Friedrich Nietzsche, and by proclaiming the 'death of God' wants to become God himself. However not God but freedom is the keystone of the Kirilov's ideology.

Though he fancies himself that killing will make him like God, his fundamental drivers are the freedom and willingness to make people happy. God stands on his way, so Kirilov believes that his fate is sealed. This is how our demon deduces: death is what people are most afraid of and because of this they are not happy. Fear of death is induced by God. "*He who conquers pain and fear will himself become God. [...] there shall be no God*"⁵ this how Kirilov concludes. So we should remove this fear, make it irrelevant. Because as Kirilov says: "*Full freedom will come only when it makes no difference whether to live or not to live.*"⁶ And further, his reasoning goes consistently towards achieving the desired state of freedom:

⁴ DOSTOYEVSKY, Fyodor. *The Devils (The Possessed)*. Translated by David Magarshack, England. Published by Penguin Group London 1971, 704 p. ISBN 0-14-044035-6, p. 421.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 126.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 125.

*“Everyone who desires supreme freedom must dare to kill himself. He who dares to kill himself has learnt the secret of the deception. [...] He who dares to kill himself is god. [...] He who kill himself only to kill fear will at once become a god.”*⁷

This is Kirilov’s credo. Let’s try to analyze it. Kirilov sees human life quite unilaterally: as a happiness, which is not disturbed by view of the death. Humans are a weak creatures, constantly thinking about the end of their life, and for that reason they can’t live in peace and harmony. Eschatological perspective does not exist, is a scam after all. But if eternal life doesn’t exist what are they afraid of? What to quail, what to fear if there is no Last Judgement and God’s verdicts? Are they simply afraid to stop exist? Is it not irrational? Let’s recall Epicurus’s argumentation, where he advises not to fear of death: *“So the death, the most terrible of tragedies, does not concern us because when we exist here is no death and when death comes we are not existing anymore.”*⁸ However, for Kirilov fear of death can’t be so ‘easily’ overcome. Epicurus advices are not for him, because his abilities goes much further. Because of his pride of the man who can all, he ‘uses’ of what was invented later by such a dissenters like Schopenhauer, Renan or Nietzsche. Strengthen in this way, he stands up for battle to reveal the deception of Christian God. This deception is a forced obedience using the fear of death. But Kirilov’s thinking about God is also a self-deception or at least inconsistency. Let’s see what he says to Peter Verkhovensky about God: *“God is necessary and so must exist [...] But I know that He doesn’t exist and can’t exist [...] But don’t you understand that a man with two such ideas cannot go on living? [...] Don’t you understand that he might shoot himself for that alone.”*⁹ We may ask: how Kirilov knows that God doesn’t exist? Because there is evil and suffering on the world, especially suffering of young children. As Albert Camus rightly observes in his essay *The Myth of Sisyphus*, full answer to the questions raised in *The Possessed* is novel *Brothers Karamazov*. One the one hand, we have Ivan Karamazov’s answer (according to the spirit of Kirilov), but we also have a different one: presented by Alyosha, that overcomes Kirilov’s unbelief.

Now we can focus on the next problem: who is God for Kirilov and which concept of God most adequately corresponds with his imaginations? Certainly this is God Almighty, but his will is the unique attribute of this omnipotence. God can anything. Kirilov says: *“If there is a God, than it is always His will, and I can’t do*

⁷ Ibidem, p. 126.

⁸ DEMOCRITUS from Abdera, *Letter to Menoikeus*, quoted from REALE Giovanni. *Historia filozofii starožytnej*, t. III. Translated by. E. I. Zieliński, Lublin 1999, 565 p. ISBN 83-228-0785-6, p. 264.; translated by author

⁹ DOSTOJEVSKY, Fyodor. *The Devils (The Possessed)*. Translated by David Magarshack, England. Published by Penguin Group London 1971, 704 p. ISBN 0-14-044035-6, p. 611.

