

*Karol Jasiński***The Spirituality of Anatheism***Duhovnost anateizma*

Abstract: The purpose of the paper is to critically present the essential elements of the concept of anatheism and to show it as a form of spirituality. Its essential expression is human openness and response to the various ways of the divine presence and call. It consists of three parts. The first presents the main ideas of anatheism (return of God as “Other” in a new form after the disappearance of the previous one; type of experience rather than a theory; need to deconstruct the scholastic concept of God), the second shows it as a certain type of spirituality (a way of life in the form of responding to the calls of the imagined divinity), while the third indicates the main areas of experience of the divine call (things, events and persons).

Keywords: anatheism, spirituality, the sacramentality of things, events, human encounters

Povzetek: Namen prispevka je kritična predstavitev bistvenih elementov koncepta anateizma; obenem ga prikazujemo kot obliko duhovnosti. Njegov temeljni izraz je človekova odprtost in odziv na različne vrste Božje navzočnosti in klica. Prispevek je sestavljen iz treh delov. V prvem so predstavljene glavne ideje anateizma (vrnitev Boga kot ‚Drugega‘ v novi obliki po izginotju prejšnjega; vrsta izkušnje in ne teorije; potreba po dekonstrukciji sholastičnega pojma Boga), v drugem je prikazan kot določena vrsta duhovnosti (način življenja v obliki odzivanja na klice namišljene božanskosti), v tretjem pa so navedena glavna področja doživljanja Božjega klica (stvari, dogodki in osebe).

Ključne besede: anateizem, duhovnost, zakramentalnost stvari, dogodkov, srečevanja ljudi

1. Introduction

There are several positions possible on the existence of God. The essential ones include theism, atheism, agnosticism and scepticism. Theism is the view accor-

ding to which a personal God exists, and we can justify this rationally. Atheism is a form of belief that a personal God does not exist, and we can rationally justify this. Agnosticism is the claim that the question of God's existence or non-existence is inconclusive in principle. Scepticism, on the other hand, is a form of belief that the issue of God's existence or non-existence is currently unsolvable.

The Irish philosopher Richard Kearney additionally introduced the concept of *anatheism* (in Greek *ana-theos* – after God) into scientific circulation. The issue here is not the theoretical belief in the existence or non-existence of God, but rather the possibility of His practical experience by a human being. Kearney emphasizes that there is no chance of a return to the old forms of experience of the divine being, but it can happen in a new way. Consequently, it must be said that *anatheism* is not another type of theory, but rather a variety of spirituality. In this case, spirituality is understood as a certain style of life and action, finding expression in the formation of appropriate relationships with reality.

The purpose of the following analyses is to critically present the essential elements of the concept of *anatheism* and to show it as a form of spirituality. Its most essential expression is human openness and response to the different ways in which the divine speaks. The analyses consist of three main parts. In the first, the main ideas of *anatheism* will be presented, in the second it will be shown as a type of spirituality, while in the third the most important areas of the experience of the divine (contact with things, events and encounters with other persons) will be indicated. The point of reference will be the views of the author of the concept of *anatheism* Richard Kearney, and those ideologically close to him John D. Caputo and Jean L. Marion.

2. Main Ideas of *Anatheism*

Richard Kearney treats it primarily as a socio-historical phenomenon, a consequence of, e.g. the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the phenomenon of the 'disenchantment of the world', the desacralisation of society and the loss of the illusion of God and faith (Kearney 2015, 9; 2021b, 81).

Elsewhere, he emphasises that *anatheism* is a third way between dogmatic theism and militant atheism (Kearney 2010, 3), i.e., a view concerning the affirmation of God's existence or the questioning of it. It would therefore be regarded as a type of philosophical theory.

The Irish philosopher makes an interesting analysis of the term "*anatheism*" itself. He notes that the prefix *ana* (eng. "again, anew") present in it is used to express both some kind of return and an opening to the future. The term "*anatheism*" would therefore be used to evoke a past experience of divinity that could also happen in the future under new circumstances. Kearney further emphasises that there is a double letter "a" in the word. One has to do, in his view, with the word "atheism," understood in this case as a pre-reflective experience of the wi-

thdrawal, loss or death of God. The other “a,” on the other hand, refers to the “death of this death of God” and the opening up to experience something new and mysterious (2015, 6–8; 2021b, 79–81, 84). A human being would thus be expected to open himself up to the experience of a Transcendence that wants to be reanimated. Anatheism would therefore not be a theory and a belief system but a form of practice and existential experience.

