

PHILOSOPHY



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ROBERT SPAEMANN'S ONTOLOGY OF THE PERSONS AS A CONTRIBUTION TO OVERCOMING AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL CRISIS

Abstract

Robert Spaemann (1927–2018) is one of the best-known German contemporary philosophers. One of his most important books: *Persons* contains an ontology of the person that offers a synthesis of metaphysics, anthropology and ethics. The purpose of the article is to present the most important elements of this ontology and to reveal their possible relevance for current ethical problems. Spaemann's main achievement is a successful diagnosis of the present crisis of the person with the indication of the possibilities of overcoming it through an integral view of the human being.

Keywords: Robert Spaemann; person; human nature; ethics; ontology

ONTOLOGIA OSOBY ROBERTA SPAEMANNA JAKO WKŁAD W PRZEZWYCIĘŻENIE KRYZYSU ANTROPOLOGICZNEGO

Abstrakt

Robert Spaemann (1927–2018) jest jednym z najbardziej znanych współczesnych filozofów niemieckich. Jedną z jego najważniejszych książek: *Osoby* zawiera ontologię osoby, będącą syntezą metafizyki, antropologii i etyki. Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie najważniejszych elementów tej ontologii i ukazanie jej możliwego znaczenia dla aktualnych problemów etycznych. Głównym osiągnięciem Spaemanna jest skuteczna diagnoza obecnego kryzysu osoby oraz wskazanie możliwości jego przezwyciężenia poprzez integralną wizję człowieka.

Słowa kluczowe: Robert Spaemann; osoba; natura ludzka; etyka; ontologia

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DIE PERSONENONTOLOGIE ROBERT SPAEMANN'S ALS BEITRAG
ZUR ÜBERWINDUNG EINER ANTHROPOLOGISCHEN KRISE

Abstract

Robert Spaemann (1927–2018) gehört zu den bekanntesten deutschen Philosophen der Gegenwart. Eines seiner wichtigsten Bücher: *Personen* enthält eine Personenontologie, die eine Synthese von Metaphysik, Anthropologie und Ethik bildet. Der Beitrag hat zum Ziel, die wichtigsten Elemente dieser Ontologie zu präsentieren und ihre mögliche Relevanz für die gegenwärtigen ethischen Probleme zu erschließen. Als Spaemanns Hauptleistung zeigt sich eine gelungene Diagnose der Personenkrise der Gegenwart mit dem Hinweis auf Möglichkeiten ihrer Überwindung durch eine integrale Sicht des Menschen.

Schlagworte: Robert Spaemann; Person; menschliche Natur; Ethik; Ontologie

PREFACE

'Person' usually triggers rather positive associations because this term is associated with bearers of a special dignity. However, as much as this positivity is in itself uncontroversial, there can be intense debate about what the term actually entails and to which living beings it may be appropriated. There is no shortage of tendencies to deny the status of person to some groups of human individuals and to use it to refer to other beings. Such a trend is anything but harmless, because here we are dealing with fundamental achievements of intellectual history, which form something like a coordinate system for human coexistence. In the age of a new 'language confusion', in which old terms are given new meanings, it is more difficult to agree on concrete common action if one already cannot agree on common vocabulary. Therefore, it is useful to pay deeper attention to words like 'person', not only to provide conceptual clarity, but also, and above all, to put a stop to certain dangers to human beings. This is done not by merely remembering a supposed past world of unambiguity of values and concepts, but by courageously allowing challenges to come into confrontation with them. This approach is advocated by a recently deceased German philosopher who, more likely than any other in recent times, understood ethics to be profoundly connected with anthropology and metaphysics, and whose main interest was, among other things, the person. This thinker is Robert Spaemann (1927-2018).

This paper, therefore, attempts to synthesize his remarks on the person, with the aim of making these thoughts fruitful for addressing some anthropological problems of today. In a brief overview of Spaemann's life and work, the principal aim is to show why he is at all suitable as a thinker for a conversation about persons. This will be followed by a contextualization of his ontology of persons and then turned to its individual elements. Finally, the possible application of Spaemann's insights will be explained.

1. BIOGRAPHY AND WORK OUTLINE OF A DISPUTATIOUS THINKER

Robert Spaemann was a German philosopher whose immense body of work, contemporary relevance, engaging demeanor, and original way of thinking made him highly significant, reaching far beyond Germany. The main stages of his life that shed light on his philosophical work are briefly mentioned here (Kuciński 2017, 21).

