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## ERIC VOEGELIN'S NEW POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

In *The New Science of Politics* published in 1952, the Austrian-American philosopher Eric Voegelin subjected contemporary social sciences to a smashing criticism.<sup>1</sup> “Scientific” methodology introduced to social sciences by positivism substitutes philosophy with *philodoxy* (love for subjective, “arrogant” opinions), thereby it ruins man’s faculty to comprehend the order of being. The search for *arche* or the (transcendent) source of being – which seemed natural for man of all times and cultures – suddenly becomes irrelevant; and, as a result, it is exiled from the academia. To rediscover the lost order Voegelin put forward the idea of the restoration of philosophy, essentially, through the return to Plato and Aristotle’s notion of philosophy, and through the revelation of divine reality. He attempted to do so in *The New Science of Politics* and various other writings. However, only his monumental *Order and History* seems to realize this grand design.

Voegelin was a giant among twenty-century thinkers and his scholarly legacy is immense. The author of this brief overview of Voegelinian thought approaches this task with great humility and hopes for indulgence of the readers.

### BIBIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Voegelin was born in Cologne, Germany in 1901.<sup>2</sup> Between 1910 and 1938 he lived in Vienna where in 1922 he received a doctorate in political

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<sup>1</sup> The full title is: *The New Science of Politics: An Introduction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). The book grew out of six lectures on “Truth and Representation” given by Voegelin in 1951 at the University of Chicago.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical information is based mostly on Ellis Sandoz’, *The Voegelinian Revolution. A Biographical Introduction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981).

science from Vienna University and where he taught at the faculty of law. In 1928 he published his first important book *Ueber die Form des amerikanischen Geistes* which was the fruit of his studies in the United States (1924–1926). After the experience with the European, especially German, speculative philosophy, America impressed him with its “commonsense philosophy” and “the language of the classics,” the phenomena which then still prevailed in the Anglo-American world.<sup>3</sup> His next books on race and on the authoritarian state (*Rasse und Staat*, 1933) placed him highly on the list of people wanted by the Gestapo; therefore, after the *Anschluss* of Austria he left the country and went to the United States.

In search for a permanent academic position in America, Voegelin moved between several universities, finally settling at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He worked there for years on, as he then thought, his *opus magnum* “The History of Political Ideas,” a small fragment of which was published much later in his book *From Enlightenment to the Revolution*.<sup>4</sup> The project was never completed, for he realized that ideas, beginning with the Stoics, “turned out to be a secondary conceptual development” which “refer to a reality other than the reality experienced.” Subsequently, Voegelin’s interest moved from ideas to historical research. By analysing symbols and myths, and in general all works that articulated and interpreted the past, he attempted to reach back to the reality itself; in other words, to the reality as it truly was, and as it was experienced by man and women who lived through it.<sup>5</sup> Beginning with *The New Science of Politics*, Voegelin’s search for the experienced reality led him to *Order and History*, his ultimate five-volume *opus*. Its completion took Voegelin more than thirty years. The first volume – titled *Israel and Revelation* – came out in 1956; the last, titled *In Search of Order* was published posthumously in 1987.<sup>6</sup>

“The History of Political Ideas” as well as *Order and History* required gigantic erudition, in particular a profound knowledge of the classics. Voegelin achieved it thanks to his life-long habit of working eighteen hours a day, as

<sup>3</sup> R. Eric O’Connor (ed.), *Conversations with Eric Voegelin* (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980), 65.

<sup>4</sup> Edited by John H. Hallowell (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975).

<sup>5</sup> Eric Voegelin, “Autobiographical Memoir,” unpublished transcript of taped interviews (1973), 79–86, quoted by Sandoz, *Voegelinian Revolution*, 80–81.

<sup>6</sup> Eric Voegelin, *Order and History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1956–1987), The titles of the remaining volumes are as follow: II: *The World of Polis*; III: *Plato and Aristotle*; IV: *The Ecumenical Age*.

well as through his mastering Latin, Greek, Hebrew and a dozen of contemporary languages, and through his own original research of primary sources.

