

"Does religion define the form and character of freedom?"

The Power of The Word – The Weakness of Will

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Introduction

*The will to power exists and manifests itself in the form of history;
but the will itself is absolutely counterductive (1).*

Michel Houellebecq, *Platform*

1.

When discussing metaphysical matters, which undeniably constitute a significant foundation for all historically prominent world cultures, it is impermissible, as is all too common in the contemporary academic milieu, characterized by extreme left-leaning ideologies and secularism, to either negate or to diminish their intrinsic value. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge the numerous contributions to the development of our cultural and national identity of our forebears, an identity construed as encompassing art in its broadest sense (2), *savoir vivre* (3), and morality rooted in the Old Testament Decalogue, among other elements.

The question of whether the spread of the Christian religion on the conquered, subjugated, and ultimately fully Christianized pagan territories of the "old" European continent was justified is, in this specific context of my work, truly a secondary matter. Instead of the anticipated (and completely proper) judgment over the successful medieval act of Christianizing Europe and its subsequent consequences, I contend that what must be articulated here, as a matter of its primary importance, is the unequivocal determination of a single, irrefutable fact, which, with the resounding voice of a world-class tenor, I now declare: *Yes indeed* – the Christian religion in Europe (and similarly to it, Islam in the Arab countries, Buddhism in India, and so forth) stands as the oldest among the preserved pillars of shared identity for every contemporary European.

This pillar, if suddenly uprooted from the very depths of the "European mentality" by some immensely powerful external force and cunningly replaced with something else, like a toppling domino, would inevitably drag the entirety of Europe into a void, in the shape and form we know today and in which our ancestors have lived for the past thousand years. This holds true whether this contemporary European is, like their forefathers living during the millennium of papal dominance over the easily malleable spirituality of the serf, a believing individual, or fundamentally the opposite, a caricatured, extremely anti-religious, Dawkinsian puppet (4) unable to restrain a sudden bout of apoplexy induced by reading a paragraph on some obscure online forum. This paragraph, authored in an overtly flattering manner, eagerly applauds the latest pronouncement of a church hierarch on contentious issues such as the rights of minority X, contraception, state-funded assisted reproductive methods, etc.

In my view, whether we desire it or hold it in contempt, this ancient religious pillar, this foundational support of every European soul's identity, resides far too deeply within each of us to be easily uprooted and replaced with "something else." We may, of course, attempt to rid ourselves of it, for instance, by engaging in secular circles and/or delving into scholarly literature that rigorously, layer by layer, critically analyzes the contents of the Holy Scripture (e.g., Max Stirner's "The Ego and Its Own," Friedrich Nietzsche's "The Antichrist," "Twilight of the Idols" (5)). However, through such actions or actions similar to them, we can merely attempt to transform this fact, not necessarily to our advantage or to fully negate it, but at most, to negate it subconsciously.

Because, at the end of the day, the European, prone to seeking a "higher" truth, one beyond that which is "suckled from the mother's milk," the traveler parched for the metaphysical Truth, the one whose mental thirst has dried up completely, is ambushed by winged bandits in golden halos. These celestial outlaws drag them into the roadside thickets, and by force, they forcibly open their eyes to the blinding reality. In this reality, there is no path other than Christianity or swift damnation, concealed meticulously beneath the guise of today's media-promoted nihilism, hedonism, libertinism, and so forth. These are empirically rich yet profoundly spiritually destitute and insipid ideas and practices.

Their journey through the spiritual meanders of Middle Eastern and Far Eastern thought concludes with a colossal defeat, symbolized by the monstrous creature hanging gently and quietly above their head, swaying like a leaf in the wind. Depending on their reaction to the blinding radiance of the One Truth, this merciful guardian angel of the Christian civilization appears, which, although significantly fallen and subjected to the toxic, contagious therapy of global culture, just like the academic environment, has been secularized and smoothed over beyond recognition in comparison to the previous century.

It still holds, above each of us, Europeans, a fragment of its amber rosary-wrapped hand, which may be closer or farther from our minds. This creates the deceptive illusion that the reading of nineteenth-century Germans has rendered us spiritually indifferent laymen. There is no escape from the Cross...

2.

For a very long time, no acidic rains will fall upon the heads of Europeans, rains that could directly penetrate our minds and corrode our subtly pro-Christian (more or less secularized and smoothed over) mentality. I believe that living in Europe, for a very long time, one will not be able to call oneself a wholehearted atheist with respect to the Christian religion with gleaming tranquility in their eyes. Even if not directly, it is simply "naturally" (mentally) integrated into the rhythm in which millions of inhabitants of the Old Continent blink, move their lips, and breathe in their sleep, and so forth. In other words, Christianity is in the bloodstream of our Euro-society's ecosystem, and as a result, we are its prisoners. To live one's life as part of a social cell within its composition, one must be subservient to it.

The times when, intoxicated by Mediterranean wine, great German "mind doctors" promised us a continental transfusion of corrupted blood and the "revaluation of all values" (6) have faded with the wind, leaving nothing but dust in their wake. Everything has disappeared: Buddhism has vanished (7), esotericism has vanished, anti-moralism has dissolved, and so forth. What remains is what was there in the beginning – the Word ("and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (8)). In seeking to change the world, we returned to the starting point, and the Great Return, with all its serpentine horror, proved to be True!

3.

Passion

One can call it mental enslavement, one can call it the last chance to rebuild the old order based on God, Honor, and Homeland, or one can call it something entirely different, in one's own way, colloquially put: "as one desires", without the slightest shadow of concern about legal consequences imposed by any seat of power, be it the state or the Church. The days of the dominion of these two great entities are long gone; today, we are free people. We have freedom of speech, and our languages have never been so flexible and soaked in saliva! We are in Europe – in a free Europe; we are Europeans – free Europeans; we are Europeans living in one of the most homogenized social cells, not only across the entire continent but also in the world (9). Therefore, we roughly know what to expect in the morning news edition, as the pool of news that impresses upon our neurons is exceedingly limited. On the other hand, these morning news shares the same sinful characteristic as the Passion... They never get boring.

