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**SHOAH AS AN IMPULSE FOR THE REVISION OF PHILOSOPHICAL
QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD AND HUMAN BEING –
ACCORDING TO HANNAH ARENDT AND HANS JONAS**

– summary of the dissertation –

The dissertation's thesis is twofold. First of all the twentieth-century experience of evil, in the form of a historical event of Shoah, is an impulse that prompts a new question about God and human being in relation to the current philosophical tradition, as well as seeking new answers in the perspective of the philosophical reflection of Hannah Arendt and Hans Jonas. The second thesis is the conviction that mentioned questions (specific to the area of philosophy of God and philosophy of human being) are not distanced from each other but – especially by the axiological component present in them – they open a common sphere of discourse and they are complementary. The research goal is a critical analysis of the thoughts of Arendt and Jonas in the context of their own suggestions for answers to the questions about God and human being in the context of the experience of the Holocaust, and to show the constructiveness of their thoughts in the perspective of philosophy of God and philosophy of human being. The method used for this work is twofold. First of all is used the phenomenological method, which is particularly important during the analysis of source texts. This method is based on looking at the problem *as it appears*, with the suspension of any previous knowledge on the topic. The subject of reflection, for example a source text, can *speak for itself*. The second method is the critical method which is a critical analysis of source texts in the field of philosophical work topics.

Completed archival and library queries allowed to diagnose the scope of research status in the subject of the dissertation and also allowed to find deficiencies. Because of these queries, the dissertation also shows new problems. The footnotes contain information about such bibliographic items – from Polish and foreign archives and libraries – which allowed some of the original thesis appearing in this dissertation to be presented. These foreign queries were conducted during research internships at the Tel Aviv University, as well as at The New School

in New York. Many of the foreign bibliographic items used in this work are not available in the collections of Polish libraries.

Considering the conducted queries of Polish and foreign bibliographic and archival sources, it should be noted that the starting point in the philosophical reflection of Arendt and Jonas are specific historical experiences. Secondly, the idea of God after the experience of the Holocaust is expressed in the works of Jonas – but in an implicit way – on the new philosophical vision of human being. There is also a thesis that the *imperative of responsibility*, promoted by Jonas, is a ethical key imperative in the philosopher's point of view and is also associated with the idea of God after the act of *tsimtsum*, which means: *self-destruction of God* during the moment of the creation of the world. Criticism also goes to the form of the idea of God, proclaimed by Jonas, after the mentioned act of *tsimtsum* – as extremely different from the traditional understanding of this issue. It must be remembered that Jonas emphasizes many times that his considerations oscillate within the Jewish tradition. There is also shown that some elements of this tradition are arbitrarily modified by the philosopher. In this paper is also presented the criticism of the opinion that the main philosophical issue in the studies of Arendt is the Holocaust. Moreover there is a thesis that does not appear directly in the philosopher's texts: it is a statement that the historical event of totalitarianism has contributed to the revision of previous questions about authority, human freedom and condition, the possibility of human action, as well as to the revision of questions about evil. Moreover, there is also the thesis that in Arendt's philosophical writings there are such elements that allow to recognize, that totalitarianism made a review of functioning questions about eschatological reality. Finally, there is also a conviction according to which the tragic event of the Shoah showed almost the *divine omnipotence* of human possibilities in the form of creating a system of total power – it is totalitarianism.

The modern era still has the hallmark of extreme evil in the form of *Auschwitz* and *Kolyma*. Both of these terms are for some a symbol of *God's silence*, and for others – an experience of extreme evil and betrayal committed by human being. It is also hard to deny that the twentieth century was largely marked by great political friction, which evolved into great global armed conflicts, abounding in unprecedented cruelty, of which *Auschwitz* and *Kolyma* became the most significant symbols. Reflection on the Shoah event and totalitarianism, which transforms the philosophical discourse about God and human being, is the main topic of the dissertation.