

JACEK WOJTYSIAK

GOD AND CHANCE*

Theological compatibilism claims that the existence of God is compatible with the occurrence of chance events in the world.¹ In his valuable paper “Divine Providence and Chance in the World”² (2020), Dariusz Łukasiewicz endorses a version of compatibilism in which chance events are considered as a part of the divine plan. Moreover, going against the dominant trend, the picture of God proposed by Łukasiewicz retains such divine attributes as the capacity to intervene directly in the course of events in the world and omniscience. The only component of the classical idea of God Łukasiewicz *de facto* denies is the thesis that “everything was *directly* created by God and is under His constant and total control” (Łukasiewicz 2020, 28).

I believe that Łukasiewicz’s view, however attractive, is not entirely coherent and that his *only* deviation from classical theism leads to consequences which a consistent theist would find difficult to accept. I attempt to demonstrate this (section 2) and propose, in this connection, an alternative model that may be employed to formulate and solve the problem of *God and Chance* (sections 3–4). I begin, however, with an analysis of the concept of chance events (section 1). The analysis thereof is of key importance to the issue discussed here, while Łukasiewicz’s

JACEK WOJTYSIAK, Prof. Dr Hab., Department of Theory of Knowledge, Faculty of Philosophy, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin; address for correspondence: Al. Raławickie 14, 20-950 Lublin; e-mail: wojtys@kul.pl. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4276-8483>.

* The present article was written as part of the project funded by the Minister of Science and Higher Education under the program called “Regional Initiative of Excellence” 2019–2022; project no. 028/RID/2018/19.

¹ Theological compatibilism was originally associated with the issue of free human action. I shall not address this question here except for a few remarks. However, there certainly is an affinity between the problem of the relationship found between God and chance and the problem of the relationship of God to human freedom.

² This paper is based on Łukasiewicz’s excellent book (2014). I shall not, however, refer to the book, as it is available only in Polish and differs from the cited article in its scope and emphasis.

proposal to distinguish different meanings of the term *chance* is a particularly original and important contribution to discussions concerning chance.

1. AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS OF CHANCE

Dariusz Łukasiewicz distinguishes six varieties of chance events, or six meanings of the term *chance event*. Let us examine them in detail.

First, a chance event is an event in the sense (C_1),³ that is, “an event lacking any detectable cause or causal explanation” (Łukasiewicz 2020, 6). Referring to science, Łukasiewicz posits that such events exist. This means that, in his view, “there are truly causeless events in the world, i.e. events which are not caused by God or other supernatural agents (if such agents exist), or by any natural factors, and for which there is no causal explanation” (p. 16). I shall try to challenge this strong assumption (section 2).

Second, a chance event is a C_2 event: “an event which is not intended or willed by any personal agent (a divine agent included)” (p. 6). It seems that every C_1 event is also a C_2 event. However, Łukasiewicz defends the view that C_1 events may be part of the divine plan, and so they may be non- C_2 events, that is events intended by God in some way. To state this problem more precisely, I propose to distinguish two meanings of the verb *intend*. In the first sense, someone intends something when they (directly or indirectly) want to make the occurrence of something; while in the second sense, someone intends something when they wish or permit something to occur, whether or not they can influence its occurrence in any way. In claiming that C_1 events are part of God’s plan, Łukasiewicz probably has the second meaning in mind, as it is impossible that anyone should intend, in the sense of *willing to cause*, C_1 , i.e., an event which occurs without being in any way caused by anything or anyone. Apparently, Łukasiewicz’s view is coherent only if we use the term *intend* (and/or similar terms) in its weak or nonstandard sense. One may agree that causeless events are part of the divine plan. However, the key role in this plan is played by factors on which the designer cannot exert any influence.

Third, a chance event is a C_3 event: “an event unpredictable for any mind operating and existing in time” (p. 6). Łukasiewicz suggests that “the existence of C_1 may entail C_3 because events which have no causal explanation are unpredictable also for God if He exists in time” (p. 19). However, since Łukasiewicz accepts God’s timelessness, he may also accept that C_1 events, although unpre-

³ Further, I will speak of a “ C_n event,” instead of an “event in the sense (C_n).”

dictable to ordinary subjects, are not unpredictable to God. Strictly speaking, to say that an event is predictable, or unpredictable, to God is to commit a category mistake, because to timeless God all events are known regardless of time intervals.⁴ With some simplification, it may be claimed that all events, even supposed C_1 events, are non- C_3 events to the classically conceived God. One of the consequences of this fact seems serious and I shall return to it later (section 2): if being a C_1 event entails being a C_3 event, and every event is a non- C_3 event to God, then every event is also a non- C_1 event to God.