In this connection, it is important to emphasise that anatheism is, in Kearney’s view, the result of a certain type of experience. It is related to human disposition not so much to form beliefs, but rather to be open to the experience of a new form of divinity. In this situation, a human being does not so much need new theses and theories, but rather new examples and testimonies (2018, 10; 2020, 152–153). It is worth emphasising here that the experienced divine being can be both personal God and non-personal divinity.

Kearney emphasises that anatheism would be primarily concerned with drawing attention to the question of God’s return in a new form. This would be the God known from various wisdom traditions, but a completely surprising form of Him is also possible. It is worth noting that the Irish philosopher also allows for the eventuality that God may no longer appear at all, and thus a human being will not have a new experience of Him (2010, 181). The consequence, then, can be both faith and lack of faith (2021a, 575; 581–582). For anatheism presupposes both an experience of the divine and the absence of such an experience, or the experience of its absence. What may be questionable from the point of view of representatives of traditional theism, however, is the indeterminacy of the nature of God. The Irish philosopher emphasises that He can be known from different traditions. This raises the question: from which one? All the more so since the concepts of God in different traditions are inconsistent and even contradictory. Kearney seems to emphasise the aspect of novelty and surprise in the experience of the divine. But is it sufficient? Or perhaps he deliberately avoids making any statement about the divine nature and thus comes closer to the apophatic tradition, whose representatives emphasise the incommensurability of human efforts to describe the absolute mystery of God, infinitely transcending all our categories. Kearney is undoubtedly one of the proponents of this trend. All the more so since an important source of inspiration are for him and for other representatives of anatheism ideas drawn from the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory of Nyssa, Master Eckhart, John of the Cross and Julianne of Norwich. Adopting an apophatic position also brings him closer to representatives of contemporary existentialism, to whom it is also familiar (e.g. Martin Buber, Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel).

Kearney emphasises, however, that in order to make the return and experience of divinity possible, its false idols must first be unmasked and put to death (Kearney 2021b, 79; 82). For it must be borne in mind that in religion we have to deal with various idols, sometimes unconscious by person. These can be things, places, times, rituals, institutions and persons. It seems, however, that the most dangerous idols are human ideas and concepts about God.

According to the French philosopher Jean Luc Marion, the “death of God” should therefore be understood as the death of idols (Marion 2001, 27–78). These are precisely the human notions of God by means of which one wants to grasp what is impossible to grasp. All transcendence is thus excluded (1991, 10–16; 110–115). Idols are further characterised by “excessive visibility,” focusing attention on the external dimension of reality at the expense of its existential depth (2002, 68–69; 75–81). They must therefore be put to death in order for a person to open up to a deeper sphere of being. The phenomenon of the “death of God” understood as the death of the idol would in this case be a positive phenomenon in human life.

In this connection, we have to pose the question: which conceptual idol would have to die in order to be a possible return of divinity and a new way for a person to experience it?

There is no doubt that Kearney has in mind first and foremost the death of the metaphysical conception of God, i.e. the scholastic idea of a pure act, of self-existence and of an omnipotent being. This is all the more so because God is more a possibility of being and not an act of it (Kearney 2001, 1–2; 2015, 9; 17; 2021a, 574; 579–580). It is therefore necessary to move away from the God of traditional metaphysics, allowing for new ways of understanding a divine being. All the more so as divinity appears as always other. Such an approach, however, is opposed by representatives of scholastic theology, for whom God is a pure act, or fullness of being, and a necessary being whose essence is existence. Such a concept of God is, in their view, the result of metaphysical reflection, which aims to explain reality by final causes. It is therefore necessary in order to explain the existence of adventitious beings.

