

EFFICIENCY, RELATIONS AND SALVATION

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1. Efficient medicine directed towards the body as object

- *The foundation: anatomy*
- *At the heart of the approach,
the search for efficiency*
- *The result: efficiency and frustration*

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- *The result: efficiency and frustration*

When the sick person is sent to the doctor or when he visits the doctor, don't say that he expects his healing pure and simple. He puts the doctor to the test of getting him out of his condition of being a sick person, which is completely different as it may imply that he is absolutely attached to the idea of keeping it [i.e. that condition].. J. Lacan

2. Therapeutic strategies acknowledging lived experience

- *The foundation: relationship*
- *Recognition, with its ambiguities*

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Efficiency, relations and salvation

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2. Therapeutic strategies acknowledging lived experience

- *Recognition with its ambiguities*

Sometimes he comes to us in order ask us to certify him as being sick; in many other cases he comes, quite plainly, asking you to maintain him in his illness, to treat him in a manner convenient for him, one which will allow him to continue being a sick person well-set in his illness.

J. Lacan, "La place de la psychanalyse dans la médecine",
lecture at the La Salpêtrière Medical College, February 16, 1966

2. Therapeutic strategies acknowledging lived experience

- *Recognition with its ambiguities*

1. The patient is looking for someone who will "get them out of their condition of being a sick person". This suggests that in some situations patients are aware that they cannot come out alone.

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2. Because the patient's request may be, according to Lacan, to "certify him as being sick". That is to say not to receive therapeutic action aimed at making the illness stop, but a response on the level of *recognition*.

Efficiency, relations and salvation

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- *Recognition with its ambiguities*

"O Lord, God and my salvation, when, at night, I
cry out in your presence ..."

Psalm 88:1

New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition.

Efficiency, relations and salvation

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3. Finally, let us note that Lacan speaks of "a sick person well-set in his illness".

It does not seem to me that this expression necessarily has to be understood as the inertia of a patient who refuses to regain their health because their illness brings them benefits. It is also possible to understand that it is necessary for the subject to be "kept *in* his illness". Illness does indeed involve this great danger, almost as serious as putting life at risk: it can take the place of the subject's identity.

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"If you love God and are sick 'In God's name'; if your friend dies 'In God's name'; if he loses an eye 'in God's name,' with such a man it would indeed be well. But if you are sick and pray to God for health, then health is dearer to you than God, and He is not your God."

Meister ECKHART, Sermon 10
Moyse orabat Dominum Suum

2. Therapeutic strategies acknowledging lived experience

- *Recognition with its ambiguities*

"If God is with me in my suffering, what more do I want, what else do I want?"

Meister ECKHART,
The Book of Divine Consolation, II

Efficiency, relations and salvation

Conclusion

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In this field of research, theology can bring its competency and heritage in two areas:

Firstly, the impasse in which current medicine finds itself invites us to revisit Aristotelian-Thomistic *hylomorphism* which constitutes a particularly rich and fruitful mode of representing the human being. For it does not reject the dualism that the scientific approach needs, but at the same time avoids reducing the human being to mere matter.

Conclusion

Secondly, the *Christian conception of salvation* can clarify and temper medicine's incessant quest for rescue. By recognizing only one saviour, Christ, we can acknowledge the need to be liberated, to be brought out of misfortune, while also affirming that no human being can secure this for another person. Therapists, like priests, can only consider themselves assistants in salvation, participants in their own way in the dynamics of liberation.

Conclusion

Considered by Scripture as a sign of salvation and not as an end in itself, physical healing is relativized by the Christian faith, relativized in the noble sense of establishing relationship. It is not an absolute; it can be the sign, or the experience of a reality that greatly surpasses it and which is man's ultimate liberation.

Thank you for attention !