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## THE STATUS OF RELIGION IN THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Josiah Royce constructed a systematic idealism which including my topic – the status of religion in the human experience. In developing this topic, Royce discourse on the experiences of individuals, communities of individuals, communities of communities, nature itself, and finally the community of communities, or the Absolute. The foundation of this stage, we find Royce' epistemology. He is focus on human's perception. That is the key of his theory of knowledge and the construction his conception of consciousness. His process knowing is determined in terms of Royce' Absolute. However, before analyzing of this topic is necessary to get attention which include the discussions of its relation to time, as well as its triadic interpretive nature. Royce participation in psychological research about the concept's connection in his time.

At the beginning is important to focus on the conscious and the process changing of human perception of world. In Royce's 1898 work entitled *Self-Consciousness, Social Consciousness and Nature*, he offer the interpretation the way how man is knowing the real world. Some changing element, some dynamic phenomenon is understood as a relation to something what is done as a presentation of things. The manner existing is understandable in own sense which is constituting in rich relationships of those parts to one another. Something is

emerge and get own status in human experience. This is kind of manifestation things which is depend from condition of human relation to the real world<sup>1</sup>.

Traditionally, common sense presents a concept of time very nominalistic in nature. We see our lives running through this time represented by a clock, human lifetimes comprised of decades, decades of years, years of months, and so on to hours, minutes, and seconds. Definition of our situation is temporal, our moment allows for the further division of moments ad infinitum. Sharing in one another common sense conceptual feature becomes problematic. In this way everyone have problem to approbate the real world in the same way. We observe the kind of assertion that is misunderstanding the common sense. What mean we find the present to be defined in relativistic fashion. The present context of interpretation is the moment when the comparison of ideas, be they conceptual or perceptual, is mediated by a third idea, an interpreter. It is look like a triadic process, where two distinct ideas are reconciled by a third. The third idea, the interpreter, constitutes a dynamic creative act. This process Royce illustrate in lecture XII, *The Will to Interpret* of *The Problem of Christianity*. He is showing several examples of this interpreting, or mediating idea. The first example he calls upon is that of the interpreting idea necessary for rea- ding writing reflected in a mirror. On the one hand, there is a written word printed on a piece of paper before you in normal legible print. On the other hand, and for the sake of this example, let us suppose that on the same piece of paper there is written and additional word, which is, in fact, the same word as that which was written in normal fashion, but written as though it would appear in a mirror. At first glance, one eyes the two words and is stymied. There is something peculiar in both their similarity, and in their difference. The acknowledgment of this peculiarity leads to a question: How are the two words related? With the purpose of successfully answering this question Royce is trying to establish relation that the first letter of the normally written word as the last of the mirror script word. The third mediating idea, which compared the first normally written word and similar a second word, was the creative mental act of envisioning the first, legible word, in an act of motion whereby it came to align itself perfectly with the second similar – illegible word. In this example we see interpretation

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<sup>1</sup> D. MONSMAN. *Royce's Conception of Experience and the Self*. „The Philosophical Review” 49:1940 no. 3 p. 331.

is depend from a moment when ideas come to subject and the present moment is correcting by the first impression. The status of the present idea is specific interpretation which determined our conscious. Everything is done in a meditating way. We can discover the real world as a nominal world but Royce try to show dynamism of human nature. He describe reality which from human perspective is in statu fieri (that is the latin sentence). World is creative in every time. This issue Royce present in *Temporal and the Eternal*: „An elementary consciousness of change without such definite successions we can indeed have; but where we observe clearly what a particular change is, it is a change wherein one fact succeeds another”<sup>2</sup>.

Whole process is as a consequence of the serial ordering of events. In this way we see phenomenon of changes, which create of our world. Royce is aware the changes are clear in a meditation work. It is important to see the same words and the relationship of that. Every sequenced order temporally is determined by meditating idea, which come from subject, he is recognized some words and he is order in still of thinking about the object in ordinary time. But we can ask about how the words meet together? Royce is described the depending of that from interpretation of Charles Peirce. This is triadic description, he offered it in *The World and the Individual*. Our Author except nominalistic understanding of time when we see his concept from this point in very short term, our awareness of an event is specifically an awareness of the event, over time, and not of the separate individual moments that an event might be cut like frames of a video representation.