The American philosopher and theologian John Caputo, on the other hand, emphasises that the metaphysical notion of God as an omnipotent first cause and the transcendent principle of being should be abandoned. For it is worth emphasising His powerlessness rather than His omnipotence. God’s power, in his view, consists only in the weak power of the word. The expression of divine transcendence, on the other hand, is the appeal to action addressed to a human being (Caputo 2006, 23–54; 84–98; 113–124; 180–181; 2007, 53–54; 56–58; 62–65). Caputo therefore postulates a deconstruction of the concept of God, which would result in the emergence of new forms of thinking about him (2022, 242–243). All the more so since no concept ever exhausts the divine, because it escapes any conceptualisation (2007, 53; 2022, 244–245). Some treat his deconstruction in the light of the biblical concept of *kenosis* (Cassidy-Deketelaere 2022, 129). Caputo proposes to think of God in terms of weakness rather than power, and the essential experience of God is one of emptiness. Some apophaticism is thus a feature of his thought.

For Marion, by contrast, the greatest idol is the notion of God as the supreme being (Marion 1991, 41–45; 207–210; 2001, 7; 15; 17; 215–220). He notes that philosophers have thought of God in this way since the time of Plato. However,

the category of “being” is unsatisfactory in describing God and should be replaced by the category of “possibility.” All the more so since, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, God is not so much a being but rather is yet to come. Marion therefore postulates the need to value human desire as the basis of reference to God. In a discussion with the French philosopher, Kearney emphasises that this desire may have to do with some deficiency of being or with some excess (Kearney 2004, 17–21). In another place, Marion refers to this excess as God (Marion 1991, 47; 108). Marion’s assertions seem to be an expression of his apophaticism regarding the knowledge of God, but their result may also raise the question: does the French philosopher not thereby create another idol – God as excess? Moreover, his emphasis on the category of “possibility” in relation to God also arouses resistance from thinkers of scholastic provenance, because it questions His reality.

Marion is admittedly aware that any naming of God must be marked by distance (Marion 2002, 156). However, it seems that in calling “excess” by the name of God he has not avoided the danger he himself warned against.

Anatheism thus presupposes, according to Kearney, a specifically understood atheism and theism. The expression of the former would be a transcending of the naivety of first experiences, accepted dogmas and hitherto held notions of God, and the expression of the latter would be a critical recovery of divinity and its return after the disappearance of its former form (Kearney 2015, 7; 2021b, 79–83). A certain form of divinity may have passed away, but it still contains some cognitive and experiential potential (2018, 8–10; 2020, 151–152). A person can therefore not only lose it but also regain it.

A similar belief is also unfamiliar to Caputo, according to whom an anatheism emerges from a deeply thoughtful atheism, through which a wiser theism is possible (Caputo 2021, 555). Atheism would thus be for Kearney and Caputo a form of purification of theism. Similar beliefs are also shared by the contemporary Czech intellectual Tomáš Halík, who distances himself from the dogmatic understanding of atheism as the negation of God’s existence and argues in favour of critical atheism as a way of purifying the concept of God. Nevertheless, the issue of the real existence and nature of God, who is questioned in dogmatic atheism, would still remain open. There is also no possibility of God’s return within dogmatic atheism.

However, for Caputo, anatheism would also be a form of theism that follows or returns to theism after the experience of atheism (Caputo and Kearney 2017, 67–68; 72–73). Human beings should therefore be open to new ways of not only understanding but also experiencing the divine. Thus, it can be said that anatheism has the character of an endless process of discovering God. This is all the more so because all kinds of religious experiences are marked by anthropomorphism, that is, by human images and concepts. The divine, therefore, constantly demands a new discovery and interpretation, although it will never be definitively grasped and understood. Apophaticism is therefore an integral part of anatheism. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that there is always a degree of uncertainty, since this new understanding and experience may never emerge.

3. Anatheism as Spirituality

As mentioned above, Kearney understands anatheism not so much as a belief system or a new theory, but rather as a certain human disposition to experience a different form of the divine, or the lack of this experience.

Accordingly, for the Irish philosopher, an anatheism is first and foremost a variant of spirituality that consists of human openness to the coming divine (Kearney 2021a, 579; 2021b, 79). It is a form of spirituality that is more mature in that it emerges after a period of uncertainty, doubt and the death of previous, often naïve, experiences of the divine.

Kearney emphasises that this spirituality is not limited to the Judaic, Christian and Islamic traditions, but applies to all the great wisdom traditions: from Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, Confucian and indigenous peoples' traditions. In each case, it is related to the human being's readiness to open up to other forms of divinity and the various possibilities for experiencing its presence or absence (2021b, 83; 85). Anatheism is thus a matter not so much of theory as of practice. It constitutes a form of witnessing the return or loss of the divine. It manifests itself in a particular way of human life, i.e. his spirituality. However, this spirituality is apophatic in nature, since it refers to an undefined divinity.

