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НОВЕ ПРОСВІТНИЦТВО В «РОЗЛАМІ» КЛАСИЧНИХ УНІВЕРСАЛІЙ

(Рецензія на книгу «ІСТИНА» ("TRUTH") Дж. Капуто (Penguin Books, 2014. 283 р.))

Анотація. У праці «Істина», яка розвиває нову тенденцію нерозривності «високої» та «низької» культури, Дж. Капуто, всесвітньо відомий філософ і теолог, досліджує різні поняття істини з акцентом на тому, як ми можемо її визначити сьогодні. Проблеми, які порушує Дж. Капуто, є складними й потребують глибоких знань з історії філософії та теології, починаючи з Блаженного Августина і закінчуючи широким спектром постмодерністських питань: «Чи є істина, як вважав Августин, тотожною Богу? Чи лежить вона в Розумі Декарта і Канта? Чи є вона ідеєю Дерріда про подію, яка ще твориться, або, згідно з постмодерністськими пророцтвами Ніцше, лише сукупністю вигадок і метафор?»

В «Істині» Дж. Капуто представляє свою надзвичайно цікаву теорію нового Просвітництва, яка спирається на давні ідеали істини, Бога та мудрості, що охоплюють пост-постмодерне розуміння нашої епохи. Питання істини та релігії в модерності/постмодерності, яке Дж. Капуто використав як свій «випадок» для мутації, що відбувається в постмодернізмі, обговорювалося постмодерністськими філософами з великою гостротою та компетентністю. Воно досі охоплює дослідників постмодернізму, і тут Дж. Капуто постулює власну незмінну ідею нового Просвітництва, ідею, яка спирається на давні ідеали істини та мудрості, але має велике значення у змінах та трансформаціях нашого «постпостмодернізму».

Праця Дж. Капуто «Істина» може представляти інтерес як для дослідників теології постмодернізму, так і в цілому культурі постпостмодернізму. В українських дискурсивних метанаративах вона повинна бути осмислена як частина сучасної метафілософської культури та пост-постмодерністського розмислу. Варто наголосити, що ідея нового Просвітництва вже активно обговорюється не лише західними філософами, але й представниками українських філософських інституцій.

Ключові слова: конкуруючі істини, Євангелія, Просвітництво, постмодерні пророки, герменевтичний поворот, теологія метамодернізму.

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NEW ENLIGHTENMENT IN THE "BREAK" OF CLASSICAL UNIVERSALS

(Review of the book "TRUTH" J.D. Caputo (Penguin Books, 2014. 283 p.))

Abstract. In "Truth", which develops a new trend of non-separate modes of "high" and "low" culture, J. Caputo, an internationally recognized philosopher and theologian, explores different notions of truth and how we can define them today. The problem, which J. Caputo puts, is complex and needs deep knowledge of the history of philosophy and theology, beginning with St. Augustine, and covering a wide range of postmodern issues: "Is truth as for St. Augustine the same as God? Does it lie in the Reason of Descartes and Kant? Is it Derrida's ideas of an event, still being made? Or is it according to the postmodern prophet Nietzsche, a mere ensemble of fiction and metaphors?"

In "Truth" J. Caputo presents his own surprisingly interesting theory of a new Enlightenment, one that draws on the ancient ideals of truth, God, and wisdom, which embraces the forthcoming post-postmodern comprehension of our age. The question of truth and religion in modernity/postmodernity, that J. Caputo used as his "case" for the mutation, which takes place in postmodernism has been discussed since the 70s of the last century with much acute competence by postmodern philosophers. It still embraces post-postmodern researchers, and here J. Caputo posits his own idea of a new Enlightenment, the idea, which is based on the ancient ideals of truth and wisdom, but is of great significance in the changes and transformations of our "post-postmodern" world.

J. Caputo's work "Truth" may be of interest to both researchers of postmodernism and post-postmodernism. In Ukrainian philosophical discursive narratives it should be understood as a part of metamodern philosophical culture and reflection. In the final analysis the idea of a new Enlightenment is being already actively discussed not only by Western philosophers, but also by representatives of the Ukrainian philosophical institutions.

Keywords: competing truths, the Gospels, the Enlightenment, postmodern prophets, hermeneutic turn, metamodern theology.