In 1958 Voegelin left America for eleven years and went to Germany to be the director of the Institute for Political Science at the University of Munich. His inaugural lectures at Munich, published in 1959 as *Wissenschaft, Politik, und Gnosis* (English translation came out later as *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*), provoked an uproar, comparable to that caused by *The New Science of Politics*. Voegelin angered the academia by his uncompromising, wholesale attack on Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx and Heidegger, and, in fact, on the entire mainstream of modern social sciences.<sup>7</sup> In 1969 Voegelin returned to the United States and, prior to his retirement in 1974, was affiliated to the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. Until his death in 1985 he continued to work his customary eighteen hours a day, which partly explains his polyhistoric erudition.

## VOEGELIN AS A CRITIC

“Nothing beneficial is ever accomplished within the confines of the university,” Voegelin once remarked.<sup>8</sup> In a lengthy interview published in 1980, he expressed the same thought even stronger: “I knew ten years ago that our universities, not only in America but in Europe, were completely rotten: brothels of opinion, no science, nothing.”<sup>9</sup> One should be familiar with Voegelin terminology to fully appreciate his epithet of “brothel of opinion.” Brothel is quite an innocent expression in comparison to opinion. These two quotations illustrate well how uncompromising Voegelin could be against phenomena which he held responsible for the triumph of no-science over science, and of *doxai* (subjective opinion) over wisdom. Positivism was the first to be singled out.<sup>10</sup>

The tremendous development of natural sciences in early modern Europe gave rise to the belief that the methods employed by those sciences could be applicable with equal success to the social sciences. In itself, this was

<sup>7</sup> Eric Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism* (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1968), v.

<sup>8</sup> Fred Lawrence (ed.), *The Beginning and the Beyond: Papers from the Gadamer and Voegelin Conferences* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), 121.

<sup>9</sup> O'Connor, *Conversations*, 110. Voegelin continues that universities in the eighteenth century Europe were in a similar crisis and that then science sought refuge in Royal Academies.

<sup>10</sup> Voegelin, *New Science of Politics*, 1–26.

a “harmless idiosyncrasy,” as Voegelin says. However, in time that belief led to a dangerous assumption that any study of reality have to use exclusively the methods of exact and natural sciences in order to be scientific. Positivism held precisely that view, and it succeeded in imposing them on the academia sometime in the second half of the nineteenth century. Since then, scholarly inquiry either applies these methods or ceases to be considered scholarly (or scientific, as Voegelin preferred to put it). Methods thus become the criterion of what is or is not science. As a result, all phenomena that escape those methods – the metaphysical questions in particular – lost their relevance in any examination aspiring to be scientific.<sup>11</sup>

Yet science, according to the Voegelinian definition, “is a search for truth concerning the nature of the various realms of being,” therefore, “relevant in science is whatever contributes to the success of this search.” Furthermore, each science needs methods that serve best its ends. Mathematics is of little relevance if one searches for the meaning of Plato’s *Republic*. In general, scientific inquiry is a process much more complex than the positivists envisioned. The process of cognition, according to Voegelin, “starts from prescientific existence of man, from his participation in the world with his body, soul, intellect, and spirit, from his primary grip on all the realms of being ... And from this primary cognitive participation ... rises the arduous way, the *methodos*, toward the dispassionate gaze on the order of being in the theoretical attitude.” By contract, positivism rigidly requires specific methods in scholarly research, regardless of its nature and make their use “a criterion for theoretical relevance in general.” It thus perverts the meaning of science and corruptes scholarly research.<sup>12</sup>

The positivistic perversion of social sciences manifests itself in three dimensions, continues Voegelin. First, factualism is promoted to “the dignity of science.” Such attitude brought a gigantic accumulation of “trivialities,” i.e., a fact-oriented scholarly production, produced without any meaningful aim. It serves well the purpose of employing “scientific technicians” but it does not contribute to the development of science. Second, relevant material is examined under defective theories. Such a research results, for example, in discovering Plato as “a constitutionalist, a utopian, a socialist, or a Fascist.” Or it leads to writing history of Western constitutionalism without mentioning its roots in medieval thought. While the factual side of such works can be reliable and useful, the damage is done by interpretation. And finally third,

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<sup>11</sup> Voegelin, *New Science of Politics*, 4–5.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*.

strictly “objective” methodology – that allegedly excludes all “value-judgement” and admits only “judgements concerning facts” – ultimately leads to relativism. Relativism is unavoidable, as Voegelin points out, if we are to neglect the question about “the right order of soul and society” and if we are to judge only facts. In themselves, facts have no relevance. A Marxist and a liberal, though both try to be objective, choose different facts as relevant, and therefore each reaches different conclusions.<sup>13</sup>

Voegelin attacked positivism in the forefront but his real archenemy appeared to be gnosticism.<sup>14</sup> Assaulted already in the final chapters of *The New Science of Politics*, it was thoroughly reexamined and fully unmasked in *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*.