However, Passion in praxis, unlike the television news pulp, does not entail particularly negative physical consequences. And if one is not a cursed demon possessed by a romantic soul in these extremely unromantic times, one's mind remains untouched, and one emerges from the entire situation with a sense of ordinary human satisfaction, and perhaps even a feeling of inner fulfillment.

Passion has always, in my eyes, represented a secular form of fulfilling the sacred sphere, a kind of prayer that ends in enlightenment and personal revelation. For the person experiencing this love spasm, it reaffirms their belief in the truth of their denomination. But does thinking like mine

sometimes appear to be the already mentioned nihilistic-libertine "alternative path" that stands in opposition to the absorption of classical, European, Christian morality, leading a person toward an anti-human, anti-life path? Indeed, it appears to be precisely that. As the author of this text, I openly admit it and, just as loudly as I did in the second paragraph I wrote, I declare that I, like a stubborn lemming, am heading toward the abyss, the path of an anti-Christian life, driven by my lemming-like daemon, I am moving towards the Void, which I deeply hope will strip away my humanity, my human right to call myself a human being in the eyes of the public.

I wish to throw myself recklessly into the embrace of the Void, as suggested by the hedonistic maxim of the Cyrenaics, which says, "Good is what is pleasant, and bad is what is painful." I want to exclaim Horace's "carpe diem!" and then surrender to nothingness. Throwing my physical being into the hammer and anvil of the Void is paradoxically the greatest possible way to affirm my existence (10).

However, another question remains unanswered, one I have not yet addressed: "Why?" For what purpose; why, exactly? Is it for oneself, or more for someone else? Is it a real, sincere, and non-cynical representation of what truly resides in my mind? And the most important question of all in this: Why, knowing the ethos and destiny of a person with a mentality and soul thoroughly European, do I still turn my back on what is so clearly written in my heritage? In the following points of my work, I will attempt to answer this deeply troubling question about the mysterious reason for turning away from what is, for a European, the obvious spiritual goal, which is Christianity.

Cannibalistic Nature of Faith

Every religion is, by its very nature, dogmatic; such is simply the nature of faith. Consequently, its adherents have a "religious obligation" to move physically and mentally only within a distinct reality. This pertains, for example, to possible ways of spending leisure time, voting for certain political groups, supporting some demands put forward by secular individuals or adherents of other religions, and expressing certain theses. This two-tiered, internal and external, moral obligation, complete devotion to the religion followed by the individual, is crucial. This is because followers of different faiths do not form separate, isolated microsocieties that are distinct from the general population (11), where all legal regulations and rules are based on the believer's faith, but they live in the same undivided, ungrouped space shared with people of various faiths, ideological beliefs, and so on. This, of course, leads to numerous conflicts, which occur on all possible confrontational grounds whenever an opportunity arises.

The accumulation of two or more separate groups of people living on the same undivided territory, adhering to dogmatic laws that are mutually exclusive, does not lead only to bloodshed and terrorist attacks on the religious sites of the opposing side, where those harmed are solely the individuals who "sinned" by adhering to dogmas that contradict those followed by the attacker. Innocent people who have no connection to the entire religious conflict are also harmed. Nevertheless, as history and contemporary global events show (12), the situation is even less rosy than that. When people believe in something wholeheartedly, that "something" seems to directly reside in their minds, drowning out all empathy and logic. In a way, it strips them of qualities that, when combined, make up a civilized human living in the 21st century. In other words, it isn't just that innocents are killed; it is that the killers do not care who or what they are.

Unlimited faith, or even faith itself, the mere act of placing hope in something, leads a person into conflict with the "spook" (13) of their dogmas, which, considering they are merely constructs of our subconscious, are nonetheless elevated to pedestals and granted access to, insight into, and the ability to infiltrate and ultimately take over the deepest recesses of an individual's untouched "self." They become a threat to those who bear these "spirits," waging a war against logic, as well as to the individuals revolving around that person, where a great battle unfolds over the person's individuality.

Ideas treated as undeniable revealed truths can easily erode a person's personality, providing them with a completely new "personality" based on the dogma of their faith, ideology, or political doctrine, solely closing them off to it. This is how people become radicals, and this is exactly what their religion requires of them, for faith demands complete rejection of external criticism, attempts at argumentation, and questioning. A faithful person is an indoctrinated person and must be indoctrinated to be faithful. Anyone who does not meet these three key criteria from the perspective of faith or only deviates from one of them "from time to time" is regarded as a false believer, a mere heretic, who, for their mental licentiousness, will be held accountable at the moment of the momentous "Judgment".

In much clearer, more concise words than my own, the American writer, essayist, and university lecturer David Foster Wallace expressed this issue during one of his lectures when he said, "pretty much anything [else (14)] you worship will eat you alive. If you worship money and things, if they are where you tap real meaning in life, then you will never have enough, never feel you have enough; it's the truth. Worship your own body and beauty, and you will always feel ugly, and when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths before they finally plant you (15)".

The Rein of Nature in the Hand of the Word

1.