It is worth bearing in mind that Kearney situates divinity between spirituality and religion. Spirituality, in his view, is understood today as a longing for something more indefinable and a wide range of different inner quests carried out outside the realm of religion. Religion, on the other hand, is for him a set of doctrinal claims, ritual traditions and codes of institutional behaviour. The divine differs from spirituality in that it is found and not merely sought again and again without effect. In turn, it is distinguished from religion by its lack of formalisation. Kearney identifies the divine with some reality that is strange and unspeakable, surprising and dazzling. It constitutes a fear- or fascination-inducing *numinosum* that is experienced through natural entities. It is characterised by ontic transcendence and an excess of meaning (2015, 15–18). The essential characteristic of the divine is therefore a radical otherness, the discovery and experience of which is the essence of spirituality.

Kearney is thus part of the dominant trend today towards a separation between spirituality, or inner experiences, and religion, or external practices. Its proponents believe that the structures of traditional religions do not serve the inner development of human beings and advocate the spontaneity of spiritual life (Tacey 2004, 30–31; 38). Spirituality thus represents a reality completely alternative to the religious system. It is linked to a type of experience not mediated by institutions. Man, emphasising his subjectivity and autonomy, seeks to transcend his own condition of being. Anatheistic spirituality is therefore close to contemporary existentialism, which emphasises the importance of individualism and the authenticity of the man, who searches for a life goal and expresses through it the originality of his personality.

English philosopher of religion John Cottingham draws attention to the role of specific life practices and external relationships in spirituality (Cottingham 2006, 5). Such an essential life practice in anatheism and a form of relationship would be, according to Kearney, responding to a call coming from outside to a person (Kearney 2021b, 84). Spirituality thus becomes a specific lifestyle of responding to a call that reaches man through natural beings. The source of this call would be the divine mystery, into which man is, according to Gabriel Marcel, not only immersed but also to be involved.

It would therefore be important in spirituality, according to Kearney, the disposition of the human being to be open to the always other and always new call of the divine (Kearney 2015, 8; 2021b, 80–81). It would be impossible to represent it in any way, but at the same time, it would be possible to experience its coming in relation to particular beings and their call. He emphasises that it always comes in any way and at any time. Kearney modifies the biblical name of God in this connection - instead of “I am who I am” it should read “He who will be” (2001, 1–4; 22–38; 63–77; 97). For the divine does not so much but rather come to man through other beings in the form of gift and call (2010, 181; 2015, 8; 2021b, 81), demanding a free acceptance and response. This once again brings to light the apophatic motif present in the thought of the Irish philosopher. It is worth noting at this point that this relation with other beings would be interpreted differently by proponents of atheism, who would understand it in purely natural terms (e.g. contact, use, encounter).

God also comes, according to Caputo, as a completely Other. A human being is not prepared for it because it occurs in an unexpected way. God thus appears as that which is open. A man should open himself up to this otherness (Caputo 2006, 108–112; 2021, 556; 563; 2022, 244–245). In connection with the anticipation of the coming of the divine being, man experiences, according to Caputo, the restlessness of his heart, which lacks definitive orientation and is open to an unpredictable future (2022, 246). It seems that the restlessness of the human heart is integral to the spirituality of anatheism. Referring to the thought of Augustine of Hippo, one would have to say that it will not know peace until it rests in God. It seems that this restlessness plays an important function in human life as the driving force in search of God’s presence and activity.

According to Kearney, imagination also plays an important role in human spirituality. For he is called to acts of imagining divinity. Consequently, he should not only suspend his previous beliefs and activate his imagination but also reject all concepts of God and replace them with images of the divine. For the relationship between divinity and a human being consists, according to the Irish philosopher, in a game of mutual creation, which is called theopoetics (Kearney 2015, 10–13; 2020, 145; 149; 153–154). An essential element of the spirituality of anatheism, then, is the conviction that divinity does not come to man in some ready-made form, but a kind of creation by means of his creative imagination. A similar conviction is close to the Canadian philosopher of religion John L. Schellenberg, who advocates a so-called “sceptical religion.” It is based on doubting and imagining

an ultimate reality. Having knowledge of its existence is beyond the cognitive capacity of man, who can only imagine its appearance. In doing so, it must be kept in mind that its imagining is always unreliable.