In a search for man’s salvation from the misery of the world, gnosticism, which seems to have always accompanied *zoon politikon*, replaces the Platonic-Aristotelian meaning of *philo-sophia* – the love of wisdom, i.e., the opening of the soul toward the order of being, especially its transcendent source which is never fully discernible, with *gnosis* – knowledge, i.e., the actual cognition of existing reality and dominion over it.<sup>15</sup> *Gnosis* thus overcomes the uncertainty of philosophy. A pre-modern gnostic “theist” did not simply believe in his god or in divine revelation but actually achieved knowledge of god and of divine hidden aims. *Gnosis*, therefore, made him immune to the cataclysms of the world. A modern gnostic atheist, in turn, achieves self-salvation either through his own intellectual potency (for example, Hegel, Shelling) or volitional power (for example, Comte, Marx, Nietzsche, Hitler), or through “an indwelling of divine substance in the human soul.” The first is preoccupied primarily with a speculative penetration of the order of being which goes “beyond the mere love of wisdom, toward real knowledge.” The second, aims mainly at the redemption of mankind through revolutionary activity or at self-liberation. In turn, the third is principally emotional.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, 8–12.

<sup>14</sup> Positivism as well as “progressivism ... Marxism, psychoanalysis, communism, fascism, and national socialism” were an integral part of gnosticism, see E. Voegelin, “Ersatz Religion,” in *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, 83. *New Science of Politics* is less clear in this respect.

<sup>15</sup> Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, 8–20. Voegelin finds the roots of gnosis in different periods. The earliest goes as far as last centuries B.C., while the latest reaches the thirteenth century, see *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, 7–9 and *New Science of Politics*, 110–11.

<sup>16</sup> Voegelin, *New Science of Politics*, 124–25; Ellis Sandoz (ed.), *Eric Voegelin's Thought. A Critical Appraisal* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1982), 190. Voegelin seems to list liberalism and secularism among the third category of modern gnosticism.

Gnostic dogmas are valid only under the condition that the assumptions upon which they are founded are not questioned. Marx, for example, made certain assumptions about nature and man which, as he admitted himself, could not be proven. For Marx, nature does not exist but is in the state of becoming. In that process, nature also “brought forth man.” Man is a part of nature yet he also stands out from it. Through his labor, in particular through technology, industry and science, man assists nature in its development. “In the process of creating nature, ... man at the same time also creates himself to the fullness of his being.” Voegelin claims that the reason for this speculation of Marx “is to shut off the process of being from transcendent being and to have man create himself.”<sup>17</sup> However, if one doubts in the existence of Marxian nature and man without a proof, and – prompted by “the tangible experience” – asks about the origin of nature and the first man, Marx replies that these questions are “a product of abstraction” and orders: “do not question me.”<sup>18</sup> As a consequence all such questions are dismissed as “idle” (Comte) and prohibited (Marx).

According to Voegelin, the process of the prohibition of questions occurs in a gnostic mind in three stages: first, on the surface it can be only a deception or an error. Yet, second, it becomes a self-deception when on a deeper level there appears an awareness of the deception. At this stage a gnostic thinker commits “an intellectual swindle” (Nietzsche, Marx), i.e., he persists in lie in spite of being aware of it. And finally, third, in revolt against God, the will to power (the *libido dominandi*, as Voegelin calls it) stimulates gnostic thinker’s lust for mastering the deception and for making god of himself.<sup>19</sup>

## VOEGELINIAN SOLUTION

There are some realities of which man is conscious inwardly, not through the five senses. Since these realities are experienced internally, and not through sensual perception, their evidence must be given by inward consciousness,

<sup>17</sup> Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, 23–24.

<sup>18</sup> Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, ed. and trans. T.B. Bottomore (New York, 1964), 166, quoted by Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, 24–25. As many other Voegelinian terms, “tangible experience” requires an explanation. Man does not wait for science to have his life explained to him. He himself interprets his own existence by “tangible experience” i.e., by the participation in the world. Only this prescientific cognition leads towards scientific inquiry (*New Science of Politics*, 5).

