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## **Prof. Mordecai Roshwald: Experience – A Moderate Epistemological Realism\***

Jakub Bartoszewski

PWSZ Konin, Zakład Pracy Socjalnej, Poland  
Professor

### **Abstract**

In the proposed article, we'll show moderate epistemological realism of Prof. Roshwald. We will refer to the content of the search for the philosopher pointing at the load-bearing elements of his philosophical thought.

The author concluded that the work accepted assumptions that are based on the moderate epistemological realism and the experience of our author. Really an existing reality, in some aspects, is for us cognitively available in direct and indirect experience, intellectual, emotional, bodily, that is also empirically.

Which leads us to conclude that the supporters of any such research is possible to provide compelling arguments in favor of any such concept of being in a general sense, the world and the human action we really get to know in an objective and subjective ways. Thus, the structure of work and methodology while adopting the epistemological realism.

**Keywords:** realism, epistemology, experience, prof. Roshwald.

### **Introduction**

The desire to understand reality has led us to undertake a study of the philosophical thought of Professor Mordecai Roshwald, because all of us seeking to understand ourselves, others and the natural world, and also the society in which we lived. Ongoing dialogue with the past allows us to look at the human reality from the perspective of the experience of others that have occurred in previous centuries. We can say that the consciousness of history allows us to learn from the past, which was marked by totalitarianism, genocide, persecution on grounds of origin, religion or political convictions.

The problems had taken and take the man dealt with on the basis of experience and rational reasons. Hence, such is a success in building a human reality, but with so much success that makes sense if we make the effort to analyze their actions.

In the twentieth and twenty-first century, when it seemed that all questions relating to the human, we are able to respond only on the basis of new technologies, philosophical problems *ens per se* become less important, because in the digital age, the philosophy is seen as the secret knowledge or "wool-gathering" a group of people who do not know how to find places in the world of bionics.

Modern man based on certain ethical standards does not ask about their etymology, but moves according them, retain certain rights and fulfill the obligations under the contract, social and positive law. Ethical and moral principles, depending on the beliefs, were born in specific situations socio-cultural and religious, for example in Israel based on ethical action is the Ten Commandments, given to Moses on Mount Sinai. It assumes belief in God the Creator, who established the existence of anything Heaven and Earth, this is the case in Christianity. However, in the culture of the ancient Greeks morality was based on the order of the cosmos.

The ethical-moral aspect is known a long time to the Greek tradition and goes back to the school of Pythagoras. This is also emphasized in the work of Ptolemy *Altmages* saying that the study of the stars can help you for the sake of a noble way of life, for example in the order of symmetry and exact celestial body recognizes the beauty and treatment. Also, school officials have been linked to the harmony of the cosmos Stoic ethics. Virtuous life should be guided by the balance occurring in the

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\* BARTOSZEWSKI J., Spotkanie filozofa z rzeczywistością. Z badań nad myślą filozoficzną Mordecai Roshwalda, Warszawa 2013, s. 20-23.

natural world, which at the same time it constitutes. Orderly movement of the universe is thus the source of all ethical and moral standards.

This resulted that in modern times fought for the rights of individuals to create various types of ideas designed to serve the good of man as the password of the French Revolution liberty, equality, fraternity. Also in modern times began to accept solutions which, by their nature, are based on the ideas destructive to humans, such as Marxism or fascism. As a result, this gave rise to all sorts of ethical and moral concepts, such as: situational ethics, which appealed to the Nazis at the Nuremberg trials.

As a result, many researchers have tried to find the cause of human actions. It is worth noting, for example that Abbagnano, Jaspers, Sartre, Camus, Shestov, Berdyaev trying to determine who the man based on the analysis of human existence, and Heidegger in the perspective of being. The experience of totalitarianism led the Catholic theologians for taking the issues related to the mystery of iniquity, which they believe is conditional upon the fall of the angels.\* In Jewish tradition wickedness is connected with pride and departure from God. According to Jewish philosophers, especially, Buber's wickedness is the result of breaking the relationship with "the other" and a personal God.