John D. Caputo, Professor of Religion Emeritus (Syracuse University), is a prominent scientist as a "hybrid" of the philosopher/theologian who works in the area of radical theology. His "Truth" as a part of the Penguin "Philosophy in Transit" series is per se aimed at general audience, though it is by all means a "scientifically loaded" book written by a specialist in contemporary hermeneutics and deconstruction with a special interest in religion in the postmodern condition. As the author's aim is not highly professional audience, the general tone of the book is clear, concise while addressing the great philosophical issues, which are inextricably intersected with theology. Recognized as one of the leading philosopher, Caputo is peerless in introducing and initiating readers into in the vital relationship that philosophy and theology share together in past and present. As a contemporary of Derrida's and a longstanding researcher in rethinking the disciplines of theology and philosophy, Caputo has been forming alliances across disciplines with the focus on what he calls "radical hermeneutics". In his "Truth" he raises a series of probing questions about the challenges of life in the postmodern world, which soon seems to be the metamodern world. J. Caputo is sure that in this context it is important to stress that postmodernism is by all means the denial of rationalism, which is the basis of the Western modernity. The author of the book accentuates that metamodernity refers to the cultural period after

postmodernism characterized by an "oscillation" between modern and postmodern concepts, seeking a synthesis rather than a strict opposition. Thus it is a term for a cultural discourse and paradigm emerged after postmodernism. Cultural theorists T. Vermeulen and R. van den Akker published their essay "Notes on Metamodernism" (2010), in which they assert that metamodern sensibility can be conceived of as a kind of informed naivety, a pragmatic idealism characteristic of cultural responses to the recent global events [8]. It is the point where J. Caputo's tone is closely connected with the "Naive" tone of the previous authors, resembling the scientific attitude that is called "Lifeworld" ("Lebenswelt"). In other words it is the sum total of physical surroundings and everyday experiences that make up an individual's world (E. Husserl). It is namely the mode of writing that J. Caputo uses in his "Truth".

It is context it is necessary to stress that postmodernism (modernism as well) historically is always has been in confrontation with everything in the socio-cultural and philosophic world that preceded the former ideas and thoughts. And here the scientists' opinion that not only postmodernism but modernism as the way of «thingsless» are connected nowadays as the contemporary researching in many humanitarian sciences. This presumption of postmodernism as an interdisciplinary dialogue is represented in J. Caputo's book. It is known that the word "interdisciplinary" has

become an “umbrella” in postmodern thought. The proliferation of academic and professional research involving multiple disciplines in one “knot” of its growth is seen in “Truth” in every chapter and on every page. Many, however, do not understand, which role it plays. Caputo’s book vividly shows why the interdisciplinary trend is so important for postmodern methodology. J. Caputo persuades the readers of his book (not by words, but the logic of his thought), that the modern situation has depicted the context for a battleground of among disciplines and specialties which have been considered for centuries the true authoritative sources of knowledge, and J. Caputo makes us believe that the interdisciplinary dialogues are not only beneficial but necessary.

The other significant characteristic of his book is by all means its style. He does not write his composition using the strictly philosophical terms and modes of difficult to comprehend structures, which is characteristic of many postmodern philosophers (with all the respect to their work). The problem is that in postmodernity the “high-flown style” and “popular” stylistic presentation are not so distinctly separate as they have been for centuries. This is sure Caputo’s benefit: actually definitions of popular culture often depend on who is defining them, and J. Caputo is a highly esteemed professional philosopher.

It is interesting that the “Introduction” is the stress on the beginning of the description of Caputo’s riding to work in the morning. This first sentence contributes to the “rule” of popular culture – “to entertain masses of people by “distracting” them and by calling on their common references” [9]. Caputo’s book focuses on the life circumstances of presumably London the pop culture which seems similar to the large cities of the USA and any other Western capital. As it happens, the barrier that once existed between high culture and low culture has been recently made exclusively thin and “cultural studies” is now the all-purpose “umbrella term” for the interdisciplinary examination of a phenomenon in the context of the social value, influence and ideology. In short, what is Caputo’s book about? He writes about modernity and the eclipse of Truth, what we do with Religion and religious Truth, letting Truth be, Augustine, Derrida and the postmodern turn, the Enlightenment and its critics, postmodern prophets, Truth in the postmodern situation, and the future of Truth. All these per se philosophical themes are nowadays one key issue. Each takes on a major theme of the history of philosophy and theology as well as current philosophical debates: Truth is God, and God is Truth.