Fourth, a chance event is a C_4 event: “a pointless event, lacking any conceivable meaning or purpose” (p. 6). If purpose is understood in an anthropomorphic fashion, it is obvious that every C_1 —being, by necessity, simultaneously a C_2 event (in the standard sense) and a C_3 event—is also a C_4 event. This is because a purpose may be given to an event only if an event is initiated by an intentionally acting and forward-looking agent. If, however, as we have observed, a C_1 event may be, in a certain sense, intended by God (i.e., to be non- C_2) and may be, in a certain sense, predicted by Him (i.e., to be non- C_3), why should we not assume that a C_1 event may also be, in a certain sense, purposeful to God (i.e., to be non- C_4)? In his paper, Łukasiewicz gradually reduces the number of meanings in which certain events are chance events to God. In his conclusions, the only meanings left are (C_1) and (C_4). The former, which I find doubtful (see section 2), is clear: the author posits that C_1 events exist. The latter seems inconsistent: if the author allows causeless events to be designed and predicted by God, why does Łukasiewicz fail to admit that to God they may have a purpose? *Nota bene*, Łukasiewicz points to this purpose himself when discussing “the emergence of complex, functionally well-organized structures” (p. 15), as well as the emergence of some positive metaphysical qualities such as diversity, equality, flexibility, etc.⁵ The events in question are like a stone which lacks purpose in itself, but may be purposefully used.

Fifth, a chance event may be a C_5 event: “an event whose probability is very small” (p. 6). Łukasiewicz connects this meaning of chance event with the meanings he analysed earlier. However, the reason why he does so remains unclear. Neither does he explain how he calculates the probability of events. Personally,

⁴ To assume that C_1 events are knowable to God, it suffices to assume that all events are *simultaneously* present to one divine *now* (conceived in any way) and, perhaps, are “understood” by God as known to us or experienced by us in a certain time order. See Łukasiewicz (2018, 123–25, 131–32) and Wojtysiak (2018, 172–78). Tkaczyk (2018) has suggested, in a broader context, a different solution to this problem.

⁵ The list may be completed and expanded. See Collins (2009, 244–53).

I believe that if there are causeless C_1 events, then it is impossible to calculate the probability of their occurrence. To do this we would need to know either their causes (there are none) or the number of such events in proportion to the number of all events (we have no such knowledge). Therefore, I suggest leaving the concept of (C_5) out of further considerations. I shall replace it (section 3) with a related, yet different concept of randomness. Now, I only wish to observe that if we include among unlikely events, in the sense of occurring infrequently, miracles or lucky coincidences (happening to people), then, in the theistic worldview, such events may be intended by and predictable to God and may also have a purpose set by Him. Some of these events may also be said not to have a natural cause. It is, however, impossible to claim that they have no cause whatsoever, including supernatural causes.

Sixth, a chance event may be a C_6 event: one which is “a coincidence of two or more causal chains” (p. 6). Let us observe that a set of C_1 events and a set of C_6 events are disjoint sets, since a C_1 event has no causes, while a C_6 event has numerous ones. Let us also observe that among type C_6 events, events may be both unintended and intended, unpredictable and predictable, purposeless and purposeful, and events of lower or higher degrees of probability. My understanding of a text that reaches me simultaneously through a vocal causal chain (from an audio recording) and through a visual causal chain (from a book) may be an example of an event described by the second items in the listed pairs. For this reason, I leave the meaning of (C_6) out of my further considerations. The occurrence of C_6 events is an interesting problem, but (as indirectly admitted by Łukasiewicz in part 3 of the discussed text) this presents no challenge to a theist.

Summing up the above analysis, the following must be stated. Dariusz Łukasiewicz posits the existence of C_1 events (causeless events). If an event is a C_1 event, it is also a C_2 , C_3 , and C_4 event (in the standard sense), in other words, it is unintended, unpredictable, and purposeless. I do not include the meanings (C_5) and (C_6) as unrelated to the main subject of my considerations. On the other hand, due to His epistemic and ontic status, the classically conceived God knows every event, even a C_1 event. Moreover, God may will such events to occur or permit events on which He has no influence to occur. God may also see in such a situation (or give to such a situation) a certain purpose or purposes. In other words, causeless events may be in a way (in a nonstandard sense) intended by God, predictable, and purposeful to Him—they may be C_1 events, but also non- C_2 , non- C_3 , and non- C_4 events. However, do C_1 events exist?