Course of this argument is continued by Professor Mordecai Roshwald. The rich heritage of Professor Roshwald is essentially in one stream, it is the philosophy and ethics. While on the one hand it develops the issue of ethics and morality, but on the other hand, is built on the basis of this idea, a vision of reality, based on the metaphysical and epistemological realism.

### 1. Experience – epistemological realism

Theme of this work forces us to define key in this context, the concept of what is experienced. Through experience we understand everything that directly or indirectly receiving an individual. Furthermore, the term experience refers to both the untreated mentally directly feeling events, as well as to the wisdom gained by further reflection on these events and their interpretation.†

Accepting the reality that each person experiences on the basis of his cognitive apparatus, these are the senses and the mind; we advocate the same for the metaphysical and epistemological realism.

The philosophy is about understanding actually existing world of people and things. This is a traditional, classic object of philosophical knowledge opposed to various forms of subjectivity, reducing philosophy to analyze the character of cognitive concepts, language and data awareness.

We therefore consider that there is a real reality external to the knower of being, so we reject all forms of metaphysical idealism.‡At this point we must stress that we do not want to tackle the question of the existence or non-existence cognized objects.

Metaphysical realism is similar to the common sense of recognizing the reality. Although it is easy to demonstrate significant problems, a position creates, especially its extreme version, but our action is not related to proving the thesis that the professor Roshwald is a realist or idealist moderate or extreme, but show how the experience affected the perception of reality and this is to adopt a particular position, in this case of metaphysical realism. Of course we are aware of the difficulties that implied the adoption of metaphysical realism, in favor of it, because only in that context, as we think, we can objectively recognize the ethical and philosophical thought through, which is described the reality.

We adopted the assumptions that are consistent with Socratic ethical intellectualism, because it was based on the experience of actually existent. It consisted of looking for solutions that could improve the quality of the human being. This trend does not have to deal with one of the all accepted doctrine, but rather with the whole spectrum of positions, from which we can see, even in the history of philosophy. In this paper, however, we will be bringing to the specific solutions to specific positions. At the same time we hope that the presentation of the solutions contained in the assumptions will allow us to get to the essence of reality overview stored in the work of Professor Roshwald.

We have also noted that starting from the knowledge of experience; we understand that term very broadly. We are not concerned in this aspect of the analysis of knowledge and experience on the grounds of major disputes:

1. The dispute over the source of knowledge,

\* BARTOSZEWSKI, J.: *Doktryna religijna i jej implikacje pedagogiczne: krytyczne podejście*, Studia Sieradzana 2012/1/s.61.

† SCHLICK, M.: *Meaning and verification*, Philosophical Review 1936, nr. 45, s. 347.

‡ ABBAGNANO, N.: *Dizionario di filosofia*, UTET, Torino 1998, s. 907. KÖRNER, S.: *Metaphysics: its structure and function*, Cambridge University Press, London 1984.

2. The dispute over the object of knowledge, but the direct and indirect experience of both intellectual and sensual thanks to which we make the description of reality.\*

Through experience we know our reality. The intermediate knowledge we deal with relays, such as: we were invited to the theater, but for various reasons we could not go to the arts and we hear someone narrating about it so we know this reality indirectly, in an incomplete way, at the same time having a picture of theater, the stage, the actors, but we were not direct participants in this cultural event, thus passing on information we had heard about the art of making a treatment of intellectual property, which is associated with our knowledge and is often the case with stereotypes of the reality.

The knowledge of the direct we are in contact with the object or situation, then we analyze a subject, not only through the senses or the intellect, but we can use sophisticated equipment, and the test method. With direct knowledge, we learn every day world that surrounds us.

If we had to prioritize types of knowledge, we would opt for direct knowledge, but in view of the experience, we must clearly specify that the two types are required to experience being named an objective "look" of reality. Therefore, it is important to know both indirect and direct, so that we know the physical world, emotions, or the natural world.