## 1. THE COMPOSITION OF OUR WORLD

Many of todays thinkers might describe science as a conscious beings but not often science is describe a conscious life. This aspects of human being is presented by Royce. The key of his concept is nature: „we have no right whatever to speak of really unconscious Nature, but only of uncommunicative Nature, or of Nature whose mental pro-

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<sup>2</sup> J. ROYCE. *The Temporal and the Eternal*. In: *The World and the Individual*. New York: The MacMillan Company 1901 p. 114.

cesses go on at such different time – rates from ours that we cannot ourselves to a live appreciation of the inward fluency, although our consciousness does make us aware of their presence”<sup>3</sup>.

The main question is why is possible communication between entities of dramatically different situation of people in the same time. We find a Royce’s discussions about it in the *World and the Individual and Self-Consciousness, Social Consciousness and Nature*. In the first attention Royce is notified W. James discussing about „specious present”. He see communication as a dynamic processes taking place between those two time limits can be held before the mind’s eye in one moment, a moment which, technically, could be analyzed by way of the triadic structure mentioned above.

According to Royce, we are aware of ourselves only in so far as we are aware of an „other”. The first „other” that we become aware of in our development is a fellow being of the same type. In this way we apperceive and react. We observe others reacting in similar fashions to those same stimuli that an action from ourselves. Through language, we reports our fellows reports back, and a comparison of ideas ensues. Communication from this point of view mean the sharing of common perceiving things. Royce’s idealism present a system wherein conscious life is attributed to a far greater degree of beings the common sense permits. In this way is building a widening of the epistemic community and again the knowledge is increased. This is the reason why the communication is never the same intimate nature and community is permanent changed.

## 2. ABSOLUTE AND HUMAN NATURE

The term of Absolute is a key of Royce’s idealism. Communities exists a higher reality to a community than the sum of its constituting members. In lecture XII of *The Problem of Christianity*, he discusses the community of interpretation and triadic process. We can read „the real world is the Community of Interpretation which is constituted by the two antithetic ideas, and their mediator or interpreter, whatever or whoever that interpreter may be. If the interpretation is a reality, and if

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<sup>3</sup> J. ROYCE. *The Interpretation of Nature*. In: *The World and the Individual*. p. 225-226.

it truly interprets the whole of reality, then the community reaches its goal, and the real world includes its own interpreter. Unless both the interpreter and the community are real, there is no real world<sup>24</sup>.

We see a parallel process that common sense would assume retain for human individuals with whom we can directly communicate. When we creatively construct an interpretive idea for the comparison of two other ideas to form an apperceptive moment of understanding, we fall short of our ideal goal of a complete understanding. The new interpreting idea is used as a means for another comparison. We find many problems and questions about it. Today, for instance we speak of the scientific community which answers to large questions with a certain method. The same way we can talk about different society as an environment of community or different reality. This point of view come from relativistic describing world.

However Royce note that we find the higher community which exist as a infinite. He was drawing this point out in *The Place of the Self in Being*. Royce wrote – „as a fact, any Self except the Absolute is included within the life of a richer Self, and in turn includes the lives of partial Selves within its own”. That is a reality which is present outside of community. In *Universality and Unity* Royce asserts: „The facts which we view as related to one another in space must indeed be viewed by a larger experience than ours, as present and as linked. But our way of interpreting the linkage is obviously human, and is probably only a very special case of the experience of the various aspects of coexistent meaning in the world of the final experience<sup>25</sup>”.

In this text we see that there are various degrees experience. And that in a community pursuing an ideal in a purposeful fashion. There are developing experience so far than these possible in the human individual. The process establishing of communities is depend from the construction of consciousness we want to be together, because we have image of community which is very idealistic. This is the reason why Royce present relation between community and communities and Absolute. The key of his consideration lay in his idealism, which is building on pragmatistic foundation.