2. DO CAUSELESS EVENTS EXIST?

For Dariusz Łukasiewicz, the existence of causeless events is a kind of dogma, allegedly confirmed by science: “Contemporary science is the best source of knowledge available to us about the world we live in, and it tells us that chance [including C_1 (causeless)—JW] events do happen in the world ... e.g., on the quantum level, there is a radioactive decay of atoms” (Łukasiewicz 2020, 5, 15).

Yet the question of causeless events is not so obvious. In analysing scientific data, a philosopher of physics or an ontologist may choose from four ways of interpreting a situation in which one cannot identify the cause of a given event:

- (i) the event may be considered causeless;
- (ii) it can be supposed that there exist hidden factors which have caused the event in question, but they are undetectable in the framework of our present cognitive capacities (or currently available theories);
- (iii) it may be assumed that the event has a cause in a sense different from the one to which we are accustomed;
- (iv) it may be considered that the event as falling into a category to which the concepts of “cause” or “causelessness” cannot be applied (as the concepts of evenness or oddness cannot be applied to the colour red).

Łukasiewicz does not explain why he prefers (i) over (ii)–(iv). Personally, I opt for approach (iii). Our “macroscopic” cognitive habits make us inclined to define cause as a factor which *entails* the occurrence of a certain event. However, there are situations (accessible not only to science, but also to everyday knowledge) where cause could be defined as a factor which *does not entail* the occurrence of a given event, but without which the event in question *would not occur* or *could not have occurred*. Throwing a (sufficiently heavy) stone at a glass pane entails the breaking of the pane, while throwing a die does not entail rolling the number six. Yet without our throwing of a die, the face with the number six would not have appeared and could not have appeared. Regardless of whether type one or type two events are more frequent in nature and social life, the second definition of cause is more inclusive (the first definition is a particular instance of the second one) and therefore should be used in our analyses.⁶ In using this definition, we considerably reduce the scope of causeless events, and even eliminate them altogether.

⁶ See Lewis (1986, 23): “ C is a cause of E ,” when it is true that “if C had not occurred, E would not have occurred either.” Lewis is the most important advocate of the counterfactual theory of causation. He believes the theory in question avoids a number of problems related to causation and best reflects our intuitions of causation.

As we can see, there are conceptual-ontological grounds to deny the existence of causeless events or at least to doubt that they occur.⁷ I also believe that in the cases where science and philosophy do not give a clear solution to a problem, a theist has a right to choose a solution which is acceptable to science and philosophy and, at the same time, is the most compatible with the doctrine he or she upholds. To reject the claim that causeless events exist is to choose such a solution. On the contrary, the acceptance of this claim implies a picture of the world in which there are events which have not been created by God. Such events are supposed to have *no* (either direct or indirect) cause. On this view, God would be the creator of *some*—but not of *all*—beings outside Himself. Thus, God is not *the creator of the world* in the strict sense of the term. The extent of the consequences of the adoption of the idea of an *incomplete creator* for theism is open to debate. It is unarguable, however, that a theism espousing such an idea would be a *limited* or *truncated* theism. A God who is supposed to reckon with what He permits, while being unable to exert any influence upon it, cannot be the all-powerful director of the course of the world, but rather performs the role of a participant and player. In this way, God's ontic position is weakened.

To illustrate the consequences of Łukasiewicz's view, I shall devise a thought experiment. Let us imagine that the world consists only of causeless events. Let us further assume that God permitted the existence of such events, knows them very well, and gives them a purpose. Would the inhabitants of such a world be able to reach, in a natural way, the conclusion that God exists? To be sure, they could not do so through employing a cosmological argument or any other argument that refers to causal relations. The inhabitants of this imagined world might be able to acquire knowledge of God by following a variation of the ontological argument. It is doubtful, however, that they would identify "something than which nothing greater can be conceived" with a person who is an omniscient subject and who has permitted the existence of the world, but who has not created it. I believe that the residents of Łukasiewicz's world are in a similar, albeit less extreme, situation. The world in question consists of events created by God and also events He merely permitted. The former events can provide a basis for the causal argument for the existence of God the Creator. However, the identification of such a creator with "something than which nothing greater can be conceived" is made doubtful by the existence of the latter.

⁷ I disregard here other arguments for the principle of causality or, more broadly speaking, the principle of (sufficient) reason. I have analyzed this principle and the objections against it in a paper (Wojtysiak, 2007). Despite the difficulties I have discussed, my analyses make me feel inclined to accept the general validity of the principle of causality.