So we need to emphasize that the position adopted by us the metaphysical realism suggests that we look at reality as something that is made up of really existing objects that directly or indirectly we experience such as: tree, buildings, human emotions, behavior. Of course, by identifying the various entities can lead to confusion, especially when we are not able to directly examine the existence, but there is no doubt that experiencing real beings, including the relational beings, we are able to describe and apply them to the reality. Hence, we can also say that knowledge of indirect or direct has the right to, potentiality, which in our life is constantly pursues, going from potency to act. This understanding of the experience, the first, does not exclude the events that by their nature are not available for empirical research, such as: the belief that arise in the process of socialization. Secondly, it means that the world's existence does not depend on knowing subject, because this world exists objectively and is not essential, even for the natural world and the cosmos, whether we recognize him.

At this point, almost at the end of this section, we explain the possible issue related to the understanding of knowledge of the reality, namely, we may receive the complaint allegedly taking realism we limited to the objective, therefore, why we have taken the issue of subjective recognition, and at the same time describing reality by our author. It should be noted that the adoption of this perspective points to the experience that becomes a place, based on the cognitive apparatus, the real reality. We, furthermore assume that this state of affairs shows that knowledge is only available to man. All the animals can also experience the reality, but not in the abstract approach, only by instincts.

A man can analyzes, researches, draws conclusions from the knowledge of this real world. What's more, we are able to reproduce the image of the world in which we lived, for example: after World War II, the authorities and the population of Warsaw and other cities and towns recreated architectural world in which they had to exist. This point to the fact that we can reach out to the various aspects of manufactured, of an artificial world, but the world of nature, where as the creation of new technology, we can discovered things unknowable to the naked eye. In other words, our experience of things will be perfect, and our descriptions accurate. Which in turn should translate into an understanding of the "other" that is to be responsible to build relationships.

## **2. Rejection of moderate realism epistemological: universal agreement**

Looking at the reality and the cognition presupposes the adoption of a particular way of understanding the real world, hence the professor Roshwald many of his works devoted to a democratic system and, consequently, the universal harmony. In a democracy the majority decides, but it is a misconception to say that it is irrelevant to ethical and moral in choosing the fact, for example, if the majority in a referendum decides that the child can be considered a man, only if it is aware of his "I" is this means that the baby is not a person, and we condemn him to death?, if we determine that a person the elderly, people suffering from atherosclerosis or numb are not aware of their own accord, can serve to us for medical experiments?

The issue of universal agreement raised many objections already in Plato, who experienced the loss of a master and friend Socrates, condemned to death by a majority, criticized the democratic

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\* MARTENS, A.: SCHNÄDELBACH, H.: *Philosophie. Ein Grundkurs*, Rowohlt Taschenbuch, Hauburg 1991, s. 68.

system. In the VIII century in the book titled: *Country* you can see the irony of Plato, who ironically praises democracy and the universal consent in an effort to bring its advantages to the absurd. He preached, among other things, that this system gives full freedom to man, that anyone can do what he thinks is right, while submitting to a vote of values that are inalienable as the right to political, religious, economic, the right to a change of residence the right to live.

Democracy is apparently valued equality, recognizing and allowing the behaviors and beliefs,\* including any ideas in the management of the state, often incompatible with the ethical and moral resulting from the natural law, and denied by the majority of society. The man who grows up in a society that "(...) swagger [called] a higher culture, fornication – independence, hopeless debauchery – the Lord's gesture, and impudence courage"<sup>†</sup> worthy is unfortunate, says Plato. Living in a democratic country where the rule of this kind of reign of freedom, equality, tolerance and diversity, promotes the formation of dehumanization attitudes, such as: extreme subjectivism, utilitarianism, extreme pragmatism. A man does all these in the "name of" pluralism and democracy.<sup>‡</sup>

Returning to the scene of our author's note that he criticizes the understanding of truth in the context of the general agreement stating among other things that a person loses a sense of goodness, truth and beauty, no longer knows what is right and what is not, it loses some research and indulges in power: "(...) the agreement between people in a democratic system leads to one goal, to achieve power.