In the mode of fictional style J. Caputo begins with the “symbol of change” – using narrative and descriptive stylistic device. His attempts at theorizing sociocultural life start with the “mobility” of the contemporary people, their admitting to change. Contemporary life means a mix of chaos and cosmos. J. Caputo comes to the possible conclusion that, in brief, the postmodernism is not a culture but a mode of thought [3, p. 5]. He is inclined to assert that the best way to think of postmodern thought is as a style, rather

than a body of doctrines. Where modernity thinks there are “pure rules and a rigorous method” –postmodernity advises “flexibility and adaptation”. That is why if you ask postmodernists “What is truth?” they are likely to say, “It depends”. Who can say what is true? So the critics of postmodernism “fear the worst”: relativism, skepticism, nihilism, anarchy. In the late nineteenth century Nietzsche said that Truth was an ensemble of fictions and metaphors (that we had forgotten as fiction and metaphors): more recently the influential philosopher R. Rorty (1931–2007) said truth was merely a compliment we paid ourselves when things were going well with out beliefs. And here Caputo makes an interesting turn to everyday life: our transportation technologies are the vehicles for the important metaphor about postmodernism [3, p. 8]. Today the universality is recognized as diversity. J. Caputo stresses that he is not simply “run off the tracks” of postmodernity in programmability of truth, he defends the right to say that some things are not just different, they are wrong. The author does not claim that there is no such thing as Truth, instead there are truths, “many of them” you do not have to actually believe in God, you can simply treat God as an ideal limit point whether or not you think there really is a Divinity. We are always “situated”, and that situating imposes a limit on us, but that limit also gives us “an angle of entry”, an approach, a perspective, an interpretation. “God doesn’t need an angle, but we do” [3, p. 15], though some philosophers of modernity claimed (G. Lessing) that when it comes to truth, our job is to interpret, which postmodern philosophers call hermeneutics.

Originally the word “hermeneutics” was a theological term, having to do with the interpretation of the Scriptures. Nowadays the one word that J. Caputo thinks best sums up the postmodern turn is “hermeneutics”. J. Caputo treats hermeneutics as the key to the postmodern mutation in the idea of truth [3, p. 20]. The author proceeds: “To say everything is a “A matter of interpretation” is to throw truth under the bus of relativism, to reduce it to somebody’s opinion, to open wide door of subjectivism, passion and the irrational. The Big Bang is just somebody’s opinion, while the Baptists out in Kansas, have their own opinion called Creationism, which is just as good. It is a free country. Everybody is entitled to their own interpretation [3, p. 201]. The author puts hermeneutical approach to everyday situation in the pop culture tone, which is generally characteristic of his narration mode, which we have stated already. For example, the typical crime drama: the defense consists in the products of a “frame” under which everything, the apparently the person, did is redescribed, “the critical point is this: either way there is a frame –the “frame up” and the reframing, the right frame and the wrong [3, p. 201]. Scientists often call that frame the context, postmodern scientists maintain that nothing is ever context-free and nothing is immune to being recontextualized. Postmodernists think that truth is a matter of good interpretation and bad. “There is no truth without interpretation, but having an interpretation

does not make it true" [3, p. 206]. The Scriptures like any text have many levels of meaning: literal, moral, symbolic, mystical, etc. Caputo stresses the well-known fact (maybe not so well-known for pop culture) that what we call "the" Bible is a misleading translation of "biblia" – multiple books from many different times and authors. The author proceeds that the Protestant concept of the "inerrancy" of the Bible (literalism) and the Roman Catholic conception of the infallibility of the Pope (certitude) are fabrications of modernity. They depend entirely upon the modernist assumption about truth. That is why postmodern philosophers accuse modern philosophers of posing as gods, to assume a God's-eye view of History and Nature instead of conceding that we all "poor existing individuals" [3, p. 218].

It goes without saying that Caputo cannot but give his opinion of "Language Games" with the conclusion that "each one is a "form of life" in which life is working itself out and something is getting itself said and done" [3, p. 221].

Any professional postmodernity researcher understands that just here the author has to speak of "performatives", which Caputo successfully "performs". Then of course there is a time to address "Paradigm Shift", the Kuhn's theory hypothesis that the state of scientific research at any given moment is organized around the prevailing paradigm by which Kuhn meant an established set of scientific practices, which regulated what he called "the normal" state of scientific practices at the time.

Giving his arguments – "pros" and "cons-, Caputo says, "indeed scientific revolutions represent the exercise of a creative and elemental scientific intelligence, which is feeling about for the nerve of intelligibility in the phenomena" [3, p. 232].

Caputo, of course, cannot forget to mention the idea of the Event. This is the key theme of the single living classical postmodernist S. Zizek [10].