Imagination is also, according to Caputo, a tool for discovering and shaping the image of God. For the incoming divinity is an imaginative configuration. Imagination, however, is not understood by Caputo as a subjective and arbitrary fantasy, but as a means of human contact and resonance with the mysterious depths of reality (Caputo 2021, 556–557). Imagination seems to play an important role in the process of discovering a divine being, and it begins by establishing a relationship with reality. However, one must not stop at its surface but reach its deeper layers. It is also necessary to abandon its conceptualisation in favour of an imaginative configuration. It seems, however, that the accentuation of the role of the imagination may provoke some resistance from proponents of traditional theism and atheism. For the first, emphasising more the importance of rational reflection concerning the existence and the nature of God as the foundation of human spirituality, the abandonment of reason and the yielding to creative imagination may lead to the emergence of a spectral spirituality. For the others appealing to the imagination would only confirm that God is human projection and construct.

4. Areas of Experience of the Divine Other

An atheistic spirituality, making the experience of the divine possible, would therefore consist in man's readiness to open himself to the otherness of reality, to activate his imagination and to respond to the call emanating from other beings. A necessary condition for this is direct contact or, to use Martin Buber's language, dialogical relation with various natural beings, which include all things, events and persons. Surviving their otherness, every man experiences in them the presence and call of the divine Other, which he imagines differently each time.

The first area of the experience of Other is contact with concrete things. These are initially experienced, according to Kearney, in a commonsensical way, but over time one begins to apprehend them in a symbolic way, i.e. as signs of divine presence (Kearney 2021b, 84–85). The human imagination, in his view, plays an important role in this process (2015, 6–7). Through it, a change of perspective can occur in the perception of things that become sacraments of the divine and enable its return in various forms. The belief in the sacramental nature of reality is familiar not only to traditional theism (e.g. Karl Rahner, Edith Stein) but also to contemporary existentialism (Karl Jaspers, Paul Tillich). Following Kearney's thought, one would conclude that things are "seen-as" full of divine presence, or, sharing the intuition of the British philosopher John Hick, "experienced-as" a symbol to experience its proximity.

Secondly, the events taking place in human life are significant. Caputo notes that they cannot be reduced to what can be grasped by the senses alone but also

can be felt. Events are always dynamic and changeable. They take different forms and are not complete. They are never exhausted in the present but refer to the past or the future (Caputo 2007, 47–48; 51–52).

Elsewhere, Caputo will emphasise that the event is in the name of God (2021, 556). It is regarded as the moment of divine visitation and the place of its coming in a constantly new way. A divine being confronts a human being through the event with an unconditional challenge and insists on a response in the form of an action (2006, 1–18; 291–300; 2007, 49; 53–54; 56–58; 62–65). Moreover, by responding to the event, a human being participates in the creation of a divinity whose being is dependent on personal activity (2013, 45–47; 94–96; 247). The divine, then, is a peculiar construct that is the result of a phenomenon taking place in the world and human activity (Caruana and Cauchi 2016, 24–26).

Kearney will emphasise in this situation that divinity is to be identified not so much with the event itself, but rather with the unconditional call. If there is a call, there is also a caller. The call is a “silent voice,” demanding a personal response (Kearney 2021a, 574; 579–580). Kearney will further note that in events, taking place in finite time (*chronos*), infinite time (*kairos*) manifests itself (2015, 8–9; 2021b, 81; 85). Time, therefore, is not just a collection of moments, but is a turning point in a person’s life. He is forced to make decisions in relation to the historical actions of the divine and the challenges posed by it.

Events are also, for Marion, an expression of the presence of God, who through them reveals himself to man and comes to him in history in a constantly different form. For the French philosopher, the event is one of the so-called “saturated phenomena,” that is, phenomena characterised by an excess of intuition (content) over intentionality (conceptuality) (Kearney 2004, 13–15; 23; 26; Marion 2002, 112). These phenomena therefore call for a continuous interpretation aimed at reading the meaning of an event in the context of a human existence.