Every religion obliges its followers to defend the "truths" deemed dogmatic by their Church authorities. With this element secretly sewn to every priest's cassock and every imam's abaya, it's not difficult to feel a certain specific kind of unease caused by something that might happen someday in the future, though as of now, that "something" neither has been seen nor heard. You could call this fear entirely irrational, mere idle talk that needlessly spreads panic or serves a hidden agenda to set one group against another. Nevertheless, for me, it's a danger as yet unidentified, looming in the air, lying in wait for us. It awaits the moment when we will be too weak or preoccupied with some other pressing social issue that will be so engrossing. When we finally receive that long-anticipated blow, delivered straight to the gut, we'll be taken by surprise, unable to counter it, not to shift the balance of victory in our favor, but to return it to the earlier "neutral zero" point where neither side had to fight.

Saying that "no one wants war" or that "people are inherently good by nature, so casting doubt on any group in society is simply unsavory and in bad, vile taste" is for me nothing but thoughtless regurgitation of logically unexamined humanistic slogans, which I neither believe nor respect because I'm not in the least bit of a humanist. I don't trust humans because I am human myself, so I know well how these entities and monsters can easily domesticate themselves within each of us and then fester and choke in there due to unfulfilled desires to commit something macabre to our fellow human beings. Moreover, how can one talk about opinions that are in "bad" or "good" taste when individual Human Thought is at stake?!

2.1.

Whose is that "Truth"?

Human nature makes us painfully dichotomous. On one hand, we are beings filled with empathy and logic, but on the other, we can succumb to an uncontrollable rush of blood and froth spewing from the corners of our mouths, a beastliness that beckons us to gaze into the bottomless abyss, which breathes in our face, brushes our hair aside, and hisses with some seductive psychiké sensualism, enticing us to immerse ourselves in its immeasurable, uncharted filth – an irresistible facet of our existence, or rather a "fragment of existence" that cannot be eliminated (16).

However, in modern times, there is no place for the macabre and barbarism. Every outbreak of madness or an approaching fit of amok is detected by the system early enough to prevent most heinous acts, such as mass murder. This, in comparison to, for example, the United States, is something we can collectively take pride in (17).

Oh, how much more beautiful our world would be if human demons, like all statistics, remained perpetually immobilized, locked in their perfectly symmetrical pixelated tables and columns! The fact that today we have every reason to feel safe in our own homes does not mean that this state will last forever.

2.2.

In our world, since its very beginnings, there have roamed (and will continue to roam!) individuals willing to pillage, violate, torture, murder themselves and others in the name of something they deemed the highest value, a value above all values. A thousand years ago, in Europe during the papal rule, our continent was consumed by just two matters: war and religion, much like it is the case today in many Muslim countries. While we, Europeans, were absorbed to the brink of human capacity with the enthronement of our new leader, the wealthy merchant Paolo Vitelli by the Florentines, and how it would impact the ever-evolving conflict between the Florentines and the Milanese (18), in the Arab countries, science was advancing (19). When the Pope promised salvation for one's soul in

exchange for joining the meticulously prepared crusade to capture Jerusalem, we set forth to Jerusalem. Just as now, young, entranced Arabs, in the throes of salvation, walk with explosives strapped to their bodies onto a crowded street, joyfully crying, "Allah!, Allah!", and with the press of a button, they trigger detonation. [---] The end. Darkness. A deafening sound. Screams. Cries. More screams. Then silence. And the silence endures still... "And then you hear the song of angels and the creaking of the gates of Heaven, the same Heaven revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by Gabriel". And finally: "I was. I was no more. Life was real (20)".

But what is this "reality?" – I inquire.

It's not, as the [empirical] finality of the act may suggest, the "reality" of the person committing this barbaric act in relation to the morality of the whole. It is the reality of the Book that has corrupted the "self" of the perpetrator.

A person is not born with an idea or affiliation to a specific religion - these elements of human nature are instilled to a greater or lesser degree by family, society, authorities, Books, and the "words of God/Gods" contained in them (i.e., in all of them). What is infused into an adult who commits a criminal act is explosive material already tightly concealed under layers of clothing and skin. These syringes filled to their brim with lethal poison pass through the criminal's attire to make contact with their taut skin. They slip under it with childlike ease, reaching the bloodstream with a direct needle injection of a mind-altering hemlock that ferments within the individual and then materializes in an explosion, somewhere in an Israeli pediatric hospital or a Sudanese pharmaceutical factory (21).

The word is your true father, and as a result, you don't recoil when "he" administers poison to you under the guise of medicine. After all, why should you assume that the Good Omnipotent desires your bodily annihilation?

3.1.

Authority – The Custodian-Corrector of the "Word"

As I mentioned in my introduction, we are Europeans living in a free, secure Europe, though not eternally secure: there's a demon lurking inside each of us, eagerly waiting for someone of higher rank to grant permission for actions that are now perceived as "evil," "inhuman," "immoral," and so on.

This inner demon resides in every psyche, without exception, and its release into the world through our bodies is a possibility for anyone: Christian, Jew, Muslim, or secular individual. It all depends on who, at a given moment, seizes power within one of these groups, which are all "higher" to someone among them, as I mentioned. If an authority figure says, "kill," and you refuse to kill, it means they are not a true authority to you. They will quickly spot your disobedience to "their 'Word'" and expose you, stripping you of your pedestal of unwavering morality, which is what they themselves represent.

The word of your book, entrusted to you by your priest, sets the boundary for your worth as a human and determines your right to be an individual covered by human rights. The holy war continues, even if it doesn't spill blood. It's a war to deepen the loyalty of its followers. Those gutted by the priest's Word become progressively smaller inside, easier to control, and, if necessary, to sacrifice for something "greater" than themselves. The corporality of a worshiper matters to the Church as long as their inner being is wholly subservient.

3.2.

Authorities in and of themselves (22) have an element of sanctity within them, which is that they are not beings open to any form of debate. You either agree with them and act as your authority and their "Word" dictates, or you simply "fall out" of favor. Neither they nor the people who genuinely believe in them and the preached "Word" will extend their hand to you a second time, as they consider you no longer needed because you've doubted the Truth.