What is specific in Royce philosophy about Absolute? Absolute – philosophical term used for God – come from conception of co-

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<sup>4</sup> J. ROYCE. *The World of Interpretation*. In: *The Problem of Christianity* Washington. D. C. The Catholic University of America Press. 2001 p. 339.

<sup>5</sup> J. ROYCE. *Universality and Unity*. In: *The World and the Individual*. p. 420.

community. Royce consider existent of that in a idealistic form which is characterized by infinite structure. Community exist in this way as an idea which is determined by human condition. This idea looks like Absolute. It has the same form. When we try to characterize Absolute we see processes which contained in the infinite past, as well as those will constitute the infinite future. Absolute is like human expectations which it get clear form and start to be universal thing. Illustrating this point, Royce states: „For it is precisely the wholeness, and not the mer fragmentariness, the presence, and not the mere absence of unity in our consciousness, the relative attainment, and not the mere postponement of our meanings, which, from this point of view, guide us towards a positive view of how the unity of Being is, in the midst of all the varieties, attained”<sup>6</sup>.

This unity of Being is good illustration for my topic. Without this term using by Royce we never recognized his idealism. He is focus on idealistic and pragmatistic community which exist in human consciousness as a point of unity and goal of human aspiration. He call it – Absolute. The unity of Being is the source of knowledge of the Absolute. That is, our acknowledgment of the presented continuity gives us evidence of the Absolute. Effectively, the Absolute is the epistemic community. Royce’s idealism views the whole world, the world at large, as engaged in terms of this type of temporal process by which meaning is had in the embodiment of a sequential series, a purposively ordered sequence of events. The implication of that is the ordered sequence of world events, when viewed as en embodiment all at once, constitutes an ever present now, and includes the infinite past, present, and infinite future. It is the inner life of the Absolute, ever be present by now. In the *Temporal and the Eternal*, Royce declares: „in the last analysis, the Absolute Will must be viewed as expressed in a well- ordered and discrete series of facts, which from our point of view may indeed appear, as we shall still further see, capable of discrimination ad infinitum”<sup>7</sup>.

Interestingly, this well ordered series of fact contains not only the final determinations of ideas, but also includes all of the ambiguity and problems, all of the error, and all of the yearning of the world as

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*. p. 422.

<sup>7</sup> ROYCE. *The Temporal and the Eternal*. p. 138.

well. However, the Absolute also contains all of the solutions and final outcomes of these problems and their resulting yearnings. The Absolute is the sum of all experience, both that which constitutes, from our perspective, the infinite past and the infinite future, as well as our own present.

In his notion of the Absolute we see he is functioning as a transitory state wherein an ideal is pursued, but also the final solutions to all of those yearnings, there is an ambiguity that Roycean scholarship would be well served to address. Some interpreter of his philosophy compare him with Bergson's interpretation of human action and finally his conception of Absolute<sup>8</sup>. For Royce Absolute is perfecting, as opposed to perfect, He is presence in his transitory function of finite and he is appeared as infinite form. The process of His acceptance is done in the way of assertion but is done as a perfect form. It is necessary for human need, Absolute is producing by community which look for a perfect stability and the platform of communication between people. But Absolute himself seems that Royce's Absolute is purposeful by aiming at its own perfection. This is a very pragmatic interpretation.

### *Conclusion*

Royce analyzed the meaning of loyalty give to method how the status of religion is done in human experience. True religion is the resold of community life which is developing in every day. Time and every generation has to be confronting together and look for compromise in this field. We find in Royce's writing some direction when he is presented his understanding guilty, grace, the status community and their relationship to communities in general. Idealistic vision of integrated people is relating to human expectation and need. It is difficult to say about the universal consciousness from his understanding Royce's Absolute. It is better to describe this idea as a process which is a very creative and attractive. From this point of view this theory is useful for scientist who search the foundation of any religion. The pragmatic base give them the space of new vision religious study.

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<sup>8</sup> M. CAPEK. *Time and Eternity in Royce and Bergson*. „Revue internationale de philosophie” 21:1967 (79-80) p. 22-45.