It seems that the above understanding of events is close to the concept of ‘signs of the times’ by the French theologian Marie Dominique Chenu, which are historical events (Chenu 1967, 210–211; 213–214; 220–223). The Czech philosopher and theologian Tomáš Halík, emphasising the art of reading the signs of the times, thinks in a similar way. He calls it karyology, a variant of hermeneutics of events in the world (Halík 2018, 38). They postulate the need for a contemplative approach to historical events, which, when interpreted in the light of faith, are an expression of the presence, action and manifestation of God’s intention.

A third opportunity to experience the “other,” and thus the presence of the divine, is to experience the human face. This tendency is present in Caputo, Kearney and Marion, influenced by the thought of the French intellectual Emmanuel Levinas.

Caputo emphasises, for example, the need to open up not so much to things, but rather to another human being. He thus emphasises the inherent mystery to which one must open oneself in humility. In particular, one should be open to the suffering human being (Caputo 1987, 258; 266–267; 269; 271; 278). Turning to-

wards another person means, according to Caputo, surrendering oneself to God Himself, who has left His mark on one's face. In relation to it, the revelation of divinity takes place, consisting of a call to action and service (2006, 259–272). Caputo thus moves away from an abstract notion of a divine being to its concrete experience in relation to the face of another man as the foundation of an ethic of responsibility.

Kearney also invokes the motif of the epiphany of the face (Kearney 2015, 16), through which an encounter is made with a human being who is other, sometimes even completely alien. He emphasises that God has left his mark, especially in the face of suffering, and that the fundamental moral experience of human beings in this situation is to respond to that face (2021b, 82). In this connection, he draws attention to the need for hospitality, that is, openness and readiness to receive another human being. For in him comes God himself (Caputo and Kearney 2017, 73–75). Kearney therefore emphasises the importance of the virtue of hospitality, the consistent practice of which would not only make it possible to experience divine presence, but also to shape human relationships in peace and love.

A similar approach is taken by Marion, for whom the human face is a particular example of a “saturated phenomenon.” It is not only a manifestation of the “other,” but also an icon (Marion 2002, 118). Through it, a glimpse of the divine reaches the person. It thus guides one to another dimension of reality and enables one to experience something invisible (1991, 17; 19; 23; 2001, 198; 200–201; 244–247). It is worth bearing in mind, however, that the human face may not only be an icon that opens up to transcendence, but also a divinised idol that closes off to it. Nevertheless, the encounter with the other people is always an opportunity to experience their otherness and thus some manifestation of divinity.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of the above analyses was to critically present the essential elements of the concept of anatheism and to show it as a form of spirituality. Its essential expression is human opening up and responding to the various ways in which the divine speaks. The term “anatheism” is thus used to describe the dynamics of the human relationship with God, which is made possible by other things, events and persons. By experiencing their otherness, a human being has the possibility of imagining and experiencing the divine Other, who wants to communicate with him through different entities and address a specific call to him. It demands a free acceptance and an appropriate response, which constitutes the essence of the spirituality of anatheism. An anatheistic spirituality would be marked by two characteristics emphasised in contemporary existentialism: individualism and authenticity. A man would not be a formal member of a particular religious community, practice any rituals, or accept a particular doctrine. He would also decide more independently about his lifestyle aimed at realising his personality and providing a personal response to the challenges of everyday existence. In doing so, he is

constantly open to experiencing some mystery of reality. However, its spirituality is not devoid of a moral dimension. It seems that the ethics of anatheism is a type of situational ethics and ethics of responsibility. This is because it emphasises that only man, when confronted with certain things, events and persons, can make an independent decision about his own behaviour. It undermines the absolute validity of any laws and norms since reference to them is dependent on changing situations. Man, therefore responds to what he encounters, but he is also responsible for what he does with it. The responsibility is heightened because through various things, other persons and the course of events in history the call of the divine reaches man. An anatheistic spirituality would be close to the ideas of modern existentialism.