For example, if a new Pope feels the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, say, Saint Bernard of

Clairvaux, and then orders his followers, the adherents of the religion he represents, to engage in behaviors aimed at discrediting a specific ethnic or religious group, people (though not everyone today) will likely do it without much hesitation because their moral leader, the one closest to God, has spoken. If a radically inclined imam issues an order to cleanse city X, believing it has lost all morality by allowing women to wear pants and drive, there will probably be a few young, fervent devotees, fixated on him as if he were an idol, who will carry out the directive without a moment's hesitation. If a charismatic leader understands the deepest concerns and agonies of his people, he can easily become a political virtuoso, playing on societal sentiments like the mythological Amphion playing his lyre, simultaneously building and tearing down the mighty walls safeguarding Thebes.

A person needs only a small spark, a subtle nod, a quietly uttered "yes" that watches over the boundary between what is "good" and what is "evil" to abandon their temporary morality and openly commit "evil." As history has shown, religious leaders are remarkably adept at shifting this moral boundary at any moment, often for any reason. Morality doesn't exist for them because they are morality itself. There are no greater moral relativists in our world than the church hierarchs responsible for creating new dogmas and upholding old ones.

4.1.

There is no religion in the world that is attuned to the mindset of our times. When we choose someone as our authority, someone whose spoken "Word" matters more than our own life or, in the grander scheme, human life, we cease to be our own property because we've stopped thinking for ourselves. We don't stop being human, it's true, but we become something far worse than if ultimate subservience to the one wielding the "Word" had made us non-human. No, no, no – "no" times three! Subjugation to the "Word" never renders us non-human by any means, but it does something much worse – it makes us feeble, insignificant humans! The moment our thoughts no longer solely belong to us, we cease to be ourselves and instead become the possession of another, a slave, a dog on a leash, a mere empty tool in the hands of the one we pedestalize. Whether it's a spiritual or human authority, it doesn't matter. So, "either the bat will break the man, or the man will break the bat! (23)".

4.2.

The Critique of the Attempts to Reform Religion

I state that the nature of religion cannot be reformed; it can only be displaced or fully embraced, allowing oneself to be consumed by it. This is strikingly demonstrated by the example of Protestantism and semi-Christian sects, which, through the force of individualism they employed against Catholicism, managed to emerge. They were originally intended to provide people (or sometimes individuals themselves) with a more liberal alternative to the rigid framework of Catholicism. However, adhering to what is inherently essential to the existence of the Catholic faith in their doctrines only renders Protestantism inherently contradictory on a logical level.

Protestantism, as a branch emphasizing humanism in its approach to individual actions vis-à-vis the Church and the law, and adopting a liberal stance on socio-cultural matters, simultaneously maintains in its sanctified annals the belief in the superiority of the "Spirit" over the body (human) and asserts that in "our" world, inhabited by the humanist (natural) individual, cosmic and superhuman entities exist, occupying the space between the realms of physics and metaphysics (24).

Hence, the humanization of religion (Catholic religion, the super-religion (25)) just like its transformation (26), doesn't bring about positive change or a genuine update of faith in line with the times and human mentality. Instead, it gives rise to a mere illusion of improvement, evident by its failure to protect against harm, which continues to flow directly from the "Word" onto its adherents and those who interact with the adherents.

Metamatter

1.

The deeper we delve into the very essence of Earth's matter, into what is closest to humanity, and if this matter proves to be in any way "insufficient," then, in an act of desperation triggered by the realization of one's powerlessness in the face of the earthly matter's primeval principle, individuals decide to "give birth" to metamatter. By the mere fact that it is created by a human being, metamatter is, by its very nature, and up to the farthest limits of its "validity," extremely individualistic and subconscious. As a result, it is physically, and quite literally, impossible to transfer it in any way directly from one person to another (let alone to the general population) in the form it is sculpted within the mind of its creator.

Every religion that is expanded and reinterpreted by new generations of philosophers, theologians, and theosophists is inherently flawed and barren because the thought itself dies along with its creator's musings. A religious system that would be closest to what resides in the mind of the originator of the metamaterial idea should, first and foremost, be flexible rather than dogmatic, suggestive rather than prescriptive. Unlike dogmatism, suggestiveness aligns with human nature, as it is rooted in the continuous exploration of any form, delving deeper and deeper, without the sense of ever hitting a rock, a lake of magma, or a Dantean Inferno.

The primal, foundational urge, referred to in this text as "Passion", which, like itself, assumes that humans, as reasoning animals capable of abstractly analyzing and describing the world, should constitute a physical and mental synthesis of their thoughts. This synthesis should be exclusively based on empirical experience of the world and the transformation of this empirical knowledge into the design of individual self-development, rather than the development of the collective, as advocated by the Jewish prophet Jesus or the 19th-century German prophets Marx and Engels.

Your God is your God, but your neighbor's God, with whom you both attend the same church, is merely a feeble reflection of your individual, uncopiable essence. It cannot be transferred outside the inner world of your body – the world of the Ideas of the One God – attached to your individuality. Furthermore, your neighbor's God is a mirror image with a chemical, unnatural base compared to yours. It makes the mirror through which your neighbor connects with "their god" inherently fragile and susceptible to numerous cracks. Above all, it is frail and perilous, unsuitable as a child's toy or an adult's tool, lacking the blend of the pleasant and the useful, as it lacks even a single particle of Passion. Consequently, it doesn't bring comfort or address any of the Big Questions. Instead, it deepens the concealment of what you feel should be unveiled and laid bare before your very eyes in the depths of your "soul".

2.