## STATUS RELIGII W DOŚWIADCZENIU LUDZKIM

## S t r e s z c z e n i e

Przedmiotem tego artykułu jest status Boga w ludzkim doświadczeniu na podstawie koncepcji Absolutu w filozofii J. Royce. Jego koncepcja Boga wiąże się ściśle z doświadczeniem indywidualnym i wspólnotowym Absolutu. Sam Royce koncentruje się na percepcji, czyli zdolności poznawczej podmiotu tego doświadczenia. Dlatego zwraca on szczególną uwagę na fenomen świadomości. Royce skłania się w kierunku teorii wiedzy i jej struktury w procesie poznawczym podmiotu indywidualnego i zbiorowego. Istotną kanwą tego poznania jest związek czasu, natury i kultury. W opisie Royce'a interpretacja świata zależna jest od procesu asercji rzeczywistości, która w swojej dynamice przedstawiania się znajduje swój wyraz we wspólnym sensie. Jest on podzielany, a później zachowany na drodze lojalnościowej.

W jego filozofii ważną kategorią poznawczą jest „wola do interpretacji”. Idee i interpretator tworzą twórczy akt poznawczy, tworzą świadomość. Ta zależność pomiędzy ideą a interpretatorem wyraża cały dynamizm ludzkiej natury. Poszczególne wydarzenia, które następują po sobie, dają się poznać w fenomenie zmian, które tworzą nasz świat. Zmiany te ujęte w kategorii czasu dają się uchwycić w medytacji nad ideami, dlatego są one poddawane nieustannej interpretacji i domagają się programu lojalnościowego.

Komunikacja międzyludzka odbywa się na podłożu naturalnym, który jest podstawą działań świadomych. Natura w takim ujęciu nie jest świadomością, jedynie bazą dla ludzkiego świata. Świadomość tworzy się na poziomie wspólnego sensu, który nigdy nie jest ten sam, bo jest komunikowany, uzgadniany i wzmacniany programami lojalnościowymi.

W swojej koncepcji Absolutu Royce jest ogarnięty idealizmem. Rzeczywistość idealna jest uwarunkowana interpretacją wspólnotową. To wspólnota tworzy ideał, który przybiera cechy graniczne i staje się wspólnym sensem jej istnienia. Absolut wzbogaca tożsamość wspólnotową i jest przez nią pożądany. Jest wynikiem pewnego rodzaju apercpcji, gdzie dane rzeczywistości są przedmiotem autoanalizy, interpretacji, poszukiwania wspólnego sensu egzystencji. Spotkanie z Absolutem jest związane z doświadczeniem wspólnoty. Jest on bowiem wyrazem uniwersalności ludzkiego rozumienia świata. Bóg jest to podzielany wspólny sens wszystkiego tego, co ludzkie. Nie można go traktować w sposób statyczny, gdyż jest on w ludzkim doświadczeniu nieustannie negocjowany i uzgadniany. Absolut jest pozczasowy sam w sobie.



W doświadczeniu ludzkim, które jest uwarunkowane czasowością, musi być on nieustannie odkrywany. Człowiek jest nim zdeterminowany, ale nie jest nim zniewolony.

Royce ukazuje z jednej strony sam problem statusu Absolutu w doświadczeniu człowieka, a z drugiej ukazuje istniejącą zależność między nimi. Idealistyczna wizja jego pozycji ogranicza człowieka w rozumieniu Absolutu, a nawet go pomniejsza. Royce jest za tym, aby Absolut był rozpoznawany w jego działaniu, czyli w dynamicznych relacjach zależności pomiędzy Idealem a podmiotem doświadczenia. Tak rozumiany Absolut jest dany w doświadczeniu podmiotu jako przedmiot jego twórczego zaangażowania w rzeczywistość ludzką i w nieustannym jej poznawaniu. Poza tym wyraża on ludzkie aspiracje, oczekiwania i potrzeby. Royce jest pragmatystą, którego teoria Absolutu pozwala na poszukiwanie nowych przestrzeni studiów nad religią i religijnością.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Josiah Royce (1855-1916), teoria Absolutu, koncepcja Boga, doświadczenie religijne, doświadczenie człowieka

**Key words:** Josiah Royce (1855-1916), theory of the absolute, conception of God, religious experience, experience of human being