

**Ks. Piotr Andryszczak**

AUTONOMIA PODMIOTU POLITYCZNEGO W UJĘCIU JOHNA RAWLSA

AUTONOMY OF THE POLITICAL SUBJECT IN THE THOUGHT OF J. RAWLS

**Summary**

Rawls's philosophy in general and his conception of the person in particular has undeniably Kantian foundations. Kant, in his attempt to find a basis for his ethic, came to a conclusion that it can be found only in the autonomy of the will which has to be independent of any empirical determination. Any influence of our social and psychological inclinations leads us to the refusal of freedom and makes our will heteronomous. Therefore we are able to be moral only as participants in a transcendental subject.

Rawls preserves Kant's teaching by detaching it from transcendental idealism and recasting in the new context. His social and political theory is founded on a specific anthropology. The metaphysical essence of a person is not determined by any form of the good, ie by the ends we choose, but consists in our capacity to choose them. The reason for that is very clear: If a conception of the good were a part of my identity, I would try to impose it on others in a society we plan to build behind the veil of ignorance. That is why only the persons who are individuated prior to their ends can construct a just society. So in Rawls's view the autonomy turns out to be our essence.

However his anthropology and his political thought as well induce us to raise some objections to his proposals. Rawls sees a human being in a very abstract and artificial way and such characteristic does not show the truth about ourselves but is used by him to justify liberal principles. Rawls simply constructs a certain notion of the person, which is liberal in its content to convince us that we have to choose to live in a liberal society. If we do not recognise ourselves in his theory of the person and therefore we are reluctant to accept the liberal vision of society, then what?