

Editors' Note

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In September 2022 the Institute of Philosophy of Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow hosted the second international conference “Christian Philosophy and Its Challenges.” The conference gathered over 50 philosophers from all around the world, representing many different denominations of Christianity. They sought to identify the main challenges facing Christian philosophy today; particularly noteworthy areas of investigation included: the problem of evil, ancient and medieval inspirations in Christian philosophy, Christian ethics, the relationship between theology and philosophy, and the identity of Christian faith itself.

In his introductory essay “A Christian Theodicy,” which was presented at the conference opening, Richard Swinburne attempts to advance discussion on the fundamental question: the problem of evil. He presents a series of arguments which seek to demonstrate that God has the right to permit evil and that humanity is free to choose between good and bad, good and bad, leading to the conclusion that there is no contradiction between the existence of an ultimately good and omnipotent God and the evil in the world. This seems an excellent introduction to this issue, since the problem of evil remains—as many scholars emphasise—one of the most crucial problems for Christian philosophy.

In his paper, JUAN MANUEL BURGOS sheds some light on the very idea of Christian philosophy and its tasks for today. He emphasises the role of individual Christians making philosophy instead of a particular philosophical system based on Christian beliefs, corresponding to the phrase attributed to Cardinal Newman: “We do not need Christian philosophy. We need Christians making good philosophy.” Helpfully, BURGOS introduces three categories: Christian philosophy, Christian philosophers, and Christians making philosophy, which could prove useful in understanding the questions of Christian faith. Similarly, in a paper entitled “Demarcating the Foundations of Analytic

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Theology and Philosophical Theology,” JON KELLY proposes some distinctions to draw a map of concepts and approaches in analysing problems of Christian thought. One of the ideas he attempts to establish is that philosophical theology can provide the conceptual base for the relationship between theology and philosophy. This means, importantly, that philosophical tools (and therefore a logical *culture*) can also be fundamental to further development of Christian philosophical theology. If so, we may conclude, Christian philosophers and theologians should cooperate in the development of a suite of Christian philosophical tools. Continuing this subject of Christians making philosophy, MARCIN BĘDKOWSKI and JAKUB PRUŚ ask: “How Can Christian Philosophers Improve Their Arguments?” The authors try to show that the concept of a “logical culture,” an attitude of thinking and speaking, can be very useful in developing and teaching Christian philosophy. They argue that this notion—sometimes opposed to the notion of “critical thinking”—seems very promising for Christian philosophers, for it not only improves the discussion within Christian philosophy, but also promotes a certain ethos of thinking and speaking which is sorely needed today in public debate.

In dialogue with classical philosophers and theologians, JAMES BERNARD MURPHY introduces the concept of “Greek Philosophy as a Religious Quest for the Divine.” He examines the root of Western philosophy and exposes the real goal of philosophy: to become “as much like a god as is humanly possible.” He suggests that Christian philosophy, too, is aimed at this goal related to divinity—the very understanding of the nature of God and identifying the way to salvation. From the other side, in a paper entitled “Athens and Jerusalem Redux: Monastic Mystical Discourse and the Rule of Faith,” DANIEL SPENCER tries to show that certain types of Christian mysticism, especially as exemplified by Evagrius Ponticus, sit uncomfortably in relation to the philosophical methodology employed by various early apologists. While mysticism simpliciter should not be treated as a necessary enemy to methodologically and logically organised Christian philosophy, in certain cases, Spencer argues, properly Christian “narrative grammar” may be seriously threatened.

A paper by JASON HYDE, “Kim and the Pairing Problem for Dualism: In Defense of a Thomistic Dualist Substance Ontology of Agent Causation,” argues that Christian philosophy can provide a more satisfying solution to the problem of mental causation. Using the classical notions of substance and soul appears to be more fruitful than physicalism, and—as HYDE argues against Jaegwon Kim—mental causation in an Aristotelian-Thomistic view of the nature of persons seems to be coherent after all.

From another point of view JAEHA WOO proposes a dialogue between Kant and Christian philosophy. In a paper entitled “On the Need for Distinctive

Christian Moral Psychologies. How Kant Can Figure in Christian Ethics Today” he invites readers to treat Kant as an ally rather than an enemy to Christian philosophy and Christianity more generally. Woo highlights the significance of developing a moral psychology that upholds moral principles over self-interest, and suggests that this task is particularly relevant in today’s world which faces many crises, and of which climate change is just one. The author suggests that Christian philosophers, along with all those who share a Kantian way of thinking, would benefit from adopting a moral psychology that prioritizes the moral law over self-love.

In the final paper, TYMOTEUSZ MIETELSKI introduces the Jesuit philosopher Paolo Valori, who proposed a very promising idea for a “mission statement” of Christian philosophy. Valori’s main concern was the dialogue between Christian philosophy and human sciences. MIETELSKI argues that the most crucial task of Christian philosophy is to search for truth not only inside Christian theories (philosophical and theological), but also beyond revelation. Only in that model may Christian philosophy properly face all the challenges that comes upon it.

Finally, in the Discussion & Reviews Section, Forum Philosophicum’s Editor-in-Chief, JACEK SURZYN, starts a series of translations of outstanding papers written by Jesuits; the first is a translation of a paper written in Latin by the Polish Jesuit Franciszek Bargieł in 1997. This article is dedicated to the seventeenth century philosopher and Jesuit Jan Morawski. This translation is followed by the report from a debate which took place in May 2022 at Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow, written by MACIEJ JEMIOŁ. The starting point of the debate was the book by Filip Borek on phenomenological interpretation of Heidegger’s *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* (published in Polish exclusively).

We hope that the conference papers along with discussions will bring some fresh ideas to Christian philosophy, which continues to be a vibrant and influential field of study today. We truly believe that Christianity has much to offer the world today—not least with respect to the various crises we all struggle with currently—but also to metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and even to argumentation theory and psychology.

In particular, these new texts, unknown to commentators during earlier stages of the discussion, contain a wealth of interesting material as regards analysis of the question of God.

The present volume was edited with the aim of gathering some insights to this important problematic of the question of God in Heidegger’s thinking. The editors hope that the volume can contribute to the further reflections on Heidegger’s phenomenology of religion.