Spaemann was born in Berlin in 1927. His parents converted to Catholicism with their child in 1930. The spiritual atmosphere of the parental home favored thoughtful confrontations with reality. Robert studied philosophy, history, theology and Romance philology, pondered at that time a religious vocation, but finally married Cornelia Steiner in 1950 and had three children with her. After a brief phase of rapprochement with Marxism, he turned away from socialism, especially under the impression of the conditions in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Later he became a member of the so-called Ritter School, named after his philosophy professor and doctoral supervisor, J. Ritter of Münster. In 1952 he received his doctorate in Münster with a thesis on L. G. A. de Bonald, in which he examined the replacement of metaphysics by sociology. Between 1952 and 1956 Spaemann worked as an editor at the Kohlhammer publishing house in Stuttgart. In 1962 he completed his habilitation on the so-called 'amour pur' dispute between two 17th century bishops, F. Fénelon and J. B. Bossuet, in which the problem of the modern abandonment of teleological understanding of nature came to light. From 1962 to 1992 Spaemann taught philosophy and pedagogy at the universities of Stuttgart, Heidelberg and Munich. He often intervened in the social discussion on various topics: nuclear rearmament, abortion, euthanasia, education, etc. He took on several guest professorships and received honorary doctorates, was an advisor at the post-conciliar Würzburg Synod in Germany, and also became a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life.

Certain factors were of central importance for his intellectual profile (Kuciński 2017, 21-23). His personal experience with the Nazi era as well as his encounter with the socialist world of thought in the newly formed GDR made him, on the one hand, immune to ideologies of any provenance, but also, on the other hand, suspicious of seemingly compelling 'rationalities' of the so-called 'scientific worldview'. His skepticism, however, did not result in a turning away from the world. On the contrary, it formed the decisive incentive for the search for truth and secure knowledge. Totalitarian systems were ruled out for him already for intellectual reasons: according to Spaemann, National Socialism, for example, could not represent an attractive alternative for life due to its reductionism, because truth is always more interesting than its ideological reinterpretations (Spaemann 2012a, 34).

His openness to discussion with the intellectual world was, however, anchored in a fidelity to principles, in which he consistently held belief in the enduring importance of metaphysics and its primacy in philosophy. This can be called the

cornerstone of Spaemann's entire edifice of thought. For, in his view, philosophy should reflect on the truly 'ultimate questions' of humanity, posing questions of legitimacy and not merely solving practical problems (Spaemann 2010, 31).

The necessary orientation to the ultimate (metaphysical) questions correlated with the corresponding approach to ethical problems, which was open to deeper contexts. For Spaemann, ethics cannot be separated from metaphysics, which also reflects his criticism against any reductionisms.

Finally, his closeness to Christianity in thought is unmistakable, although he tended to resist calling himself a Christian philosopher so as not to succumb to the suspicion of confessional influence on his thought. Although he always insisted on the methodological distinction, his writings show fluid transitions between philosophy of religion and moral theology. What he confesses as a devout Catholic, he expresses using the terms of the philosophy of religion. Thus, it is not surprising that he concludes that the question of truth is inseparable from the question of God (Kuciński 2017, 35). In this way, Spaemann tries to offer Christianity once again as a plausible interpretive option to the critical intellectual world of the present.

Against this background, Spaemann is an excellent interlocutor in questions about the person. One of his most important books is entitled *Persons: The difference between 'someone' and 'something'* and is the fruit of his tradition-consciousness and at the same time present-critical preoccupation with the person. From this, Spaemann develops his philosophical reflections in other areas as well. What remains decisive here is that he adheres throughout to the affirmation of the human being, which also forms the basis of his ethics. "If one attempts to survey Spaemann's entire philosophy, one can say: Spaemann is concerned with the human being's self-understanding of himself and about himself, about his being and his acting, because the two cannot be separated from each other" (Schöndorf 2012, 316).