The above considerations lead to the conclusion that to reject the existence of causeless events is a better strategy for the theist than to formulate constructs similar to the one proposed by Dariusz Łukasiewicz. He is aware that being a C_1 event entails being a C_2 – C_4 event. But, if C_2 – C_4 events are *de facto* nonexistent to God, then C_1 events should also be nonexistent to Him. In order to maintain the conception of C_1 events that are not C_2 – C_4 events to God, one must understand the latter in a particular fashion. I admire those analyses of Łukasiewicz which point to *such* an understanding. I believe, however, that the intellectual construct we have thus obtained is too complicated. The fact that this construct is conducive to a *truncated* version of theism is another disadvantage.

3. RANDOMNESS AND GOD

My criticism of Dariusz Łukasiewicz's view does not mean that I do not appreciate the importance of the problem he has posed. I believe, however, that this problem should be reformulated. I admit the existence of events, being troublesome to ontology and theology, that resemble C_1 – C_6 events but cannot be reduced to them. These are random events, which I define as follows:

An event e is a random event iff e belongs to a set E of possible events which complies with the following conditions jointly: (i) the operation (or occurrence) of cause c entails the occurrence of one of the elements of set E ; (ii) the operation (or occurrence) of cause c does not entail the occurrence of any definite element of set E ; (iii) a given element of set E has the same (or similar) chance of occurring—under the influence of cause c operating (or occurring)—as any other element of this set.

Condition (i) is the effectiveness condition: one event (one lot) will occur; condition (ii) is the indeterminacy condition: nothing determines in advance that a given event (lot) will happen; condition (iii) is the equality condition: the chances of any event (lot) occurring are the same. Perhaps condition (iii) is met only in ideally random events, while the chances of occurrence of really random events are not equal. Among the latter, a greater probability of some events does not preclude, however, the occurrence of others. In addition, the above conditions suggest that c is a cause in the broad sense of this term: c does not entail the occurrence of a definite e , but e would not occur without c .

As we can see, random events are not C_1 events, although they are C_2 – C_4 events (unless we conceive intentionality, predictability, or purposefulness in a nonstandard manner). Besides, random events do not have to be C_6 events. Nor do they have to be C_5 events: equality of chances does not necessarily imply a very low

probability (in a two-element set E , the probability of the occurrence of either of its elements is $\frac{1}{2}$).

Since the existence of random events is indubitable, a theist should pose the question of these events' relationship to God. If physical events are direct causes (in a broad sense) of random events, then God is the indirect cause of these events. This would mean that in using physical causes, God does, to reverse Einstein's famous maxim, *play dice*. But does God really play dice?

According to Łukasiewicz, *God does play dice*. Moreover, He wants to do this and (as I have attempted to show—see section 1) gives the results of this activity a purpose. And although the results are unpredictable to any subject existing in time,⁸ God (because of His unique position with respect to time) knows them.

Let us observe that such an interpretation of Łukasiewicz's view, unlike its literal interpretation (see section 2), does not undermine the idea of God as the creator of all real events. The consequence of this interpretation, however, is the necessity to distinguish between events created in a standard way and events created randomly. The latter, in view of the indeterminacy condition (ii), impose a certain limitation on God. So understood, God is the creator, but not the Lord, of all events, as there are events that elude His governance and control. What would be our idea of God if, to propose a modified version of the thought experiment described in section 2 of this paper, the world were composed exclusively of events created randomly?⁹ We certainly would not identify such a creator with "something than which nothing greater can be conceived." Perhaps we would be ready to admit such an identification if the world contained, apart from numerous events created in a standard way, only one event created randomly. Yet it is possible to conceive of a more perfect creator than the one who *played dice* just once. As Flint (2009, 273) wrote, "A God who (*pace* Einstein) does play dice with the universe, at least with free macro-objects if not with undetermined micro-ones, is more to be pitied than acclaimed."

⁸ Or they are predictable for such a subject, but in a purely probabilistic or statistical fashion. *Nota bene*, "in our mathematics, randomness cannot be identified with complete and absolute lack of rules" (Grabowski 2019, 158). Incidentally, Grabowski (2020, 205) suggests that the *probabilistic theism* proposed by Łukasiewicz does not actually concern probability, but rather chance or randomness.

⁹ My thought experiment should be distinguished from the one proposed by Daniel and Frances Howard-Snyder (1994, 260–68). In the latter, a perfect (unsurpassable) being, while choosing a world to create, uses a device (a lot-casting machine) that selects randomly from an infinite number of good possible worlds. One of the morals of this experiment might be the following: although the world selected in such a way might be better than a consciously chosen one, a conscious (personally made and controlled) choice is certainly not worse (or is even better) than a choice made by a "randomizing procedure."