With every "prophet"'s death, his religion also dies, and the entire system of thought sinks into the void of time. I assert this because I believe that the exchange of thoughts related to metamaterial nature, which includes both religion and, to a lesser extent, even philosophy, those without any dogma, leads to the decline of the religion established and maintained by the prophet. This is because the exchange of metamaterial thoughts inherently transcends matter itself, the very realm within which the expected "Superexchange of Revealed Truth" is supposed to occur.

Therefore, logically speaking, this exchange cannot be transferred to another being that, unlike the thoughts of the "prophet," is physical and material. So, neither parchment nor the most dedicated disciple will be able to adequately absorb the sacred ideal from an individual permeated with the "Spirit" (German: *Geis*) into their own existence.

3.

Every attempt to transfer the "Truth" from the "prophet" to a disciple, as history has shown,

ends tragically. A prime example can be the brief illustration of how classical Marxist values, initially harnessed by Lenin for a good, revolutionary purpose, eventually mutated under Stalin's leadership. Stalin, on numerous occasions in his writings like "The Problems of Leninism," openly mocks classical Marxist-Leninist proletarian-socialist doctrine and exhibits a complete lack of understanding of this very idea. He distorts it and, depending on his own needs, adapts it for his own purposes, often deviating significantly from the original idea of the socialist collective created by Marx and Engels.

It is also worth noting the linguistic creations that emerged from Marxism, which was first renamed as Leninism, and then branched into styles like Stalinism, Trotskyism (which paradoxically combined extremely communist ideas but also considered the existence of an aristocratic intelligentsia (27)), Maoism, Titoism, and so on. This only underscores how dangerous religion, here understood in a Stirnerian sense, including political-ideological affiliation, can be for the freedom of the individual (28).

Fanatical dogmatism, which eventually, in its political form, moves into the realm of the sacred, is an extremely malleable tool in the hands of those who feel the need for control. However, it can't be long-term control without a moment where the idea tightly gripping the individual doesn't begin to ally with religious authority or become a religion in itself.

4.

Prophets – The Absent Fathers and Their Wild Children

Every "prophet" openly declaring celibacy (29) to demonstrate the benefits of their unnatural abstinence with their own example fails to notice the numerous offspring they leave behind in the form of faithful followers.

Islam, as a much more flexible religion in terms of human biology, in contrast to Christianity – the first major religion – recognizes this paradox. Here, a man who sees himself as a "Supreme Being above all beings" repels the key element that allows the discussion of such a concept as a "being." Therefore, most Islamic schools (*fiqh*) permit Muslim imams to marry multiple women and have children. They are authorized and even encouraged by the Quran (30) to procreate.

Every "prophet" who creates an image of themselves as a "supreme being", which is inherently pure and saturated with the "Spirit of Virtue," is, in reality, imbued with a burning desire to proliferate their "self" and build their legacy in the bodies of third parties. It makes one want to return to the words of Zarathustra, who, after years spent in his hermitage, said to himself, "One times one – in the long run always equals two! (31)".

So, let not the thin-lipped sower of discord in the fields of Humanity, Socrates, be scorned for teaching, nor let those who, against the prohibitions of their master, secretly recorded his words be disdained.

5.1.

The Shimmering Prism; or, Religion Addressed Directly

For clarity, religion, as an abstract, colorful creation of the human mind, is to me as beautiful as a glass sphere in which a shimmering prism is embedded. However, religion, like that crystal, can be used in various ways.

Religion perceives and dogmatically posits that life can be viewed solely as an unfillable void or a space not comprehended by reason and form. I counter this notion with my belief that all attempts to translate empirical reality into numbers, particles, or religious laws simplify the world unnecessarily. While it may seem to diminish it, it causes a person deeply absorbed in the world itself to lose its charm.

Illusions and illusory processes, due to their abstract and illogical nature, speak much more to human beings than scientific facts or real, non-illusory empirical events, which, in my perception, include religion, whose laws are "formulated" in an experiential form subject to empirical experience, either in written or oral form.

I believe that the human mind thirsts for magic and a sense of the unknowable because this is a natural way for humans to perceive reality. It should be directly restored from the "perspective of a sheet of paper". In doing so, the need to eliminate the two greatest plagues from the social space, which humans seem to enjoy poisoning themselves with masochistically as a species, should be recognized. These two plagues, as I see them, are religion and, to some extent, the attempt to materialize "Music" through deities or secular gods, such as the exact sciences.

5.2.

Anyone who desires eternal life, believes in an objective morality, asserts that the body and its physiology are inherently evil (sinful), etc., does so out of sheer laziness. This is because a firm belief in supernatural phenomena carries a hypertextual message that should be interpreted as a deliberate imposition of one's own weakness and inadequacy in relation to the real world – intentional disempowerment in the face of the "Spirit", which prohibits engagement with the worldly and clearly implies the insignificance of present presence by imposing a rigorous "all-or-nothing" framework laced with the terror of fear.

If a person who believes in supernatural phenomena were suddenly to accept that their fate and the currents of the world depended solely on them and not on the "Words of the Spirit," this would be synonymous with surrendering to the strong arms of depression. Its core would be the inner weakness of an empty body, further weakened by an even less replete "Spirit" – an illusion. That's why they [the faithful] choose the easier option, one that doesn't require deeper thought or reflection. They opt for the path that leads to the lasting maintenance of their self-worth at a low but stable level – "To pray is to accept defeat (32)".

By surrendering to the "Spirit," one rejects the material world, and the reason for rejecting anything in any configuration is almost never due to something that can be described as "good." We reject a nation because we can no longer bear the oppression it exerts on us; we reject alcohol because we recognize its degrading effects on us, and so on. Behind the denial of something that once formed part of our "self," there always lurks a hidden tragedy, grayness, and languor.

Religion in Politics

1.