In this context, the problem of natural law comes particularly to the fore, because Spaemann analyzes the person in interaction with human nature. Nevertheless, he cannot simply be assigned to personalism, because Spaemann, in the name of the freedom of the philosopher, is interested in distancing himself from all simplifying classifications. However, his freedom with the zeitgeist, especially in the questions surrounding the person, together with the critique of supposed 'self-evident facts,' does not lead into criticism, but into a creative relationship to modernity, in which it is a matter of correcting its errors in order to save its genuine achievements, not least by means of Christian inspiration. "Robert Spaemann is a critic of modernity who comments on modernity both from a philosophical and from a Christian point of view" (Zaborowski 2010, 9). This is the case, for example, with regard to the concept of the subject, a main theme of the present, which, however, he would like to see coupled back to the given objectivity of nature.

Last but not least, Spaemann's philosophy of person is of great importance for the Christian intellectual world. As indicated in relation to his writings in general,

it is also evident in particular in the debate about the person that he is able to make certain Christian positions plausible in the secular world. In that sense, he provides important arguments for the rationality of Christianity that can be used in the dialogue with modernity.

2. THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT OF THE DISCOURSE OF PERSONS

Although Spaemann's considerations on the concept of 'person' permeate his entire body of writing, the book *Persons* is the actual synthesis of it, which allows his position to be grasped. Thus, its presentation will be essentially limited to the aforementioned book. Since it is an approach to the German philosopher's thinking about persons, only some central elements will be highlighted here which, in the author's opinion, have particular relevance for contemporary problems.

For this, the context of the discussion with the person is relevant. To say that the philosopher wrote his book as a purely polemical writing against someone or something would be rather short-sighted, even if the author himself admits at the beginning: "These reflections are prompted by a challenge to our cultural tradition and its developed understanding of humanity and human rights" (Spaemann 2012b, 4). In any case, the critical perspective towards the reductionist-functional view of the person, as it is present above all in Singerism, i.e. the thinking of the Australian ethicist Peter Singer and his followers, is unmistakable.

These are ethical designs in the empiricist tradition of John Locke, whose starting point is that "only that may claim to reality which is given to us directly in sensual experience" (Spaemann 2001, 420). The main theses of Singerism, which develops consequences for the treatment of personhood, can be summarized in Spaemann's interpretation as follows (Spaemann 2001, 419-424; Spaemann 2012b, 238; see also Wessels 2007, 624-630; Singer 2011; Hoerster 1995; Schlegel 2007; Zaborowski 2010, 198-202):

1) Rationality and self-consciousness constitute personhood. Anyone who does not currently possess these qualities cannot be called a person and cannot enjoy his or her rights. Consequently, human dignity is not identical with personhood.

2) There is no general 'nature of human being' that would decide the personhood of all specimens of the human species.

3) One becomes a member of the community of persons ('humanity') not by natural process (such as birth), but with the help of co-optation by the other members of this community.

4) If certain groups of people do not have personal status, they are placed at the disposal for eventual killing: embryos, newborn children, severely mentally handicapped and dementia patients.

In this way, Singerism reveals a crisis of thinking about persons in the present, which leads to no longer seeing the concepts of 'human' and 'person' as

congruent. It calls into question the primacy of the human that has been taken for granted for centuries. Human rights become rights of the person, the person is no longer a person throughout life, i.e. his or her life is no longer necessarily worth protecting. Those who dare to claim the opposite are accused of speciesism: an unjustified preference for their own species (Spaemann 2012b, 3). Whoever then still holds to the primacy of humans has the burden of proof.

3. SELECTED ELEMENTS OF SPAEMANN'S ONTOLOGY OF PERSONS

In general, one can say: Spaemann responds to the outlined challenges, appeared in the present due to the crisis of the understanding of persons, with the help of a metaphysically anchored and ethically effective concept of person, which is committed both to the Aristotelian substance ontology and to the dynamic relationship of persons.