<sup>19</sup> Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, 33–34.

and not by referring to an outward reality. This proposition does not mean an escape from the world. As Voegelin stresses the relation between consciousness and the experienced reality is not that of the observer, on the one hand, and the observed world, on the other, but that which unifies both in participation in the order of being. In *Anamnesis* Voegelin worked out his theory of consciousness that reflects this fundamentally participatory nature of human mind.<sup>20</sup>

The search for the order of consciousness begins with the realization that we remember what has been forgotten, and we remember it – at times with considerable difficulty – because it should not be forgotten. Meditative process of re-entering into oneself, starting with “the remembrance of the things past” helps one to overcome this difficulty. Such a descent into oneself, achievable only for a philosopher, reveals that consciousness is a process of experiencing; that it has a “biography,” and that “consciousness finds in the order of being ... no level which it does not also experience as its own foundation.”<sup>21</sup> Consequently, the philosopher’s life, the history of his society, of humankind, as well as of universe are experienced as the foundation of his own consciousness. That structure of consciousness makes possible a process leading upward toward the world-transcendent ground of being. Furthermore, such nature of consciousness helps explain why the awareness of divine ground of being is universal in all cultures and societies.<sup>22</sup>

“God and man, world and society form a primordial community of being” says the opening sentence of the *Order and History*.<sup>23</sup>

Man’s role in being is that of a participant. He is thrown into and out of existence without knowing either the why or the how of it. He only knows himself as a participant in the lasting and passing existence ... “Participation is the essence of existence” (*Order and History*, I: 1). In this position of essential ignorance concerning both himself and being, man fastens on the knowledge [which] his experience gives him in seeking to understand the essentially unknowable order of being and his place in it.<sup>24</sup>

The crucial event in the growth of this experience and in breaking with man’s essential ignorance, is the discovery of the transcendent being by the prophets of Israel and by Greek classic philosophy. This breakthrough was subsequently absorbed and perfected by Christianity, while similar discoveries,

<sup>20</sup> Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978.

<sup>21</sup> Voegelin, *Anamnesis*, 11, 14–35, especially 28.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, 32–34.

<sup>23</sup> Voegelin, *Order and History*, I: 1.

<sup>24</sup> Sandoz, *Voegelinian Revolution*, 119.

though less complete, took place in India and China about the same time. Voegelin termed this discovery “the leap in being,” by which he means a great increase in our understanding of the order of being.<sup>25</sup> The tremendous importance of this event becomes clearer if we realize that, in addition to a better understanding of reality, the leap in being was also a decisive step toward man’s “attunement to the truth of being,” which Voegelin views as the most fundamental goal in our life.<sup>26</sup>

Man has always sensed the divine source of being. But the early society and cosmological civilizations, such as Mesopotamian, Egyptian or Chinese, operated on the level of myth that reflected observable order of universe. Universe itself seemed to be of divine nature, and cosmological civilizations viewed themselves “as analogous of cosmic order” and tried to imitate it. Their story of ordering the world includes no speculation “on the principle, the *arche*, of being,” as in Greece, or on transcendent person that created it, as in Israel. Although comprehensive, cosmological account still produces myth, not history. Because its understanding of reality is “compact,” not differentiated – the voice of truth is scarcely audible on such a level – attunement to the truth of being is barely possible within a cosmological civilization.<sup>27</sup>

The leap in being radically separates cosmological civilizations and historical existence. By divine decision, Israel was to become the community that took this leap and that began attunement of a substantially higher degree. It thus substituted myth with history and, at the same time, recorded its own birth “as an event with a special meaning in history.”<sup>28</sup> History, as viewed by Voegelin, is a variety of differentiated “presents” that has occurred in the past as a result of the leap in being. It “creates mankind as the community of men who, through the ages, approach the true order of being that has its origin in God.”<sup>29</sup> However, history that men are making in the process of attunement remains ambiguous. We do not know what we are creating and if we are proceeding on a right path. We cannot produce a meaning of history that could be stored

<sup>25</sup> Voegelin, *Order and History*, I: 235, 405ff, 496; II:1, 8–11, 181, 262; III: 113; cf. Sandoz, *Voegelinian Revolution*, 117–18.