They claim that aspire to power to create laws that will be impartial and fair for all citizens to secure freedom and justice. All this is done through marketing activities aimed at the formulation of rights corresponding to the appropriate group of voters. So, in fact, is not it connected with a political future government. Of course individual people are in government as ministers of truth, however, is apparently, are masters of politicians and their staff, state government is doing what the majority was introduced in everyday life."<sup>§</sup>

Professor Roshwald describes a characteristic type of person in front of hima democracy opens up a wealth of different options, but which at the same time lack of ethical and moral signposts. Therefore, do not know exactly what they say what is true and what is false.\*\* All this makes the determination of the truth with regard to the epistemological and metaphysical realism is impossible, for realism, according to proponents of universal consent, pluralism embarrassed by its principia and referred to even define who is a human being. Moreover, the plurality determined by the majority, the so-called free choice, which must therefore be regarded as a moral norm, what's the truth, what's good and what justice.

In other words, it can only identify people in a referendum and free elections, where lobbyists, lobbying with political, economic, and pharmaceutical products manipulate the truth in order to obtain public support: "(...) the truth and value, according to this philosophy is what society whether the authorities in this society, instilled in people. There is no truth or law as such, but only faith in what people have learned in a process called education".<sup>††</sup> Therefore people who do not have the principles on which they could rely on in seeking the truth, they are forced to adopt the criteria to explain human reality. And this, according to Professor is the greatest danger that came with the common consent. The common challenge of realism denoted the victory of epistemological relativism and ethical-moral. The professor, of course, does not negate the freedom of choice, but says the danger that entails moderate rejection of metaphysical realism and cognitive.

Associated with widespread agreement marks its true anarchy impact in all aspects of human life, such institutional settings as and family, already Plato wrote about it: "(...) the father gets used to the fact that it becomes like a child, and afraid of the children, and the son gets like his father and neither shall not be ashamed nor be afraid of their parents (...). In such a state, the teacher is afraid of the students and getting them flatter, and the students themselves are ignoring the teacher, (...)",<sup>†††</sup> the

\* PLATON, *Państwo*, tłum. W. Witwicki, AKME, Warszawa 1990, s. 434-437.

† Ibidem, s. 442.

‡ STAWROWSKI, Z.: *Niemoralna demokracja*, Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej, Kraków 2008.

§ ROSHWALD, M.: *Paths through mankind's perplexities...*, dz. cyt., rozdz. A., p. 5.

\*\* ROSHWALD, M.: Democracy and Elite, Modern Age, Spring2003, Vol. 45 Issue 2, s. 147; ROSWALD, M.: *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Apr1963, Vol. 19 Issue 4, s. 24-27

†† ROSHWALD, M.: *O wolności słowa*, tłum. M. Frateczak, Studia Sieradzana 1/2012, s. 77.

††† Ibidem, *Państwo...*, dz. cyt., s. 445-446.

contemporary social reality takes similar forms:" (...) the right to any social group are reserved for itself an insult to justice and equality."\*

Unlimited general agreement follows the rules adopted in an open or a closed ballot, where a society based on the rule seeks solutions for a better life: "(...) if the state operates democratically, with the consent of the majority, but it guarantees the rights of individual liberty, his pursuit of happiness is an illusion(...). Discrimination on the basis of the law drafting, (...) can lead to persecution, even worse, the law adopts the majority. Yet democracy and its rule based on common consent suppose to affirm any individual in his complexity and needs."†

Therefore, when an individual is subordinate to the universal harmony with no reference to the realism, then in society glorifies the criterion of truth: the consensus, coherence, dialogue or obviousness. Professor Roshwald has made description of the society in which human minds captured the ideal of universal agreement, is impressive in its accuracy. In a democracy, citizens are formally governing - the people, but the people that, following Plato, consists mainly of those, "(...) that work with their own hands, do not occupy offices and have little property".‡

However, he chose his representatives who make laws and at the same time seeking the favor of the people he will find himself among the elect by the nation. His desires to pursue in space, which Plato described the *agora*. Democratic politician to gain the support needed to be a good speaker, but what does that mean? Professor Roshwald put it in this way: "(...) the politicians claim to be endowed with the wisdom, who alone understand public issues, relying on their promises and beliefs, they are asking others for their adoption, and if they cannot get to the public, they use a social engineering to convince citizens (...) that they give them their vote."§

A good speaker is a person who will be more convincing than his opponent. This issue has taken on the verge of a philosophical reflection on the reality of Plato in the *Gorgias*: "(...) the same things you do not need to know or know how to have, and just find some means to convince people, so that the man gave an impression to those who do not know anything, that he is better expert even than those who know."\*\* In a democracy, a politician who wants to convince the public to his views must have the ability to induce a belief in his competence in the field, even though it is actually the opposite.