To conclude, let's step away for a moment from contemporary issues related to religion and focus solely on historical matters. Let's examine examples of how religion shaped the form of politically conscious and active societies. To do this, we will go back to the beginnings of European culture, take a few steps back, pass through the sun and marble, and delve straight into Ancient Greece.

In reality, what is now called "the religion of Ancient Greece" was a matter not of individuals but of entire communities. Each family revered its gods and heroes. This meant that family members had to behave decently towards one another to receive lasting divine protection. If these relationships were treated ambivalently or intolerantly, divine punishment would befall the entire family.

In a similar fashion, each state (a greek *πόλις*) worshipped gods and heroes chosen by the community. Religion during that era was not a uniform entity; as I mentioned before, it belonged to entire communities. All significant events in the life of the community had to be sanctified through religious rituals, serving the purpose of mentally unifying the society.

The communal nature of Greek religion influenced civic consciousness and led to the development of complex, even revolutionary systems of governance for the time. A prominent example is the famous Athenian democracy. An ancient Athenian was as devout as their participation in the political life of the community.

The system of Greek religion that I have briefly described was adopted with little change by the Romans. This brings us to the rivalry between Roman religion and Christianity, the Dionysian sense versus the Apollonian, will to power versus decadence. In the contrast between these religions, we can clearly see that the introduction of religious, systematic, and dogmatic ethics leads to changes in the way of life of society and its form.

Christians separated themselves from pagan gatherings and led a quiet life on the sidelines. As long as Christians saw themselves as law-abiding faithful, they were regarded by the Romans as bad citizens. By renouncing participation in community life, they exposed the entire society to the wrath of the gods (33).

2.

Christianity also did not possess the visual attributes that the Roman religion had, such as altars, idols, sacred artifacts, and so on. This further set Christians apart from the Romans and the entire Hellenistic culture. In that context, even then, they appeared as intruders, although intruders who were not necessarily threatening. (Oh, how wrong the Romans were, laying their entire understanding in the bronze texture of their daggers...).

Christian practices were spiritual and internal. This attitude toward religious rituals also left its mark on Hellenistic culture. The Romans considered prosperity a blessing because they knew that the wealthier the celebrations they conducted in honor of the gods, whether Bacchanalian or other holidays, the more lenient and supportive the gods would be. This affirmation of worldly life was a clear contradiction to the Christians. During revelry and debauchery, Christians prayed with closed eyes to emptiness, thus finding solace in material destitution. For Christians, the ascetic path was considered a "holy path" that allowed them to be close to God (34).

3.

Some Conclusions

So what can we conclude from these and earlier examples?

Without a doubt, religious doctrines influence believers by imposing certain ethical principles that later transform into rituals. It is through these rituals that believers, like a hammer and a chisel, carve out distinctive forms within the rock of social structure.

A Short Stroll Along the Stave

How much can one write about a trembling trill? I am enchanted by the omnipresent beauty of this world: its fragrances, its flavors, its sounds – the songs of leaves, avian odes; dogs' barking, the sounds of cut metal, the rumble of rusty trains.

I consider myself as nothing, a fleeting glimmer or perhaps a pitiful, barely audible flat note in the exuberant symphony of the cosmos. Yet, I do not feel particularly bad about this undeniable fact of my own insignificance.

And if (oh, if only it was possible...) life could be lived solely along the path of the musical staff of the world, which enchants with each of its small elements!... But there is an obvious discrepancy, something here does not fit, does not align with what can be seen both through and beyond the looking glass.

The problem, however, I believe, does not lie in the composition of the symphony itself, but rather in who experiences this composition. Injecting "great" gods and alternative worlds, where extremes of all kinds await us, disrupts the beautiful spectacle in which whimsical notes leaping freely do not interfere with the ugly shades of gray or even the sooty black lurking in the entranced individuals.

Nature will never push away a person, but religion and its sinister human extensions will chastise the "gray" forever, ruining this brief experience of the "Spirit" given to them, to engage with Music, with Life.

The beauty of Passion is unconditionally unconditioned; nothing needs to be signed or fulfilled – it is enough to simply be human, which is real and inherently possible. Religion, on the other hand, speaks quite the opposite, imposing new burdens of obligations and packages with countless laws, commands, and rules on individuals, adding to it a bitter vision of posthumous infinity.

Religion never accepts "grayness" – it aims to brutally homogenize every single shade of uniqueness. And when it finally captures it in its bloodthirsty hands, it turns it into an inhuman trophy, mummifying it with a mental dogma, pushing it as far as possible from its original, virginal, unspoiled, pure human form.

Why must something that enchants be further adorned with something that complicates the delight, trying to "illogicize" it by creating godly figures? Spiritual ecstasy should flow from the sacred nature of the knowable reality, not – as has been happening in the world for over a millennium – from an artificially added value, elevated above the certain things, because they form the foundation of Passion.

Vers la Flamme: An Attempt of Self-Critique and an Answer to Every "Why"

If our nature were unblemished,
sunrises and sunsets would suffice (35).

Michel Houellebecq, *Platform*

2.

Passion versus God

Whatever I do (and maybe it's just weaving empty excuses), I will not change my future or overcome my nature inclined toward sin because what is called Evil in the Eyes is, in turn, my Great Passion.

One day, I will surely be able to see the world in the world, rather than the ever-present Eye, which relentlessly, with the determination of a maniac, meticulously takes notes and later assigns "just" grades based on them. One day, perhaps, I will see in the field road very little more than just the road itself, rather than the weight that drags me down as soon as some "burdensome Morality" thought appears in my head. And maybe one day, I will no longer fear the sunbeam entering the room through the lace curtain or the moonlight splashing my Passion's cheek.

"Someday! Someday!... Someday(?)..." Yes, "someday" will surely come, but not now (not now, not now; certainly not now)...

