

Kazimierz M. Wolsza, ed. *Stanisław Kamiński*. The Polish Christian Philosophy in the 20th Century. Krakow: Ignatianum University Press, 2019.

This publication is dedicated to Stanisław Kamiński; one of the most outstanding Polish philosophers, typified by his work in many areas of knowledge and wide range of interests (59). As a critically reflective yet “friendly” methodologist, he investigated the methodology of science from the logical and philosophical perspectives and is arguably the best and most popular methodologist of science in the history of Polish philosophy.

The unique goal and import of this collection can be discerned in both its title and the manner in which it has been structured by its publishers. Kazimierz Marek Wolsza, its editor, has articulated and outlined the basic themes of its contents in a logical and illuminating manner, such that it portrays the overarching concerns of the book. This book engages with investigations on the various aspects of the person and works of Kamiński. These include his biography, the sources of his philosophical inspiration, his philosophical school, his preferred conception of philosophy, the influence of his own philosophical school, and his proposals and proffered solutions to philosophical problems and theological dilemmas; a dictionary of basic terms used by him, and polemics and discussions that he initiated both at home and abroad. The principal value of this book lies in its aim to furnish and familiarize the reader with the person of Kamiński on a deeper level, his achievements and contributions to resolving the problems of contemporary philosophy and above all, the influence of his philosophical considerations on the methodology of Polish academia.

The book is comprised of two parts. The first part contains eight high-quality articles written by different authors on the person and works of Kamiński, particularly on topics that reflected his unique career over the years. The second part comprises four very interesting and engaging selected philosophical texts of Kamiński’s which have already been published in different books and journals. In writing this review, I undertake the moderate task of ensuring a proper presentation of this book to the reader. It is not possible to discuss each essay in this review in depth—the volume consists of 12 individual essays—so I will focus and confine my comments

to what I perceive to be the most central contributions made by this publication.

One of the central essays (and arguably the text that unlocks the key to the book) is that of Marek Rembierz, "How to Understand and Practice Philosophy? On the Concept of Philosophy Developed by Stanisław Kamiński." This essay serves as a gateway to comprehend almost all of the related issues addressed by the editors of the various essays of this collection. This essay touches upon the most basic issues surrounding the philosophy of Kamiński and provides a background key that allows the reader to unlock his work. Besides the biographical information that the first essay provides on the life and person of Kamiński, which may attract the reader's attention, the obvious temptation of almost every reader of this book would be to begin from Rembierz's essay, since it leads directly to the mind of the author in question.

In this essay, Rembierz presents Kamiński's interest as one whose desire was to resolve the problems of contemporary philosophy by formulating and reconstructing a new system of classical philosophy which he felt would be capable of meeting the test of time. This project led him to react against positivist movements and any anti-metaphysical trends which tended to obviate the classical scientific status of metaphysics. Also captured in this essay is Kamiński's concept and understanding of philosophy which distinguishes him as one who followed his own multifaceted and highly-developed metaphilosophical-historical explorations in which he applied his vast and thorough historical knowledge with regard to logical issues, which comprise both formal logic and methodology of sciences (23). The fruits of his rigorous metaphilosophical historical explorations are best described through the major themes of his works such as formal logic, the history of logic, the general methodology of sciences, philosophy of science, the methodology of philosophy, science and studies, methodology of theology. His commitment and contributions to the traditions of the Lvov-Warsaw, Krakow and Lublin philosophical schools (and the fact he was a co-founder of the latter) are rightly regarded as significant achievements. Against this backdrop, a distinctive roadmap emerges which clearly guided his research and academic career.