His interpretation of the crisis and the answer to it is determined by other parts of his philosophy, among which the plea for a teleology of nature stands out. The author sees the roots of the problematic in the total victory of the economization of reality, to which the human person, understood as substantial 'being in itself', also falls victim: "in place of being-in-itself, inviolable in its dignity, emerges the principle of exchangeability in the utilitarian sense" (Kuciński 2017, 345). This was preceded by the modern 'abandonment of teleology' (*Enttteleologisierung*) of nature, i.e., the paradigm shift in the consideration of the nature of living beings as a whole. It is no longer the natural goals of living beings that are the criterion for understanding them, but the will of the subject using them for his purposes, who wants to take complete possession of nature. In this way, the decisive factor becomes what things are used for, and not what they are ordered to because of their own nature. The fact that it is a human subject that wants to seize the others does not change the fact that now this subject threatens to perish itself in the process initiated by it, because it is no longer sure whether there is an existing subject of thinking processes or if they are deprived of any substantial basis. In any case, the abandonment of teleology of nature also led to the detachment of personhood from the natural conditions of the human being. As a result, one can then doubt the principle that biological membership of the human race is sufficient for the determination of personal dignity. It is precisely the contradiction of this doubt, and thus the renewed view of the congruence of the human being and the person, that is the explicit goal of Spaemann's intellectual endeavours within the framework of the ontology of persons (Spaemann 2012a, 285). The logical structure of his endeavour can be presented in some fundamental concepts.

1) Person is an individual "being in itself" (*Selbstsein*)

In faithfulness to Aristotelian thought, Spaemann defines the person as 'being in itself' (*Selbstsein*). This is a substantial, ontologically independent being. As

'being in itself', person is 'the paradigm of being', an expression that plays a central role throughout the philosopher's ontology of persons: "Personality is the paradigm for being—not as 'something in general', but as transcendence of objectivity, 'being in itself'" (Spaemann 2012b, 67). The substantial character of the person also includes the fact that it exists from its own origin: "Personal existence is in the highest sense existing 'out of one's origin', something unsusceptible to external inducement" (Spaemann 2012b, 241). Finally, the 'being in itself' of the person implies an inseparable connection between subjectivity and corporeality. The body is the medium of the person's distinctive individuality and the condition of the possibility of its external appearance to others: "Since the body is the medium of existence-for-others, physicality belongs essentially to human personality" (Spaemann 2012b, 80). However, personal individuality is not seen as part of the whole, but precisely as a 'whole': "Persons are 'individuals', not in the sense that they are *instances* of a universal concept, but as the particular individuals they are, who in an individual and irreplaceable way *are* the universal. They are not parts of a larger whole, but totalities" (Spaemann 2012b, 19, emphasis in original).

2) Person is a *nomen dignitatis*

According to Spaemann, 'person' is not a 'sortal', i.e. classificatory, expression of something as something, but refers to something that is already otherwise determined. It means: person designates a group of beings with already determined properties in order to state a special status of them: "'Person' is not a classificatory term (...), identifying a particular this as such a thing. 'X is a person' does not answer the question 'What is X?', as do 'X is a human being' or 'X is a lampstand'. In order to know whether X is a person, we must first know whether X is a human being or a lampstand. The term 'person' does not identify an X as such-and-such; it says something further about an X already specified as a such-and-such" (Spaemann 2012b, 6). What is special about the concept of person is also its ethical implications. Whoever is called a person becomes the bearer of certain rights and duties: "The term 'person' has always (since Boethius) served as a *nomen dignitatis*, a concept with evaluative connotations; in the wake of Kant it became the central plank in the foundation of human rights" (Spaemann 2012b, 2).

3) Person means the 'having' of one's own nature

Spaemann's central thoughts on the person revolve around the determination of the relationship between the person and human nature. The being of persons is characterized by the 'having' of their nature: "Human beings, on the other hand, exist by distinguishing their being from their specific way of being, their specific 'nature'. Their nature is not what they *are*, pure and simple; their nature is something that they *have*. And this 'having' is their being. To be a person is the form in which

‘rational natures’ exist” (Spaemanns 2012b, 31, emphasis in original). This explains the subtitle of the whole book: person is *someone* and not *something* precisely because it can relate to its material substrate, nature: “But their way is not what they *are*, but what they *relate to*: they take it on, they carry it through, or they refuse it. That is what we mean when we say that persons are not *something*, but *someone*” (Spaemann 2012b, 72, emphasis in original). This connects to another central component of Spaemann’s ontology of persons, with which he opposes the one-sidedness of modern subject philosophy with its self-centeredness on human reasonableness and self-consciousness as the criteria of personhood. It is about vitality as a constitutive component of the person. The Aristotelian principle *vivere viventibus est esse* determines Spaemann’s thinking in many central places and so also here in the ontology of persons. The Cartesian separation of life and person by means of its replacement by subject and its linkage with consciousness has paved the way for uncontrolled domination of nature and deprived the person of its natural foundation (Spaemann 2012b, 134-136). Therefore, Spaemann strives to reconcile life, or the nature of man determined by aliveness, with his personhood. This is where the concept of freedom comes into play. It means the person’s ability to realize the ‘having’ of one’s nature, to shape it within the limits set by it: “‘having a nature’ does not make a person *independent* of human nature. Freedom is a particular way of relating to one’s nature, not of growing out of one’s nature and leaving it behind” (Spaemann 2012b, 231, emphasis in original). This specific connection of the two allows us to see freedom as ‘remembering nature’: “remembering nature means becoming aware of a presupposition of human life and freedom beyond which reasonableness and freedom would inevitably become sterile or turn into mere nature” (Zaborowski 2010, 57).