Religion has always put hands where no one but the body's owner should ever put them. But it happened (and it won't go away). Therefore, the only thing I can do in this place is to warn about what religion can do to the fragile human mind that has just started to develop and familiarize itself with concepts like good, evil, life, and death. Life in itself is not easy and unfriendly to humans, which is why houses are built on rocks – to protect them from the destructive force of the sea.

3.1.

It is an undeniable truth that people become more decent when they become more religious. It's true that religion leads to increased well-being and "protects" its faithful followers from indulging in life-shortening addictions (36).

It's true, it's true, it's all true... All this statistical goodness is a fact. However, for me, religion has made me a an in-human wreck! So, I can't suppress this Music within me; I can't behave "calmly" and "professionally" because this is my struggle.

Religion, the afterlife, life culminating in eternal happiness or eternal suffering – it's all too much for my nerves. It overwhelms me, devours me, spits me out, and swallows me again, and I diminish: there is less and less of me, less, less, less... Until I finally go before the altar of the Holy Scripture and study the "Inspired Verses" fervently, tremblingly turning the pages with the hope that the Radiance of one of the "Golden Truths" will blind me, and my heart will instantly stop beating with the "Word." But, I always get only a piercing silence, leaving my inner empire of senses starving and in agony, yet not a torment severe enough for curiosity to take over, and the body to be thrown under a speeding hammer, which will drive it into the anvil, helping me to cross to the "other side" and see with my own eyes what this "different world," inaccessible to any human or machine, conceals.

3.2.

In the end, in the natural process, my body will sag, age, and fold in on itself. The flushed pupils will turn inward, and they will see what they have always longed to see. Their insides will fill with the juice whose bitterness the inhabitants of my realm of senses have always desired to taste, as they wait in quiet anhedonia for the answer to the Ultimate Question. But by that time (by the moment

of receiving the answer), will there be even one curious, suffering servant of the subconscious who will still be interested in tasting that nectar, so eagerly desired now – the Answer? However things may unfold, I would like to precede my sinking into myself with these words: "I was. I was no more. The life was real". And not be afraid. And not be afraid! And not be afraid... not anymore...

References

- (1) Michel Houellebecq, "Platform," Publisher: Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal, 5th Edition, ISBN 978-83-280-9906-7, page 90.
- (2) To this day, most of the Christian canons have been preserved practically intact, perhaps with the exception of architecture and attire (fashion is a relatively young concept).
- (3) Here, strictly speaking, making prudery something worth applying to everyday life.
- (4) Truth to be told, it's enough to open any random section of "The Imaginary God" to encounter primitive, at times even barbaric, "arguments" that Richard Dawkins, with an unprecedented, at least for me, brashness (even if rightfully so), puts up against the a priori and ontological "evidence[s]" presented by the Catholic Church to confirm the truth of faith. Hence my aversion to Dawkins and the hordes of blindly applauding "fans" – I believe that even the fight against something that seems fundamentally ugly should be conducted in a more elegant, sophisticated manner: refined and erudite rather than crude and blindly aggressive. (Dawkins is unquestionably a better biologist than philosopher.) Publisher: Wydawnictwo CiS, Warsaw 2007, 2nd Revised Edition, ISBN 978-83-85468-28-9, page 128.
- (5) Nietzsche on page 22, in a section of the book titled "'Reason' in Philosophy," in point 2, concludes that, "It is precisely what we do with their [the senses'] testimony that introduces the lie, for example, the lie of unity, the lie of reality, substance, duration... 'Reason' is the cause that we falsify the testimony of the senses." Thus, he expresses agreement with the pre-Socratic thinker Heraclitus of Ephesus and the young Hegelian Max Stirner, as both of these thinkers, just like Nietzsche in the passage I mentioned, argued that only what we think and accept as true, real, and just is what begins to meet those criteria of truth, actual presence of a being, and so forth. In point 4 on page 23, Nietzsche summarizes, stating that everything called the "greatest" or "greatest of all" is, in reality, empty. This is because, according to the laws of logic, the being that is everything must be the most general being, and a being that, by its nature, is shifted or even placed on the very border of generality, in its essence cannot be designated as anything concrete. Therefore, it cannot be named a god, crystallized in individual words, with the help of, for instance, adjectives describing its characteristics (omnipotence, omniscience, etc.). Publisher: Wydawnictwo Vis-à-vis Etiuda, 3rd Edition, ISBN: 978-83-7998-259-2, pages 22-23.
- (6) This is clearly an allusion to Nietzsche and the conclusion of "The Antichrist," where, on the last page 106, he finishes his argument with the words, "Revaluation of all values!..." Publisher: Wydawnictwo Vis-à-vis Etiuda, 2nd Edition, ISBN: 978-83-7998-250-9, page 106.
- (7) This, too, is an allusion to Nietzsche and the conclusion of "The Antichrist," where, on the last page 106, he finishes his argument with the words, "Revaluation of all values!..." Publisher: Wydawnictwo Vis-à-vis Etiuda, 2nd Edition, ISBN: 978-83-7998-250-9, page 106.
- (8) New Testament, Gospel According to St. John/NT, J1: <https://biblia.deon.pl/rozdzial.php?id=340>.
- (9) Here and later, strictly about Poland.
- (10) The Japanese writer Yukio Mishima explains this existential paradox in his essay titled "Sun and Steel" as follows: "Let's imagine the existence of a single healthy apple. It does not exist due to words, and the seed nest cannot be seen from the outside, as in the case of the strange fruit of Amiel. The interior must be entirely invisible. So in the very heart of the apple, enclosed in the flesh in a blind pale darkness, lies its essence, which, trembling with irritation, is looking for a way to see with its

own eyes that it is a worthy and real apple. The apple certainly exists, but such existence is insufficient for its essence. And it thinks that if not words, then only sight can secure its existence. Indeed, from the point of view of the essence of the fruit, it can be if, only by existing and looking simultaneously. There is only one way to unravel this contradiction. It is the edge of a knife – deeply sunk into the fruit, it can split it in two to bring its essence into the light, the same essence that falls into the redness of the apple's skin. But can the apple properly continue its existence as a single fruit at this moment? The existence of a split apple breaks into parts – its essence has sacrificed existence to "see".: Publisher: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy (PIW), 2022, 1st Edition, ISBN: 978-83-8196-436-4, pages 57-58.