It is quite pronounced in the author's analysis that the problems of the multiplicity and variety of approaches to philosophy, styles of philosophizing or philosophical methods which characterized the contemporary philosophical culture constituted the major theoretical backgrounds to Kamiński's philosophy. The question of how to philosophize or do philosophy was for him a central one. Hence, his goal was to develop a concept of

philosophy and an autonomous philosophical method which he considered as the most appropriate and which met a contemporary demand. Kamiński's meta-philosophical-historical explorations, which focused on the epistemological, methodological and functional aspects of the concept of philosophy, aimed at capturing the different sides of philosophical multidimensionality and at developing a typical method or autonomous methodology which he considered as fulfilling the hopes raised as to what constitutes the concept and practice of philosophy. These meta-philosophical historical explorations helped him to record some remarkable achievements in the domain of the theory of science and the methodology of classical philosophy, especially in the studies of the method and language of metaphysics. He also gave a methodological description of general metaphysics, philosophical anthropology, ethics, philosophy of religion, philosophy of history and studies on religion.

As regards the concept of philosophy in Kamiński, Rembierz presents him as wrestling with the problem of how philosophy should be understood and practiced. The concept of philosophy which he is said to have developed (and considered to be the most appropriate and most apt) is "a particular type of metaphysics." For him, metaphysics is a conception of philosophy which is realistic, that is, a philosophy which has real beings as its object. By this concept of metaphysical philosophy, Kamiński refers to the "theory of being" which he identifies with classical philosophy and conceives it as capable of meeting the contemporary demand for autonomous philosophy both in relation to faith and natural or humanistic sciences. Kamiński is seen as conceiving metaphysics to be the nucleus on all divisions of philosophy to which particular disciplines depend on since it provides ultimate explanations.

In an attempt to draw a line of demarcation between the cognitive and non-cognitive functions of classical philosophy and to underline the unity between theory and practice in philosophy, Rembierz painstakingly demonstrates how Kamiński established the absolute necessity of the practicality of philosophy by applying the minimalist and maximalist theories. In this approach, the theory of being is committed to fulfilling the maximalist goals which other disciplines cannot engage in. This means that philosophy is able to ask and proffer solutions to fundamental questions regarding the meaning, purpose, and end of existence.

Another problem which occupies a central place in Kamiński is tackled by the fourth essay of the first part of this book, namely the problem of the methodology of the philosophy of sciences which are fundamentally grouped and classified as comprising of conceptual, internal and external

problems within the domain of methodology of science. Put together, these methodological problems which sometimes overlap with the problems in the field of the philosophy of science, center around issues of the structure and function of scientific research and its outcomes. They also include issues about the relationship between scientific theories and reality. Finally, they also touch on the possibility and conditions of unification of sciences.

Tadeusz Szubka arguably presents Kamiński as one who looked at science and philosophy through the prism of methods applied in them and the legitimacy of those applied methods. It is acknowledged that seeking legitimate ways of doing science was the most prominent issue investigated and taught by Kamiński in his research. The conceptions of the methodology of science and philosophy proposed by Kamiński are not limited to the didactic and educational dimensions of the methodology of science project but an extension of logic to the practical application of scientific research and its systematization. To promote the practice of philosophy within a methodological culture, Kamiński expands the concept of the methodology of sciences from the confines of logical themes by not limiting his interest only to the methodological (formal) dimension of science (in the scientific method, language and the structure of science) but also in its epistemological and cultural dimensions as it relates to humanistic, social, and philosophical issues dealing with science and its advancement.

We now turn to one of the overarching goals of this book with regards to Kamiński's achievements in the methodology of sciences. This goal finds its fullest expression in the seventh essay which provides a comprehensive record of Kamiński's legacy by focusing on the impact of his activities at the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) where he spent the most part of his life. His outstanding legacy in both the philosophical and non-philosophical environments was substantially methodological in nature. In a detailed and critical manner, Kazimierz presents how Kamiński's activities influenced the research, teaching and organizational work of this institution and the tremendous impact he had on the theory of science, the methodology of philosophy and theology, and wisdom. His works on the methodology of science have set him up as model and point of reference for younger generations of Polish authors in the field of the methodology of philosophy at KUL's Faculty of Philosophy and other environments.