As we can see, the modified version of Łukasiewicz's view still places a limitation, albeit in a more subtle way, on the ontic position of God. This limitation is, in fact, of no practical importance to us, because, according to the view discussed here, random events are the means which lead to the emergence of an (secondary in terms of time or structure) order. Besides, God, thanks to His capacity to intervene, can perhaps *correct* the negative effects of random events. However, the concept proposed by Łukasiewicz allows for the existence of sections of space-time that are not fully controlled by God. How are we then to solve the problem of the relationship between God and random events without imposing such a limitation on God?

The solution I propose rests on three principles:

- (1) The principle of simultaneous concurrence: "God acts, not *on*, but *with* the secondary cause to produce its effect" (Moreland and Craig 2003, 563).
- (2) The principle of complementarity: an effect of the simultaneous action of God and a secondary cause bears the stamp of them both, and therefore can be a non-random effect if seen from one perspective and a random effect if seen from the other.
- (3) The principle of middle knowledge: God knows all possible combinations of random events (all possible results of *dice games*) in any given set of circumstances and, from the perspective of His design, chooses to actualize the best of these combinations.

Principle (1) is defended by some Thomists.¹⁰ Principle (2) is a paraphrase of Niels Bohr's physics principle (related to wave-particle duality). Principle (3) is a paraphrase of Luis de Molina's principle when applied to free human action. In virtue of the primary principle of middle knowledge: "God knows what any free creature *would* do in any set of circumstances" (Moreland and Craig 2003, 562), while in virtue of the paraphrase proposed here, God knows which random event *would* appear in any set of circumstances (random causes). Thus, thanks to middle knowledge of both types, "God (...) knows that were he to actualize certain states of affairs, then certain other contingent states of affairs would obtain" (Moreland and Craig 2003, 563).

Applying the three above principles jointly, one can devise the following model of God's action in the world.

God is active in the world through employing intra-worldly secondary causes. These causes are God's *tools*, and, as any tools, they contribute, in a real and

¹⁰ The principle of simultaneous concurrence can be found in the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. Its content, however, is subject to debate among Thomists. See Kretzmann (1988, 201) and Freddoso (1994, 131–33, 142–51).

original fashion, to the occurrence of an effect and the character thereof.¹¹ Among the causes God employs to (co)act are ones that can produce effects only in a random way. Therefore, subsequent effects must have a random aspect or, considered from the intra-worldly perspective, must be described as random effects. However, the divine aspect is superimposed over this intra-worldly aspect (or perspective): God as the Creator and Lord of everything cannot act in a random way. Thus, out of all possible distributions of random events, He has chosen (or, more precisely, chooses extra-temporally) the scenario that best suits His providential plan. To God, the status of random events is similar to that of free human choices.¹² God does not predetermine them but permits them and helps them to be. God's (co)causation of human choices and random events, and His permitting them to be, does not concern all possible choices and random events, but only those that fit into God's design. The design in question allows for freedom and randomness as good in themselves, and also for bad choices and bad accidents (lots) as conditions for the occurrence of higher goods. God is the only author of this design or plan and thus it is He who chooses, from various (more or less autonomous or spontaneous) possibilities, which elements to include in the designed whole, instead of conforming to the real elements which He finds.¹³

¹¹ In a manner different from Łukasiewicz, I prefer to explain the principle of concurrence through the analogy of a tool, instead of a literary work of art. God acts employing real, and not fictitious, beings. As to the causal contribution of a tool, I propose a still different analogy: Grass may be cut with a knife, a pair of scissors, a scythe, a lawn mower, or a robot (perhaps the latter will soon be remote-controlled by artificial intelligence). In each of the listed cases, a different tool is used and, consequently, in each case the effect is different. The grass is cut in a different way.

¹² To carry on the analogy, a free human agent is the limit case of a tool in the hands of God. Free human agents are tools characterized by a special autonomy and causal contribution.