<sup>26</sup> Voegelin, *Order and History*, I: 4–5.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, I: 83; Voegelin, *New Science of Politics*, 54–60. The terms “compact” and “differentiated” can be explained in a following way: “What the music lover hears in a concert is ‘compact’; the conductor hears the same music in the ‘differentiated’ manner.” Thus, something is closed for the individual who lives in a cosmological civilization (Sandoz, *Eric Voegelin’s Thought*, 35).

<sup>28</sup> Voegelin, *Order and History*, I:116, 124.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, I: 128.

and passed on to posterity. No, the meaning of history “reveals a mankind striving for its order of existence within the world while attuning itself with the truth of being beyond the world, and gaining in the process not a substantially better order within the world but an increased understanding of the gulf that lies between immanent existence and the transcendent truth of being.”<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, the multiplicity of historical “presents” does not change the elementary fact that all of them reflect the same truth of being, though on different levels. A differentiated historical present is closer to the order of being than a compact form, yet the former does not entirely abolish the truth of the latter. The relationship between headenism, Judaism and Christianity illustrates this point:

All three of the communities – Christians, Jews, and Gentiles – belonged to one mankind as they all participated in divine order; but the order had been revealed to them in different degrees of clarity, increasing in chronological succession. To the Gentiles the law was revealed through the spectacle of the divine creation; to the Jews through the Covenant and the issuing of a divine, positive command; to the Christians through Christ and the law of the heart. History and its order, thus were established by the measure in which various societies approached to the maximal clarity of divine revelation.<sup>31</sup>

The relationship between compact and differentiated presents has its consequences for Voegelin's notion of history. Man's past does not form a senseless cycle of civilizations turning around in a fortuitous manner but, in its essence, it is the experience of one and the same transcendent order of being. Civilizations are merely products of this experience. Hence, history, as a science, makes sense only if through study of civilizations traces that which is ever lasting – the order of being.

## CONCLUSION

The Voegelinian thought is an entirely unique phenomenon in contemporary social sciences. The complete rejection of their methods and praxis, as principally wrong; the firm refusal of operation according to the canons

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, I: 129.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, I:131. Arnold J. Toynbee (*A Study of History*, 12 vols., London: Oxford University Press, 1935–61) whom Sandoz quotes is more clear in this respect: “Judaism has its own theology of sin and salvation which runs parallel, on the level of ethnic compactness, with the universalist theology of Christianity. This recognition of the parallelism ... does not deny the differences in the levels of truths between Judaism and Christianity” (*Voegelinian Revolution*, 127).

sanctioned by the consensus in the academia, as promoting no-science over science; and the creation of “a new science of politics,” founded upon the Jewish revelation, the Greek classic philosophy and the early Christian thought, constitute its uniqueness.

Positivistic methodology doomed to non-existence all phenomena that are not empirically experienced. The adoption of methods proper to natural sciences resulted in a huge outpouring of “trivialities.” Driven by the *libido dominandi*, the big egos of various shades built, in turn, a gnostic salvation for mankind. Voegelin was uncompromising in showing the consequences of this state of the social sciences. Trivialities as well as great gnostic systems separate mankind from the transcendent being, prevent man and women from the attunement to it, and thus threaten us with a three-thousand-year lapse, back into a cosmological civilization.

Voegelin was outspoken in holding gnostic thinkers responsible for the hell which they have already assisted in creating on earth. By rejecting the transcendent order and replacing it with gnostic systems, they rendered a great service to communist and nazi tyrannies.

With the help of scientific technicians, the vindictive gods of the academic pantheon doomed Voegelin to scholarly oblivion from where, however, his thought does not cease to emerge as a refraction of “the flash of eternity into time.”

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## SUMMARY

The article shortly presents the silhouette and views of an Austrian-American political philosopher Eric Voegelin, who is not well known in Poland. Voegelin radically questioned the methods and practices used in the modern social sciences. The great development of exact sciences in the time of scientific revolution led to a belief that the methods used in those sciences can be successfully used in social sciences. In the course of time, the view eliminated other methods and acknowledged experience, inductive concluding and mathematical logics as the only acceptable methods in scientific research. Positivism made the methods the only criteria of scholarship and all the fields that did not use them were expelled from the area of science.