Concerning Kamiński's outstanding contributions to the development and growth of Polish Christian philosophy, Kazimierz holds that Kamiński's interventions in the many methodological related discussions that took place after the Second World War concerning the particular branches of philosophy led to the development of metaphilosophical research in Poland.

His methodological works on classical philosophy and his contribution to the development of the methodology of Polish theology had a huge impact on the Polish theological community (124). In order to bring a fuller view of Kamiński's role in promoting Polish Christian philosophy, Kazimierz has carefully selected the modifications that Kamiński made to the existing debate on the function of philosophy in theology.

After a brief historical survey of different traditions on the relation between philosophy and theology, Kamiński in some sense admits theology's dependence on philosophical cognition but goes on to tackle the long-debated question on the relation between philosophy and theology by taking cognizance of the problems associated with the methodological status of these domains. He sees twentieth century theology as the search for just such a method of theological cognition which would solve the tensions between theory and practice. He acknowledges that "at stake was also the broader inclusion of the practice of Christian life in theological interpretation so that truths of faith could become closer to the current mentality of the faithful" (212). This tension between theory and practice could only be resolved by carefully applying the right methodology in determining the ways in which philosophy serves theology.

In his attempt to integrate philosophy and theology, Kamiński defends the rational character of theology by proposing that the practice of systematic theology led to the rational interpretation of Revelation. In this context, theological cognition rational and revelational factors are intertwined, as are theoretical and empirical factors in science. The fact that theoretical factors are present in theology is one of the important characteristics of its cognitive nature. The striking aspect in Kamiński's resolve to answer whether philosophy serves theology is reflected in his reaction to the hasty use of some modern forms of philosophical theories in theology without any preceding critical analysis of their epistemological and anthropological consequences. This instrumentalization of their values would lead to negative impacts on theology since, as he warns: "For not every philosophy used in theology leads to the understanding of faith. It may actually falsify it. This happens when the philosophical tools and means used in this understanding are not adjusted to the primary purpose, which the understanding of the deposit of faith accompanied by its integral preservation" (215). By this assertion Kamiński cautions contemporary theologians from taking the idea of theology as the philosophical rationalization of faith too unilaterally in adapting theological knowledge to contemporary mentality. The point is that, despite their methodological and epistemological differences, philosophy and theology must remain complementary in

their content, philosophy must be in harmony with faith so as to create a doctrinally unified system.

For Kamiński, the solution to the problem of the proper servitude of philosophy in theological cognition demands that theology be modernized, that is, by not limiting theology to mere philosophical speculation or correlation with the current culture and civilization. The modernization of theology for Kamiński requires that “Theology should constitute heuristics and hermeneutics practiced in the light of the revelation and tradition, yet by means and methods whose philosophical presuppositions correspond to the deposit of faith and with the aim of solving the religious and moral problems of man living in a giving society and culture” (216–7). To this end, philosophy serves theology by providing it with ultimate sources about reality, a special kind of language and style of thinking and some scientific methods. Kamiński uses his realist concept of metaphysics to underline the indispensable and inevitable character of philosophy as a tool for proper theology, since it becomes very difficult for theology to understand the deepest objective truths about man, and his position within the world and in relation to God without it. Consequently, “a theologian must employ a metaphysical (and realist) theory of reality,” which he considers as suitable in the service of theology. The concept of complementarity employed by the author creates a cordial and harmonious relationship between philosophy and theology, where philosophy does not violate the deposit of faith but serves it in such a manner that it does not impose itself on theology or reduce theology to the status of being conformist. Instead, it retains its identity while performing its ideal task.

Finally, this book efficiently conveys to the reader a synthetic conceptualization of the vast scope of Kamiński’s metaphilosophical and methodological explorations within the wide range of issues in the fields of philosophy, theology and the natural sciences. This book is indeed a masterpiece, a concise synthesis and companion to Kamiński’s philosophical enterprise. I therefore recommend it as a useful tool for philosophers, methodologists, theologians, scientists and students of all kinds of disciplines and specialties who wish to know more about the relationship between philosophy and particular sciences.