nothing against His will."¹⁰ For Kirilov, God's will is reflected in our everyday life. In his opinion, God's omnipotence has consequences in his full responsibility for evil existing on the world, according to the rule that God is a reason for everything. For engineer Kirilov, well-known Leibnitz's question: *unde malum?* is doubtless: If God exists, all the evils of the world are his fault. This wrong reasoning of our character, probably also caused difficulties for Dostoyevsky. Yet it is not a philosopher, and doesn't lead the discourse. Let's try to reconstruct the beliefs presented here. Analyzing this issue Camus argues "*You know the alternative: either we are not free and God the all-powerful is responsible for evil. Or we are free and responsible but God is not all powerful.*"¹¹ But for Camus, the problem of freedom is associated with the problem of God as a Master, and because of this, in accordance with all of his beliefs, he rejects both God and freedom as such. For him there is only "*freedom of mind and action*" that characterizes the absurd man, not freedom as a rule of higher order.¹² Can we explain Kirilov's thinking in this way? It seems that he's not even thinking about this subject too much, but rather ascertains facts and draws conclusions. And so: if free will belongs to God full responsibility is also his. But God doesn't or even can't exist, so Kirilov says: "*If there is a God, than it is always His will, and I can't do nothing against His will. If there isn't, than it is my will and I am bound to express my self-will. [...] Because all will has become mine.*" And from this he draws his paradoxically logical conclusion: "*I'm bound to shoot myself because the most important point of my self-will is to kill myself.*"¹³

Before we conduct a study of the logic paradox, we should say more about Christ. He holds a very important place in Kirilov's analysis. When he talks about God, he basically talks about the Son of Man. We can also see here impact of Nietzsche. The same as for German philosopher, Christ is for him the hero of the human drama; Man-god, not God-man. He was crucified even though he was Good and he was teaching people about good. Let us quote here a fragment of conversation between Peter Verkhovensky and Kirilov: "*that Man was the highest*

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 612.

¹¹ CAMUS, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus, and other essays*. Translated by Justin O'Brien. New York. Vintage International, Vintage Books, A Division Random House Inc. 1991, 224 p. ISBN 0-679-73373-6, p. 56.

¹² "*I cannot understand what kind of freedom would be given me by a higher being [...] The only conception of freedom I can have is that of the prisoner or the individual in the midst of the State. The only one I know is freedom of thought and action. Now if the absurd cancels all my chances of eternal freedom, it restores and magnifies, on the other hand, my freedom of action.*" Ibidem, p. 56.

¹³ DOSTOYEVSKY, Fyodor. *The Devils (The Possessed)*. Translated by David Magarshack, England. Published by Penguin Group London 1971, 704 p. ISBN 0-14-044035-6, p. 612.

of all on earth. He was that for which it was created [...] There has never been anyone like Him before or since, and never will be, not even by a miracle. For that is miracle that there never was and never will be such a man as He. And if that is so, if the laws of nature did not spare even Him, if they did not spare their own miracle, and made even Him live in the midst of lies and die for a lie, then the whole planet is a lie and is based on a lie and a stupid mockery."¹⁴

Lie and apparent religiosity of the people, beliefs which do not go for acts, abuse of human divinity these themes were always important for Dostoyevsky. Let us recall the conversation from *The Brothers Karamazov* between the Grand Inquisitor and Christ: "*Why, then, have you come to interfere with us? For you have come to interfere with us and you know it yourself. But do you know what will happen tomorrow? I do not know who you are and I do not want to know: whether it is you, or only his likeness but tomorrow I shall condemn you and burn you at the stake as the most evil of heretics, and the very people who today kiss your feet, tomorrow, at a nod from me, will rush to heap the coals up around your stake, do you know that.*"¹⁵ Do the Grand Inquisitor, who in the name of faith and name of misunderstood love, condemns heretics to auto-da-fe and on the other hand Kirilov the unfortunate 'Savior' of humanity, who wants to rid the world of 'God in fear of death', not have much in common? They both know better how to save the world, both want to make people happy and finally both want to be Gods. Behavior of the Grand Inquisitor is blasphemous; Kirilov's behavior is not only blasphemous but also absurd. We see how from generous intentions arise dangerous ideas, especially when a person loses the understanding of who he is and what he really can do.

Kirilov is convinced that his suicide will save the world. The fear of death will disappear the same as God who is the reason of this fear. People will be happy. And he? Killing himself just for that reason, to overcome the fear of death, automatically makes him a God. For him this is logical implication! Because he is doing this on his own free will, and the will is the primary (and only) attribute of God. How simple it is? Kirilov is even surprised, that no one before had found it out, but of course that's why he is a genius. That's not all: now others who want to be free will no longer have to do this. By his initial and archetypal act Kirilov gives freedom to others! So his suicide is also 'didactic' and instructive. He claims that: "*If you do realize it, you are a king and you will never kill yourself, but will live in greatest glory. But he who is the first to realize it is bound to kill himself [...] It is I who will most certainly kill myself to begin with and prove it.*"¹⁶ Following this, eternal

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 614.