¹³ Łukasiewicz rejects this Molinist view, because, contrary to this view, "God is not limited by any eternal counterfactuals of freedom" and randomness (Łukasiewicz 2020, 13, 30). I shall not engage in the controversy over this question nor shall I defend Molinism against various objections (as is done by the experts in the matter, among others, Moreland and Craig [2003, 564–65], and Flint [2009, 274–82]). Principle (3), loosely inspired by a certain aspect of Molina's complicated doctrine, is invoked to complement the other two principles, by showing that it is possible to explain the coexistence of the two types of causality and two approaches to randomness. Should this particular explanation prove faulty, we may look for other explanations or, referring to the analogous approach adopted in science, simply accept a peculiar fact of coexistence. Answering briefly Łukasiewicz's objection, I shall only indicate that: (i) it is worse (when concerning far-reaching ontic consequences) to be limited by real chance events (as described by Łukasiewicz) than by possible counterfactuals; (ii) it is doubtful that the latter impose limitations on God—they are, rather, recognized by God as the contents (or consequences thereof) of His intellect; (iii) perhaps—contrary to Molina's view—middle knowledge (at least the middle knowledge that concerns random events) should be considered not as a type of knowledge different from free knowledge and natural knowledge, but as a special variety of

IN DEFENCE OF CONCURRENTISM

Principle (1) is part of the standpoint called concurrentism. According to concurrentism, causes active in the world are neither independent (against deism) nor illusory (against occasionalism), but bring their effects about together with (or, as it were, in cooperation with) divine causation.¹⁴ Due to this fact, everything that happens in the world can be looked at from two perspectives, the worldly and the divine. Determined by our cognitive attitudes or needs, we may limit ourselves to the recognition of only one of these perspectives, but then we do not obtain full information about the mechanism that underlies the course of events (see principle (2)). The connection between the two perspectives is explained by principle (3). God permits causes that act randomly to produce their effects and, at the same time, controls them by freely choosing to bring into real existence those causes and effects that He wants to include in His design.

As we can see, principle (2) is a consequence of concurrentism (1), while principle (3) is its explanatory complement, thus playing a central role in the conception of concurrentism proposed here. Unfortunately, Dariusz Łukasiewicz rejects concurrentism, offering several arguments to support his decision. In the conclusion of this paper, I attempt to refute his arguments and thus remove the main obstacle in accepting the conception I have outlined above.

First, Łukasiewicz (2020, 26) claims that concurrentism “limits God’s omnipotence, indicating where and how God’s causality can work.” I believe that this objection stems from a peculiar understanding of God’s omnipotence. My adversary seems to suggest that God is limited when He does not act alone but allows other beings to cooperate with Him. However, if this were to limit God’s omnipotence, only omnipotent God would be the one conceived of by occasionalism, i.e., the view from which Łukasiewicz maintains a critical distance.¹⁵

Second, according to Łukasiewicz, concurrentism is supposed to give “the illusion of freedom and autonomy of the created beings” (p. 26). My adversary

the latter; so understood, middle knowledge would be necessary (or essential)—as ordinary natural knowledge—but only if we considered it as a whole, and not in its particular parts.

¹⁴ See Freddoso (1994, 132–35). This author also adds here “mere conservationism” (a position which states that “created substances are genuine agents that can and do causally contribute to natural effects by themselves, given only that God preserves them and their powers in existence”) as a theory rivaling concurrentism. Freddoso observes that conservationism, as a theory burdened with serious difficulties, was rarely advanced by the scholastics.

¹⁵ Łukasiewicz also claims that in the Thomistic version of concurrentism “secondary causes ... are not under God’s total control” (Łukasiewicz 2020). This claim is not true; secondary causes are under God’s control in a fundamental sense, they exist and act only when God wants them to do.

is right, but only if we adopt the intentional or fictional, based on the analogy of a literary work of art, model of concurrentism. The instrumental model I propose (see footnotes 11–12) avoids this difficulty. Some components of this model may be developed in more detail (as was done by Freddoso [1994, 142–56]), but it is impossible to accuse the model in question of creating the illusion of causation. Perhaps what Łukasiewicz actually meant was that *it is impossible* for causes so disproportionate as to their ontic position and for causal contribution to cooperate. We can give, however, numerous examples of situations where such causes do work together. Here is one provided by Freddoso (1994, 148–49):

I use a piece of blue chalk to draw a square on the blackboard. It seems clear that both the chalk and I count as joint immediate causes of a single effect, viz., the blue square-shaped line that appears on the surface of the blackboard. Yet the fact that the line is blue, rather than some other colour, is traced back primarily to the causal properties of the chalk as an immediate instrumental cause of the blue square rather than to any of my properties as an immediate principal cause of the blue square. By the same token, the fact that there is a square-shaped effect—rather than, say, a circular effect or no effect at all—is traced back primarily to my influence as an immediate principal cause and not to the chalk’s as an instrumental cause.¹⁶

Third, concurrentism allegedly “strengthens the atheistic argument from evil” (Łukasiewicz 2020, 26). I can see no reason why revisionist standpoints (and Łukasiewicz’s view is close to them) should be more “immune” to the problem of evil than classical ones (including concurrentism and Molinism). It is rather the other way round. The former make God powerless against evil as the followers thereof believe evil happens outside of God’s will, while the latter make it possible to look for God’s motives in permitting evil and to show how a created or permitted evil may be a prerequisite for higher goods.