J. Caputo mentions the most interesting work in philosophy of science today – F. Hackling (in the Anglophone world) and "across the channel" – Bruno Latour, a French historian and sociologist of science, both of whom try to balance the historical component with realism, concluding their detailed analysis of the "paradigm shift" theory.

The same attitude for the paradigm shift can be seen in ethical life, – says Caputo; ethical life has a conservative tendency. We tend to resist change in ethical norms because "they are close to our heart" [3, p. 238].

J. Caputo puts it down that Derrida emerges when a new framework has reinvented the world. Thus Derrida is known to call the "invention of the wholly other". Caputo mentions that Derrida's language has a slightly religious tone here since it evokes an old idea from the Bible that with God nothing is impossible. So Caputo repeats here the idea that God is truth, so long as the name (of) God is taken to be the name of the possibility of the event, the possibility of the impossible [3, p. 240]. And Caputo proceeds with the question: "Is it

still possible to love the Truth?" He proposes an idea of truth as a force that keeps the future open and is closely tied to faith in a ceasefire in the series of wars of modernity – between the religious and the secular, faith and reason, theism and atheism. To sum it up, Caputo locates the dynamics of truth in "open-ended exposure, not a safe and closed system". His postmodern religion demands people of faith, people of hope who believe that future is always better: "Human beings are border people, living in the between, in the transition from the present to what is coming [3, p. 242]. Then the question arises: "What comes after postmodernity?" Caputo is sure that we live on the border between the human and the spectra of post-human. The unchanging world which premodernity assured people was made by God, and the categories that modernity assured no more stable structures of pure Reason are already being destabilized, undergoing a radical shift, being fundamentally challenged under the pressure of info-techno-pressure.

When Donna Haraway wrote "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" [5], she shocked a generation of humanists by making it clear that the rigid border between the living and the technological is disintegrated. However, the cyborg is a hybrid, a cybernetic organism, running together the human and the machine, ending the war "between mind and body set off by Descartes" [3, p. 250]. That new paradigm of the information revolution has spawned a whole new generation of post-human prophets, making modern prophets (e.g. F. Nietzsche, S. Kierkegaard et al.) outdated. Now, as postmodernists insist, nothing is unambiguous, even this profound transformation is not immune to being given a religious interpretation.

"A Postmodern Faith" brings us back to religion, – wrights Caputo, – religion being the "final case" of truth. J. Caputo is sure that not be beliefs of the confessional religions, (which he thinks stand in need of a radical rethinking), but the postmodern faith in the Event. The philosopher (theologist) proceeds that perhaps everything we have thought and meant by philosophy and by truth will require a recontextualization in a more cosmic setting. Then the post-human will mean not the utter destructive of the human as we know but its recontextualization on a cosmic stage. J. Caputo asserts that the more we learn, the more mysterious learning is. The wonders are everywhere, beginning with the subatomic particles in our bodies, which we are told are of ancient cosmic origin, millions of years old. The splendid idea, put by Caputo, is that Grace is natural before it is supernatural. Grace happens: it is an event. We do not need Grace God for grace, but we do not need grace for God, "God" being one of the ways we have devised to express our gratitude for grace, for such felicity as things permit with or without what is called God in religion [3, p. 260]. J. Caputo presents an extremely persuasive argument: St. Augustine and J. Derrida both confess a secret that they do not know what is truth. What it means they love and desire when they love and desire their God. The two philosophers are separated by

centuries, an “accident of birth” – a French postmodern writer who sometimes says heretic things and an ancient bishop-theologian with a “short fuse” for heretics. But Caputo is sure: they are both more joint by this same accident, the same confessional or circumfessional heart. St. Augustine calls it a “grace”, J. Derrida calls it an “event”, a “bit of cosmic chance”.

The source of the debates western philosophers have conducted about God and Truth are to be found in many postmodern books: Derrida has expounded a conception of truth in connection with an interpretation of Nietzsche [4]. M. Heidegger (perhaps not so difficult for reading and comprehending) gained entrance to the continental discussions of truth [6]. R. Rorty defended the pragmatist idea that truth is nothing more than a complement me pay to classics [7] et al.

The question of truth and religion in modernity/postmodernity, that J. Caputo used as his “case” for the mutation that takes place in postmodernism has been discussed with much acute competence by postmodern philosophers. It still embraces postpostmodern researchers, and here J. Caputo posits his own idea of a new Enlightenment, the idea which is drawn on the ancient ideals of truth and wisdom but is of great significance in the changes and transformations of our “post-postmodernity” [1; 2].

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