This raises at least two important problems. Firstly, the representatives of anatheism, especially Kearney and Caputo, do not address the question of the real existence of God, which is important for the proponents of traditional theism. They confine their considerations to the sphere of phenomena and their interpretation, but they fail to indicate some reasons for the real existence of God as a correlate of human spirituality. This is undoubtedly related to their move away from metaphysics as onto-theology to hermeneutics, from cataphaticism to apophaticism. In such a case, however, God can only take on a phenomenal shape and spirituality – spectral or purely immanent form. Such a situation would, however, be unacceptable in traditional theism, but some form of immanent spirituality would be possible within atheism. Secondly, the deconstruction of the hitherto metaphysical concept of a divine being, especially in terms of its transcendence, is needed. This would consist not so much in existing beyond and above the world, but rather in its depths. The divine would not be discovered in isolation from reality, but rather in its depths as an existential foundation (Martin Heidegger's and Paul Tillich's "ground of being"). The world would thus acquire a sacramental (symbolic) dimension, i.e. it would be a sign of the divine, speaking through things, events and persons. They would demand an appropriate interpretation in order to read their deeper meaning and the call addressed by them to a human being. The otherness of beings would point to the otherness of the divine being that is their foundation and source of the call. Anatheism thus seems to presuppose panentheism (in Greek *pan-en-theos* – everything in God), in which both the presence of the divine being in the natural world and its difference from it are emphasised. The autonomy of the world is thus preserved, as is the transcendence of the divine. The divine being is incorporated into the world as its ontic foundation and intervenes from within in its development. The world is thus contained in God and reveals His presence but does not reduce Him to an earthly dimension. The divine must therefore be discovered in everything because it is implicit in everything. Anatheism echoes the old concept of the 'hidden God' (*Deus absconditus*), a secular version of which is Heidegger's theory of "underlying being." Divinity would then be a hidden but also revealing being. Two important questions arise. First, in what does this "containing of the world in God" consist of? Secondly, does divinity have a personal nature or is it merely an impersonal

being? Both possibilities seem to be taken into account in the experience of divinity. In this connection, it is worth noting that the question of panentheism is problematic from a Christian point of view. The origin of this concept is German idealism (19th century), and its main proponents are the representatives of process philosophy (20th century). Its popularity is linked to the belief that it better explains God's action in the world in the context of modern science. From a Christian perspective, however, panentheism is problematic in its emphasis on the interdependence of beings, especially God's dependence on beings, His qualitative similarity to them and the existence of beings within Him. In Christian theism, meanwhile, God is perfect and independent of other beings, and His nature is completely different from them. He is a Person, and other persons and things exist realistically outside Him. There is thus a tension between some panentheistic and theistic theses. Moreover, pantheism, because of its many ambiguities, seems to be no scientific theory, but a research programme. Nevertheless, it has its supporters among Christian intellectuals (e.g. Arthur Peacocke, John B. Cobb, Jozef Zycinski, Michał Heller, Benedikt P. Göcke).

The spirituality of anatheism would consist in a certain style of human existence, consisting in contact with natural beings, noticing their otherness, making a symbolic interpretation, and responding through action to their call. It is worth remembering, however, that its source would ultimately be a "hidden divinity." However, this type of spirituality is not innovative. It is even present throughout the centuries in the great monotheistic religions. It seems that supporters of anatheism are trying to reactivate it in the context of the contemporary post-secular era, in which we are dealing with the rebirth of spiritual life and the return of religion in a new form. There is a transition from an external, institutional and ritual religion to internal, individual and subjective spirituality. Postsecularism does not mean, therefore, the return of the former religious order, but rather the opening of different perspectives and the search for a new spiritual experience. Its object, however, is not always a personal God and an interpersonal relationship with Him. Moreover, these searches are sometimes unspecified.

Religion returns mainly in the form of spirituality, exemplified by anatheism. It refers to intuitions found in many religious and philosophical traditions, e.g. Judeo-Christian ("spirituality of events"), scholastic (Marie-Dominique Chenu's "signs of the times"), processual (Alfred N. Whitehead's natural theology), phenomenological (Edith Stein's symbolism of the world) and existential (Karl Jaspers' "cyphers of transcendence," Emanuel Levinas' epiphany of the face, Martin Buber's dialogic).

An important feature of the spirituality of anatheism is that it is available to every person who can practice it outside the area of any institutional religion. It demands only a dialogical relationship with reality consisting of things, events and people. By discovering their otherness, every human being can touch the unspecified, divine Other, which, as their existential ground, comes to people through them in a constantly new figure and contact in an always new way.

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