Fourth, concurrentism or, more broadly speaking, “the idea of God whose goodness is manifested in the total control over every being is ... incompatible with our intuition of goodness; loving parents allow their children to make independent ... choices” (p. 26). One might also argue, while extending the cited objection, that God’s goodness consists in permitting the existence of that which is ontically the weakest, and thus permits the existence of chance events controlled by no one. I agree with these intuitions, but I am against accepting them at the cost of our intuition of God’s sovereignty. The model I propose shows how these two kinds

¹⁶ Let us add that the vision of God’s economy where God acts and, at the same time, permits creatures (including us) to cooperate with Him is axiologically and motivationally fascinating. According to this vision, no cause in the world is negligibly small in the metaphysical sense.

of insight may be combined, while Łukasiewicz must content himself with just one of them.¹⁷

Fifth, “lack of chance events in the world would diminish the degree of diversity in the world” (p. 27) and deprive it of many good qualities. I agree. However, concurrentism (supplemented with some components of Molinism) does not deny the existence of chance events (as seen from the intra-worldly perspective and understood in an appropriate way), but merely calls attention to the fact that, as seen from God’s perspective, there is no event that would be exempt from God’s control. The only dice games God plays are those in which He is the winner (even if, perceived from our perspective, His victory is postponed in time).

Sixth, “the idea of God whose ‘providential success’ depends on minute and irrelevant details ... is far more unconvincing. God cannot be viewed as the true Lord of absolutely everything in the universe if His ‘strong’ providence is hostage to such irrelevant, minute details” (p. 29). I believe this objection to be based on a misunderstanding. Concurrentism (and, broadly speaking, the classical concept of God) does not intend to guarantee God’s “providential success” by making Him control every minute detail of the world. Perhaps the success in question might be achieved in a different way. Rather, the concern of classical theists is to defend the supreme ontic position of God. Should God fail to be the Lord of “minute details,” it would be difficult to grant Him such a status. Classical theists develop their view in the light of empirical data. Thus, in emphasizing the sovereignty of God, they accept the real agency of all created beings, including those of random “minute details.”

CONCLUSION

In his paper, Dariusz Łukasiewicz presented a subtle analysis of six concepts of chance. He assumed, among other things, the existence of chance events conceived as events without any cause. Łukasiewicz also showed the consequences of such an assumption with regard to theism. In the above text, through expanding the conceptual analysis provided by Łukasiewicz, I argued against this assumption and formulated the problem of *God and chance* as that of the relationship which obtains between God and random events. Contrary to the view proposed by Łukasiewicz, I believe that the problem in question can be solved without

¹⁷ As Grabowski (2019, 152) writes: “For some, the idea of God acting through chance [as a tool] is unacceptable; for others, it is the idea that best proclaims the Creator and His omnipotence.” However, if we affirm that God is “the Creator and Lord of chance,” and not that He “creates the world by chance” (Grabowski 2019, 151–52), all the attributes of God’s majesty are preserved. Principle (3), which I defend, shows how God may be the Lord of chance.

disrupting the classical view of God. If we adopt the principle of concurrence, the principle of complementarity, and the principle of middle knowledge, we can maintain the claim that God controls all events, also chance events. Considered from the intra-worldly perspective, such events are brought about by causes which *play dice*. However, no cause in the world operates independently, but all causes operate with and within God's action. Due to this fact, random events can also be considered from the vantage point of divine design. In this design, God has chosen and actualized only those random possibilities He considered appropriate.

Although I formulated my view while engaging in a polemic with Dariusz Łukasiewicz, the principle of complementarity which I have adopted makes me consider our respective positions as complementary rather than competing. We both discuss problems of such complexity that each of us can throw only partial light upon them. An additional merit of Łukasiewicz's paper consists in that, while exploring, in a well-balanced way and against a broad background, one perspective of the problem, this inspires the reader to look at the issue from another perspective. I hope that, according to divine design, our concurrence with Łukasiewicz has brought us both closer to the truth.

