

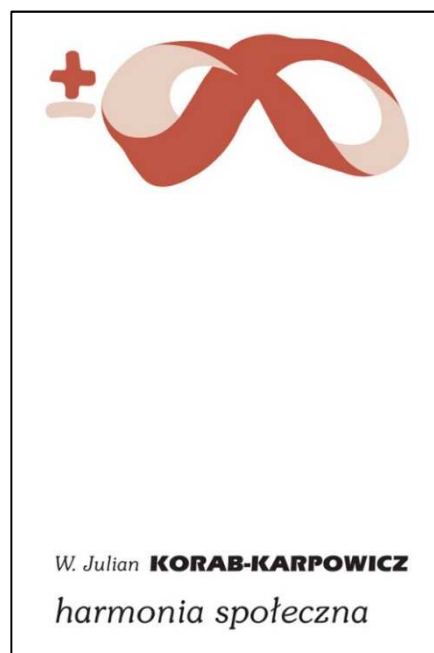
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**REVIEW OF THE BOOK BY
W. JULIAN KORAB-KARPOWICZ, *SOCIAL HARMONY
OR PRINCIPLES OF A HAPPY SOCIETY
(HARMONIA SPOŁECZNA CZYLI ZASADY
SZCZĘŚLIWEGO SPOŁECZEŃSTWA).*
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W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz is a philosopher and political thinker, professor of the University of Opole. He has also taught at many universities abroad, among others, the State University of Texas in San Marcos and the Zayed University in Dubai. He is a prolific writer, who has published several books.

His notable achievement is *Tractatus Politico-Philosophicus: New Directions for the Future Development of Humankind* (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017a). This work like Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* is written in numbered paragraphs. In order to make his *Tractatus* more accessible to general reader, Professor Korab-Karpowicz has then published the monograph entitled *Harmonia Społeczna* (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017b). It was printed by PIW, one of the leading publishers in Poland. Like *Tractatus Politico-Philosophicus*, *Social Harmony* is a work of normative political theory. It presents a vision of the good state and a happy society.

As the author writes, the monograph is a desire to confirm that "cooperation is an integral part of human nature, and when we properly recognize our human nature and organize our environment according to the principle of cooperation, we can arrive at



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a world of social harmony” (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017b) And as the author claims, this harmony “brings about a happy society” (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017b).

The book is characterized by a well thoughtful, and at the same time extremely functional division of the content. It consists of four parts, a valuable introduction and the ending that organizes the vision. These are successively: part one “A man, culture, civilization”, part two – “Principles of a happy society”, part three “A happy society and a good state”, and part four “Human evolution and quantum theory.”

In the first part, which consists of seven chapters, the author introduces the following topics: “The concept of civilization,” “Who is the human,” “Cooperation as the first principle of humanity,” “Diversity and social classes”, “Today's conflicts and their solution”, “Reality and happiness” and he concludes this part with a reflection on a “Harmonious and happy community.” The second part consists of the “Introduction – What is Politics?” and of seven chapters that describe the principles of a happy society. These are “Collaboration,” “Justice and social balance,” “Leaders’ wisdom and citizens’ virtues,” “A proper education,” “The right laws,” “Political knowledge” and “The continuity of generations”. The third part of the book, in which the idea of a good state is discussed, consists of six chapters, which constitute a coherent whole. These are: “Organic and artificial state,” “The State: definition and characteristics,” “The Good state and its criteria,” “The Good state and its political system,” “The real and outward democracy,” “The Good state and a happy society.” The fourth part presents a vision of “Human evolution” and “A new world picture”. The book is concluded by a proposal of “The new politics”. One important concept is that of evolutionity. Like in his *Tractatus*, Professor Korab-Karpowicz postulates that we need to transit from the largely conflicting postmodern times to a new evolutionary age, in which humans would engage in a conscious transformation toward moral and intellectual improvement (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017b).

The author refers to ancient ideas such as the golden mean, political community, happiness as values, and at the same time the purpose of existence and rationality of an action and puts them into a contemporary context. These ideas are not only beautiful but also timeless. Contemporary eudaimonia, according to the author, may be based on the principle that “everyone has an opportunity for self-realization, while respecting the self-realization of others” (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017a). And although self-realization should be expressed most fully in “moral and intellectual perfection” (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017a), which is an evolutionary goal, there should be no social consent to impose the path of such development on anyone. Members of the community work together on the basis of respect and mutual understanding. The aim of *Social Harmony* is to make the reader aware that harmonious relationships, based on the idea of cooperation, is a sine qua non condition for the good life of each of us.

The human being as a rational, moral and free being has evolutionary capacities. We are not finished beings yet. Since civilization is ultimately based on our abilities to recognize moral values, according to the author, “the proof of human moral development is the gradual moral improvement of humans, which is expressed in social life” (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017b). And while we seem to have made a huge leap in the development of the idea of freedom and our intellectual capacities that are paralleled by scientific and technological achievements, some ethicists may have doubts about our progress on the moral ground. Hence, as we develop our civilizations, without being fully aware about our evolutionary capacities, we may move forward or we may fall. It is true that the tools we use every day

will change, but breaking the moral rules is as tempting now as it was a thousand years ago, and the words of Ovid seem to be invariably relevant.

Prof. Korab-Karpowicz appears to rely largely on some Aristotelian ideas, such as *eudaimonia* (Korab-Karpowicz, 2017b). He stresses the importance of virtue and emphasizes that politics cannot be separated from ethics. In a happy society, political leaders should represent wisdom and the highest moral values. It seems that this thought should especially guide all those who see themselves in the political life of societies.

The enormous optimism that characterizes the author's vision that virtue can still be achieved in contemporary politics is a rare and noteworthy phenomenon today. However, this is not an uncritical optimism. He indicates the possibility of human growth and decline. He stresses the importance of human potential for development and proposes the principles that a happy society of the future should strive for. As he writes, this vision of a better world is not revolutionary but evolutionary. While appreciating the value of tradition and religion which are to constitute a solid foundation, we need to engage in a conscious evolution and in an improvement of our life conditions.

Perhaps in the opinion of some readers, this publication presents a social utopia, but for me it is a beautiful normative vision that respects the otherness of others and can inspire us. In my opinion the only missing things are references to the animal world. Animals, although we have long entered the 21st century, are still treated more as things in communities than as sentient beings. Perhaps, this will be another part of the study that the author is preparing for his readers.

It seems obvious that W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz's book entitled *Social Harmony* will find a wide audience, not only among philosophers, politicians and social researchers, but also among the so-called ordinary, socially sensitive and engaged readers. The book has now been translated to Arabic and published in UAE. It deserves to be widely known and studied.

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