¹⁵ DOSTOYEVSKY, Fyodor. *The Brother Karamazov*. Translated by Richard Pevar and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York. Published by Farrar, Stratus and Giroux 2002, 796 p. ISBN 0-0374-52837-3, p. 250.

¹⁶ DOSTOYEVSKY, Fyodor. *The Devils (The Possessed)*. Translated by David Magarshack,

life will appear on earth here and now. There is no other eternity than this one on earth.¹⁷ In his pride, Kirilov is convinced that his act will teach people how to be good. Christ taught it, but unsuccessfully. He, Kirilov as a Man-god will show others why they were not good and happy! Well, they were not – because they did not know that they were good. What a balancing act of shamanism. Kirilov says: “*They are not good [...] because they don't know that they are good. When they find out, they won't rape a little girl. They have to find out that they are good, for then they will at once become good, everyone of them.*”¹⁸

Death of your own will, just to prove that this can be done if you want it, is no longer an ordinary suicide! People kill themselves for various reasons: unrequited love, poverty, lack of meaning in life. Therefore Kirilov commits suicide of higher level: without any specific reason, but just to show that he is free and he can do it. Has freedom ever been more absurdly?

That's why, in the second part of our analysis we will try to assess the position of Kirilov from the perspective of the absurd. What is absurd? Sense of the absurd is not the same as the concept of the absurd. Therefore for Camus, who also preferred literary and theatrical perspective, is hard to define the concepts but easier to talk about feelings. Hence mysterious but also literary beautiful definitions of life in the determination of the absurd, as the ‘living under that stifling sky’. Sense of the absurd is caused by discord between man and the world, between what he wants and what he gets. Philosopher says that: “*I am thus justified in saying that the feeling of absurdity does not spring from the mere scrutiny of a fact or an impression, but that it bursts from the comparison between a bare fact and a certain reality, between an action and the world that transcends it.*”¹⁹ Therefore absurd is more in relation than in primary components. Arises from the co-presence and ‘clash’ of man and the world. Is therefore absurd a state of conscious human spirit, who is aware of the irreparable gap between himself and the world, and we are not talking here about ontological differences as this is not interested for our philosopher but rather about cognitive, acting and practical ones. In personal perspective this is

England. Published by Penguin Group London 1971, 704 p. ISBN 0-14-044035-6, p. 614.

¹⁷ P. Verkhovensky asks Kirilov “*Do you believe in future everlasting life? No, not in a future everlasting but in everlasting life here. [...] When all mankind attains happiness, there will be no more time, for there won't be any need for it.*”, Ibidem, pp. 242-243.

¹⁸ DOSTOYEVSKY, Fyodor. *The Devils (The Possessed)*. Translated by David Magarshack, England. Published by Penguin Group London 1971, 704 p. ISBN 0-14-044035-6, p. 244.

¹⁹ CAMUS, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus, and other essays*. Translated by Justin O'Brien. New York. Vintage International, Vintage Books, A Division Random House Inc. 1991, 224 p. ISBN 0-679-73373-6, p. 30.

in fact distinction between man and his life. On the one hand, we have disorder of the world, on the other, human desire, human will of order or rather will of seeing world as ordered, and vulnerable to our changes. For Camus, the most interested part of absurd is its existential perspective that it opens/ creates for people. We have to deal with absurd as discrepancy, in the sense that it is an ever-present state, though not eternal, because according to the philosopher, absurd 'as such' does not exist. Absurdity is a temporary state, that ends with the death of a man and does not exist beyond this world.²⁰ Camus's inurnment to rational examination, to definitions is also very characteristic.²¹ For the absurd mind, for that state of mind of a man living in the sense of absurd, world is neither rational nor irrational. World is irrational in the sense that it sets limits to the ambitions of mind. According to the Latin etymology of the word (Lat. *surdus* – deaf), world of absurd is originally a deaf one. Man is alone and for the world his fate is perfectly indifferent. Described once by Leszek Kolakowski in his *Presence of Myth* 'phenomenon of the world's inference' fits well with mentioned Camus's vision. It's a world without God, without Transcendence which is the source or the core of values. This empty world of a man who does not wait for eternal happiness and for rational or faith consolation.