REFERENCES

- COLLINS, Robert. 2009. "Divine Action and Evolution." In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*, edited by Thomas P. Flint and Michael C. Rea, 241–61. Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.
- FLINT, Thomas P. 2009. "Divine Providence." In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*, edited by Thomas P. Flint and Michael C. Rea, 262–85. Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.
- FLINT, Thomas P., and Michael C. REA, ed. 2009. *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*. Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.
- FREDDOSO, Alfred J. 1994. "God's General Concurrence with Secondary Causes: Pitfalls and Prospects." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, 68 (2): 131–56.
- GRABOWSKI, Marian. 2019. *Pierwociny stworzenia. Pomiędzy filozofią a fizyką*. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika.
- GRABOWSKI, Marian. 2020. "Is Probabilistic Theism a Tenable Idea? Critical Remarks on *Opatrzność Boża, wolność, przypadek* by Dariusz Łukasiewicz." *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 68, no. 3: 205–220.
- HOWARD-SNYDER, Daniel, and Frances HOWARD-SNYDER. 1994. "How an Unsurpassable Being Can Create a Surpassable World." *Faith and Philosophy* 11 (2): 260–68.
- KRETZMANN, Norman. 1988. "God Among the Causes of Moral Evil: Hardening of Hearts and Spiritual Blinding." *Philosophical Topics* 16 (2): 189–214.
- LEWIS, David. 1986. *On the Plurality of Worlds*. Oxford–New York: Basil Blackwell.
- ŁUKASIEWICZ, Dariusz. 2014. *Opatrzność Boża, wolność, przypadek. Studium z analitycznej filozofii religii*. Poznań: W drodze.

- ŁUKASIEWICZ, Dariusz. 2018. "Marcin Tkaczyk's Ockhamism, or Whether the Theory of *Contingentia Praeterita* Is the Only Plausible Solution to the Problem of *Futura Contingentia*." *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 66 (4): 115–34. <https://doi.org/10.18290/rf.2018.66.4-6en>.
- ŁUKASIEWICZ, Dariusz. 2020. "Divine Providence and Chance in the World." *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 68 (3): 5–34.
- MORELAND, J. P., and William Lane Craig. 2003. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian World-view*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003.
- TKACZYK, Marcin. 2018. "The Antinomy of Future Contingent Events." *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 66 (4): 5–38. <https://doi.org/10.18290/rf.2018.66.4-11en>.
- WOJTYSIAK, Jacek. 2007. "On the Principle of Sufficient Reason." *Polish Journal of Philosophy* 1 (1): 111–35. <https://doi.org/10.5840/pjphil20071123>.
- WOJTYSIAK, Jacek. 2018. "Future Contingents, Ockhamism (Retroactivism) and Thomism (Eternalism)." *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 66 (4): 159–82. <https://doi.org/10.18290/rf.2018.66.4-9en>.

GOD AND CHANCE

Summary

In the present paper, I analyse six concepts of a chance event (as defined by Dariusz Łukasiewicz) and also propose a definition of the term "random event." Rejecting the existence of entirely causeless events, I discuss the relationship between random events and God. The view I formulate is based on three principles: the principle of simultaneous concurrence, the principle of complementarity, and the principle of middle knowledge (inspired by Luis de Molina). In adopting these three principles, I can reconcile the existence of God conceived in a classical manner, as Creator and Lord of all events, with the existence of random events. The model I propose provides an alternative to the conceptions offered by different currents of (more or less) revisionist (open) theism, including Łukasiewicz's probabilistic theism.

Keywords: chance events; causelessness; randomness; God; concurrentism; complementarity; middle knowledge; Molinism.

BÓG I PRZYPADEK

Streszczenie

W niniejszym tekście analizuję sześć pojęć przypadku (określonych przez Dariusza Łukasiewicza) oraz – dodatkowo – definiuję pojęcie zdarzenia losowego. Odrzucając istnienie zdarzeń całkowicie bezprzyczynowych, zastanawiam się nad relacją zdarzeń losowych do Boga. Moją koncepcję opieram na trzech zasadach: zasadzie jednoczesnego współdziałania, zasadzie komplementarności oraz zasadzie wiedzy pośredniej (w stylu L. de Moliny). Przyjęcie tych trzech zasad pozwala mi pogodzić istnienie klasycznie pojętego Boga (który jest stwórcą i Panem wszelkich zdarzeń) z istnieniem zdarzeń losowych. W ten sposób uzyskuję model alternatywny do modeli proponowanych przez teizmy (bardziej lub mniej) rewizyjne (otwarte), w tym przez teizm probabilistyczny Łukasiewicza.

Słowa kluczowe: przypadek; bezprzyczynowość; losowość; Bóg; konkurentyzm; komplementarność; wiedza pośrednia; molinizm.