According to Voegelin, science requires the use of such methods that are adequate to the nature of scientific examination (mathematics is for example not very useful in the analysis of *The Republic* by Plato). A man wants to know but does not get to know the reality as an external observer but as a participant. A man gets to know some fragments of the reality not in an empiric way but through internal consciousness and meditation. The history of humanity is a process of "attunement" of human cognition to the existing order of existence. The consciousness of a transcendental source of existence has always accompanied a man. Originally, a man finds a reflection of an existence order in a cosmological civilization. A leap in being towards the existing order takes place in Israel through revelation and finishes in Christianity. This makes a man give up a myth for the benefit of history. Science is to help in the attunement to the order of existence and its transcendental source.

## STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł pokrótce prezentuje sylwetkę i poglądy mało znanego w Polsce austriacko-amerykańskiego filozofa politycznego Eryka Voegelina. Voegelin w radykalny sposób zakwestionował metody i praktyki stosowane w nowożyt-

nych naukach społecznych. Olbrzymi rozwój nauk przyrodniczych i ścisłych w okresie rewolucji naukowej doprowadził do przekonania, że metody używane w tych naukach mogą być z powodzeniem stosowane w naukach społecznych. Z czasem pogląd ten wykluczył inne metody i uznał doświadczenie, indukcyjne wnioskowanie oraz zmatematyzowaną logikę za jedyne metody dopuszczalne w naukowym badaniu. Pozytywizm uczynił z tych metod kryterium naukowości i niestosujące je dziedziny usunął poza obszar nauki. To zaś doprowadziło do wypaczenia nauki.

Według Voegelina, nauka wymaga stosowania takich metod, które odpowiadają naturze badania (matematyka jest np. mało przydatna do analizy *Państwa* Platona). Człowiek chce wiedzieć. Rzeczywistość poznaje jednak nie jako zewnętrznego obserwatora, ale jako uczestnika. Niektóre fragmenty rzeczywistości poznaje nie empirycznie, ale poprzez wewnętrzną świadomość i medytację. Historia ludzkości to proces „dostrajania” się (*attunement*) ludzkiego poznania do istniejącego porządku bytu. Świadomość transcendentnego źródła bytu towarzyszy człowiekowi od zawsze. Pierwotnie człowiek odnajduje odzwierciedlenie porządku bytu w kosmologicznej cywilizacji. Skok ku prawdzie (*leap in being*) w kierunku istniejącego ładu dokonuje się w Izraelu poprzez objawienie i dopełnia się w chrześcijaństwie. To prowadzi człowieka do porzucenia mitu na rzecz historii. Nauka ma pomagać mu w dalszym dostrajaniu się do porządku bytu i jego transcendentnego źródła.

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Статья кратко представляет личность и мировоззрение мало известного в Польше австрийско-американского философа-политика Эрика Фёгелина. Фёгелин радикальным образом подверг сомнению методы и практики, применяемые в современных общественных науках. Гигантское развитие естественных и точных наук в период научной революции привёл к убеждению, что методы, используемые в этих учениях, могут быть успешно приняты в общественных науках. Со временем это убеждение исключило другие методы, и Фёгелин выдвинул эксперимент, индуктивный вывод, а также математическую логику как единственные допустимые в научном исследовании. Для позитивизма из данных методов создал критерий научности, и не применяемые их отрасли выставил за пределы науки. Привело это к искажению понятия науки.

Согласно Фёгелину, наука требует применения таких методов, которые отвечают природе исследования (от математики, напр, мало пользы для ана-

лиза *Государств* Платона). Человек хочет знать. Однако действительность он познаёт не как внутренний наблюдатель, а как участник. Некоторые фрагменты действительности изучаемы им не эмпирически, а посредством внутреннего сознания и медитации. История человечества – это процесс «настройки» (*attunement*) человеческого познания на существующий порядок вещей. Сознание трансцендентального источника бытия сопутствует человеку всегда. Первоначально человек находит отражение порядка вещей в цивилизации космоса. Прыжок к правде (*leap in being*) в сторону существующего порядка совершается в Израиле путём явления и дополнено в христианстве. Ведёт это человека к отказу от мифа в пользу истории. Наука призвана помогать ему в дальнейшей настройке на порядок вещей и его трансцендентальный источник.