Mordecai Roshwald in *Paths through mankind's perplexities* refers to the comparison derived from *Gorgias* of Plato: (...) What is cosmetics in relation to the physical exercise, the sophistication in relation to real politics. Gymnastics genuinely cares about the health of the body, and cosmetics - the fact that it created a feeling healthy. Similarly, political sophistication striving for universal agreement only creates the appearance skillfully that it is for the good of the society. Well posed by modern sophists appearance of the common good turns out to be more convincing than the real reality, which shows the effects of political action. The public often opposes it, but any idea being accepted by majority votes, is eliminating the truth to the half-truths, despite the minds of many men and women: <The idea that men and women do not control their own lives, they do not need, and cannot be, to shape their lives according to their own assessment, but they are conditioned or shaped to act according to the dictates of power (especially political power) caused a violent reaction.

Claims of individual freedom of thought and feeling that people choose and eject their own conclusions, what is the proper way of behaving is not abandoned. This reaction manifested itself in different ways>. Perhaps the most successful of these was the literature of a negative utopia or dystopia, as it is often called. Its turn against a constructions designed of authoritarian societies, shaped by political power by a perfect plan, presenting a horrifying picture of the implementation of this project.††

"The philosopher studying the issue of universal consent in a democracy that understands the full, "(...) that the conflict between intellectual elitism and democratic egalitarianism in the policy does not apply to anything merely a matter of practice, and thus better or worse skills to run the country, but there is a dispute through ethical issues affecting what is right and just."‡‡

\* Ibidem, *Paths through mankind's perplexities*..., dz. cyt., rozdz. A., p. 5.

† Ibidem.

‡ Ibidem, *Państwo*..., dz.. cyt., s. 450.

§ Ibidem, *Paths through mankind's perplexities*..., dz. cyt., rozdz. A., p. 3.

\*\* PLATON, *Gorgiasz*, tłum. W. Witwicki, PWN, Warszawa 1958, s. 38.

†† Ibidem, *O wolności*..., opr. cyt., s. 78.

‡‡ STAWROWSKI, Z.: *Platon o demokracji*, In: *Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej*, <http://www.omp.org.pl/stareomp/index89fd.php?module=subjects&func=printpage&pageid=331&scope=All>, stan z dnia 21. 12. 2012r.

Describing in the *Paths through mankind's perplexities* democracy as a system clearly shows that it leads to distortion of the truth, if you reject a viable reality and cognitive realism. Appropriate, yet legitimate remedy for the state's fair is a rational and just law.

A good legislator cannot act as sophist and treat the public as a carrier of truth by getting the approval of imaginary reality. Although even the most rational regulations require the consent of the citizens, but if the law is inconsistent with the factual evidence - reality actually exists, is it valid for a citizen? Under the law, but is it not the adoption of legalism emphasizing universal agreement as a condition of the basic truth? Thus, the peak of rationality seems to be not so the law, even the most perfect, but the truth, not constituted by the general public, but the real, which Aristotle described giving a definition of truth *veritas rei intellectus adequatio*.

### Conclusion

To sum up this section, work accepted assumptions that are based on the moderate epistemological realism and the experience of our author. Really an existing reality, in some aspects, is for us cognitively available in direct and indirect experience, intellectual, emotional, bodily, that is also empirically.

Which leads us to conclude that the supporters of any such research is possible to provide compelling arguments in favor of any such concept of being in a general sense, the world and the human action we really get to know in an objective and subjective ways. Thus, the structure of work and methodology while adopting the epistemological realism.

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