On the contrary, Camus broadly describes 'illusions of forced hope' – attitudes which he defines as a *philosophical suicide*. As this is not the main point of our article, we will treat it briefly. Philosopher says, that a man who can't accept his mediocre position on the world, his limited mind or his claims for eternal life, invented the way how to survive, how to adapt to current situation. That is why philosophers invent negation. Existential philosophy shows it very clearly. The thought denies itself, and also in this negation wants to be crossed. Unable to attain certainty through itself, the thought makes a leap of faith. Existentialists (like Kierkegaard, Shestov, Jaspers) deny mind as ineffective, while in the same time glorify irrationality. From awareness of the defeat of mind, they come to the conclusion, that God does exist and this simply justifies everything what is inconceivable for human mind like: inconsistencies, antinomies, paradoxes.²²

²⁰ As noted by one of the interpreters of this philosophy: "*Camus treats absurd as irrefutable antirational axiom but par excellence logical one*". SZYDŁOWSKA, Waleria. *Camus Albert, Le mythe de Sisyphe. Essai sur l'absurde*. (w:) Przewodnik po literaturze filozoficznej XX wieku, pod red. B. Skargi, tom 2, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN. Warszawa. 1994, 474 p. ISBN 83-01-11551-3, p. 92.; translated by author.

²¹ Camus says about absurd: "[...] *this mind and this world straining against each other without being able to embrace each other*", CAMUS, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus, and other essays*. Translated by Justin O'Brien. New York. Vintage International, Vintage Books, A Division Random House Inc. 1991, 224 p. ISBN 0-679-73373-6, p. 40.

²² This is Camus opinion about Shestov and his philosophy: "*One must spring into him and*

This is called/ they called it: 'Humiliated mind'. This leap can also be taken with a different attitude – not religious, but the abstract one. One of the example of this leap into abstract is Husserl's phenomenology. Here conversely, mind can anything, is eternal and embraces all. The philosopher calls it 'triumphant mind'. Camus believes that: "*The abstract philosopher and the religious philosopher start Out from the same disorder and support each other in the same anxiety. But the essential is to explain.*"²³ Hence the absurd – as a real perspective, where the boundaries of mind shall be demarcated/defined, but not at the cost of falling into irrationalism.²⁴ The absurd world is torn apart, we can say after Scheler that it is a tragic one. Tragedy is it's a permanent state. Why? Because you have to choose your fate: "*It is essential to know whether one can live with it or whether, on the other hand, logic commands one to die of it.*"²⁵ To judge whether life is worth it to live or not.

That's why Camus was so much interested in characters created by Dostoyevsky, especially Kirilov, who were constantly questing meaning of the life, whether it is worth living or not. Kirilov as we know, chose suicide as a response. Is this response approved by French philosopher? No. According to him, suicide, even because of the 'highest' motives as Kirilov's ones is not the answer to the absurd. Camus counters: "*In a sense, and as in melodrama, killing yourself amounts to confessing. It is confessing that life is too much for you or that you do not understand it.*"²⁶ Attachment to life is primary, stronger than all misfortunes that fall upon us. ("*We get into the habit of living before acquiring the habit of thinking*"²⁷ – is this not a beautiful phrase?) There is no precondition between belief that life is meaningless and taking one's own life, just as there is no direct connection between absurd and death. 'Absurd reasoning' – as it is called by a philosopher, states that death is not ruled by absurd, but the opposite. Absurd is the basic concept. If so, what are the ways out: 1 / suicide, 2 / leap into faith or abstract; 3 / escape to the world: to creativity, action, love, body. Camus seems to be closest to the third path – he definitely rejects suicide and *leap*. That's why absurd man: "*demands of himself is to live solely with what he knows, to accommodate himself to what is, and to bring in nothing that is not certain.*"²⁸ To look in absurd face, do

by this leap free oneself from rational illusions", Ibidem, p. 34.

²³ Ibidem, p. 47.

²⁴ "*It is that divorce between the mind that desires and the world that disappoints, my nostalgia for unity, this fragmented universe and the contradiction that binds them together. Kierkegaard suppresses my nostalgia and Husserl gathers together that universe. That is not what I was expecting.*" Ibidem, p. 50.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 50.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 5.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 8.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 53.