4) All human beings are persons

Spaemann’s person-ontological reflections culminate in the particularly succinct thesis that the philosopher uses for practical questions: “All human beings are persons” (Spaemann 2012b, 3). Personhood is co-origivative with being human. There is no human being that is not a person. And personhood ceases with being human because ‘person’ is an individual human being and not a property of it. This is precisely what the important sentence expresses, “There can, and must, be one criterion for personality, and one only; that is biological membership of the human race” (Spaemann 2012b, 247). The philosopher is aware of the underlying presuppositions: “One is that, although persons relate to one another a priori through mutual recognition, recognition is not an antecedent condition for being a person but a response to a prior claim” (Spaemann 2012b, 3). Consequently, it is not recognition by others that constitutes personhood; one cannot co-opt the other to the community of persons. Nor is the presence of attributes (such as consciousness and rationality) the criterion of personhood, although persons are

normally recognized by these attributes: "Another assumption is that though we concede this claim [of recognition as a person] on the basis of specific attributes, the demonstration of these is attributes is not a condition for recognition in each case; membership of the species that typically displays them is sufficient" (Spaemann 2012b, 3). These assertions allow Spaemann to defend the personhood status of the unborn, the babies, the mentally ill, and the demented, who cannot meet the very personhood criteria of Singerism because they do not possess specific attributes currently. Every human being is 'someone' from the first moment of his or her existence and not 'something' that must first develop into 'someone'. He or she is not a *potential* person, although his or her personal properties are initially only potentially present: "There are, in fact, no potential persons. Persons possess capacities, i.e. potentialities, and so persons may develop. But nothing develops *into* a person. You don't become some-one from being some-thing" (Spaemann 2012b, 245, emphasis in original). Already as an embryo, a human being has his or her ontological, inalienable personal dignity, which is identical with human dignity. And, he or she does not lose it even at the other boundary of life, when he or she no longer possesses certain personal qualities due to his or her age or illness. Similarly, human rights are congruent with personal rights.

5) Persons exist only in the plural

As the title of Spaemann's work already announces (*Persons*), one of his constant motifs is: "There are only *persons*, in the plural" (Spaemann 2012b, 2, emphasis in original). For relational openness is necessarily part of their identity: "Person is nobody for himself only. Being a person means finding yourself in a personal network of relationship" (Spaemann 2006, 39, my translation). In the relationship with the other, another dimension of the person comes to fruition: when the person has 'awakened' to his or her personhood, i.e., has developed his or her genuine characteristics, he or she is called upon to perfect himself or herself. Person can improve (or worsen) himself or herself in qualitative (not ontological) terms by his or her actions. To do so, person must transcend himself or herself, which happens when other persons become 'real' to him or her as being in itself, so that person can relate to them: "Persons are beings for whom the self-being of another is real, and whose own self has become real to another" (Spaemann 2012b, 77). Thus, the person is able to leave his or her 'central position' in the world in order to do justice to the other, because person can look at himself or herself through the eyes of the other.

The above presentation of central elements of Spaemann's ontology of persons allows (despite all necessary reduction to the essentials) the assessment that one discovers here a solid philosophical basis for various anthropological and ethical discussions of the present. It thus also becomes clear that the determination of the identity and the location of man in the universe decisively influences the reflection

on other areas of reality, because it is always this man who reflects and positions himself in relation to others. Spaemann's thinking can, of course, also be viewed critically in many places; some one-sidedness becomes visible not only in practical consequences but also, for example, in the sometimes undifferentiated way of looking at the opposing camps (Kuciński 2017, 568-569). In any case, a general merit of Spaemann for anthropology is its self-evident linkage with metaphysics, which reminds all engaged in the practical questions of life of the necessary feedback to the deeper structures of reality.