(11) Deviations from this norm can include: Quakers (the Polish-language site with their beliefs and doctrines: <https://kwakrzy.org/nasze-przekonania.html>), Amish, Anabaptists, Orthodox Jews, etc.

(12) The article (although rather vague/superficial) discusses the "possibility of committing" war crimes by the Israeli military in the form of killing thousands of women and children during their missile airstrikes on the Gaza Strip: [<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-07-06/ty-article/.premium/israel-may-have-committed-war-crimes-in-jenin-raid-un-palestinian-rights-official-says/00000189-2a7b-dcb5-a5df-6f7f370a0000> to the article]. For a more detailed and precise discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as experienced by Palestinians, Ahmad Sa'di's text titled "Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity" provides insights. *Israel Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2002), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30245590>.

(13) German philosopher Max Stirner designated the act of placing faith or hope in religion, utopian ideals, political or revolutionary postulates, etc., as the concept of a "specter." This term encapsulates the notion of an idea that has so thoroughly "possessed" the human mind that the belief in the "higher purpose" espoused by said idea obscures one's (namely, the individual's) own welfare and motivates their decisions not towards self-development but rather in the service of furthering the very idea itself. M. Stirner posits that the majority of commonly accepted social institutions, including the very concept of the state, private property as an individual right, natural rights in general, and the concept of society itself, are mere illusions of the mind, "apparitions" or "specters," literal phantoms in the mind of an "obsessed" individual. An intriguing illustration of Stirner's characterization of something as a "phantom" can be found on page 46 of the philosopher's philosophical magnum opus, "The Ego and Its Own," where he writes that, in the mind of Jesus Christ, the figure of a specter was embraced by humanity itself: Publisher: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Year of Publication: 2013, p. 46.

14 The used "else" pertains to the various beliefs and their diverse manifestations previously enumerated by Wallace.

(15) The mentioned segment in the text is available at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKSUXOK8ooQ>.

(16) "Who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster. And if you gaze for long into an abyss, the abyss gazes also into you." ~ Friedrich Nietzsche, "Beyond Good and Evil." Translation by Stanisław Wyrzykowski, Jakub Mortowicz Publishing, Second Edition, Revised and Reexamined Against the Original, p. 33 (PDF version).

(17) The map with statistics confirming what I wrote in that passage can be found at this link: <https://wisevoter.com/country-rankings/mass-shootings-by-country/#libya>.

(18) The example I provided illustrates what Niccolò Machiavelli discusses in his work "The Prince," in Chapter XII. Publisher: Vis-à-vis Etiuda, ISBN: 978-83-7998-397-1, pages 58-59.

(19) The topic of inventions in the Arab world is fully covered in the text, which can be freely accessed at this PDF link: http://www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/scienceislam_education/docs/Science_and_technology_in_Medieval_Islam-Teachers_notes.pdf. A condensed version of the guide to the fruits of Arab medieval thought is also presented in this article: <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/meast/01/29/muslim.inventions/index.html>.

(20) The "last words" enclosed in parentheses, as referenced by me, are a direct allusion to the words of Daniel²⁵ from the book by the French writer Michel Houellebecq, "The Possibility of an Island." Publisher: Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal, 5th Edition, ISBN: 978-83-280-7475-0, page 494.

(21) The allusion pertains to the bombing of the Al-Shifa pharmaceutical factory by the United States on August 20, 1998, based on the mistaken belief by American intelligence that it was a location where Islamist militias from the region were storing weapons. For more information, you can refer to this link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Shifa_pharmaceutical_factory.

(22) Let's even say that they have this sanctity assigned to them *a priori*.

(23) Quoting from "The Ego and Its Own" (by M. Stirner): Published by PWN, 2013, page 9.

(24) "The Crisis of the Modern World" by René Guénon, Publisher: Sophia Perennis, page 62; ISBN: 0-900588-24-1.

(25) Protestantism + sects arising to existence from schism or personal revelation (Mormonism).

(26) Islam.

(27) John Nathan, "Mishima: A Biography," page 343, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy (PIW), ISBN: 978-83-8196-344-2.

(28) "The Ego and Its Own" by Max Stirner, Publisher: PWN, 2013, page 266.

(29) This represents one of the greatest denials of pleasure derived from the censures of Passion, from which an untainted individual can draw their sacredness, not poisoned by the idea of metabits.

(30) Sura Ar-Rūm 30:21, published by the Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy (PIW), Year of publication: 1986 (Warsaw), page 486, ISBN: 83-06-01168-6: "And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquillity in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought."

(31) Friedrich Nietzsche, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," page 52, Biblioteka Gazety Wyborczej, ISBN: 84-9891-164-5.

(32) <https://genius.com/Death-grips-beware-lyrics>.

(33) The entire point "1" refers to: N.G.L. Hammond, "A History of Greece," Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warsaw 1994.

(34) Point 2 is related to the book: Cairns, Earle E. (1996), "Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church," (Third ed.), Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.

(35) Michel Houellebecq, "Platform," Publisher: Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal, 5th Edition, ISBN: 978-

83-280-9906-7, page 368.

(36) John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, "God Is Back," 2011, pp. 175-176.