CONCLUSIONS: POSSIBLE FIELDS OF APPLICATION

In this way, Spaemann's ontology of persons can be used for the treatment of contemporary challenges.

1) First of all, Spaemann's ability to diagnose the present has a pioneering character. In the polyphony of interpretations and statements, the question of truth, the search for what was for a long time a self-evident prerequisite of all knowledge, sometimes disappears. The analysis of the crisis of the person's concept in the course of the removal of the subject, reduced to self-consciousness, from its natural biological basis forms a plausible interpretation of some problems and thus facilitates the search for a solution. Nowadays, especially in the bioethical arena, the advanced urge to hegemony by the subjectivity detached from its own nature becomes evident. Abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, embryo research, assisted reproduction, surrogate motherhood, organ trade, enhancement and transhumanism are fields in which it is necessary to reflect more and more intensively to what extent man is allowed to shape his own nature at will without destroying himself or herself as a free, self-aware and rational body-soul entity.

2) The motivation and unfolding of the statement: "All human beings are persons" as well as the identity of personal and human rights become an imperative for those who advocate the unlimited protection of every human being. What could hardly have been imagined only a short time ago, for example, making the killing of another human being a human right, is already a reality. Spaemann's sober analysis allows an argumentation in favor of human life as such, independent of its 'quality', to be profiled and further developed. Thereby, in the trace of this philosopher, e.g. the danger of arbitrariness in the determination of personhood, disregarding biological foundations of the human being, can be pointed out. But if the biological membership of the human species could really be convincingly presented as the only sure—if necessary for pragmatic reasons—criterion of personhood, then certain ways of dealing with the human being at its boundaries and in critical stages would have to be corrected. For this, one can well rely on Spaemann's preliminary work, because he identifies the person not merely with his or her reason, but also with body and life. A philosophical basis for this is provided by the Aristotelian distinction between reality and possibility, act and potency,

which has been obscured by Singerism. It is not the actual use of the potentialities inherent in one's species that determines one's membership in that species. For, according to Spaemann, the person is always in the act, even if he or she is not yet or no longer able to use his or her personal capacities. This perspective also allows a return to the primacy of being over acting in order to escape the performance pressure of the consumer society. This is followed by the affirmation of the rights of the weak against the superiority of the strong, because then one cannot measure the ontological quality of man by his abilities. Whether unborn or newborn, dying, seriously ill or mentally handicapped—they all deserve unconditional protection, simply because they are human beings and therefore persons.

3) The dynamic connection of person and nature, in which nature is a substrate for the unfolding of the person and the space of his or her realization, but is not available at will and brings coordinates of dealing with oneself, enables the subject-sensitive postmodernity to reconsider its own achievements without having to give them up. Spaemann shows how a demarcation of boundaries for individual freedom need not represent neither restriction nor paternalism, but rather serves its own preservation. Certain views of gender ideology, which rely on an unrestricted self-determination of human sexuality, would have to be questioned under these premises. If human freedom is only possible as 'remembered nature', then humans can and should shape their own nature, but in doing so be careful not to make themselves into another being when they have already transgressed their own ontological boundaries. In this respect, Spaemann's person-ontological approach is also suitable for pointing to the lasting meaningfulness of the use of the 'normality' predicate in the realm of the human. If there were no longer to be any criteria at all in this realm for what counts as normal, i.e. natural, the existence of humanity as we know would be questioned.

4) Last but not least, Spaemann's ontology of persons has an unavoidable affinity with Christian thought and the moral teaching of the Magisterium. When e.g. Pope John Paul II spoke on freedom as being both a gift and a task, it corresponds to what Spaemann intended with the renewed connection between nature and person. Moreover, the constant effort to combat reductionisms and dualisms in the realm of the human in favor of its integral vision comes in line with the struggle of the Catholic Church, which also tries to look at man in the light of revelation in his or her various dimensions and to bring them to a whole. Finally, the whole philosophy of Robert Spaemann develops in the horizon of the Unconditioned, which hides the truth of man and the world, so that his deep philosophical views can be an essential help for contemporary theologians.

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