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Piotr LENARTOWICZ SJ, *Elementy teorii poznania – szkice wykładów* [Elements of the theory of knowledge – lecture drafts], Wydział Filozoficzny Towarzystwa Jezusowego w Krakowie, Kraków 1998, A4, 184 pages.

Elements of the theory of knowledge – lecture drafts is a textbook for students of systematic philosophy. The first edition of this book published in 1995, has been twice reprinted in a slightly different form.

Elements ... is a collection of seventeen, rather informal talks closely dependent on the aristotelian and thomist metaphysical setting. The author explicitly disregards a historical approach to the subject and in an essentially systematic way tries to argue in favor of a metaphysically pluralist and epistemologically optimistic – realist solution. These two options constitute, therefore, the specific limits of the textbook.

In the first three chapters a description of the main psychological and linguistic phenomena of cognitive activity is attempted. Tendencies to abstract, to economize, to simplify, to extra- and intrapolate, to objectivize – together with obvious facts of reflection, and the epiphenomenal character of mental products are exemplified and commented on.

Two main errors – the error of affirmation (pseudo-knowledge without a real object) and the error of negation (pseudo-ignorance in front of manifest evidence) are discussed in the context of the aristotelian principle of contradiction and the principle of evidence. It is argued that the aristotelian principle of contradiction is not a principle of being, but the most restricted definition of impossibility. It is used to detect and to reject the errors of affirmation. The principle of evidence is an ostensive procedure which helps a subject to gain a fuller orientation towards the object and in this way to overcome errors of negation.

The four next chapters (VI-IX) relate the epistemological problems with the metaphysical, ontic aspect of cognition. The aristotelian concepts of matter (passive material) and spirit (an immanently active, indivisible and integrating entity) are described and their empirical – mostly biological – foundations are discussed. Cognition is described as a complex, continuous process which starts with the production of cognitive organs (embryogenesis) and then consists in the utilization of these organs by the same agency which originally led to their construction. The body-mind problem, therefore, is solved by (1) showing that the cognitive structures of a living body (brain, sense organs etc.) are products of the essential dynamism of life, and by (2) arguing that mental pictures, ideas and theories are by-products of the essentially cognitive nature of a living being and not primary, or controlling agents of human behavior, cognition and freedom. The aristotelian theory of a changing being is contrasted with the monist, static theory of actuality on one hand and the dynamic, anti-substantial theory of constant flux on the other. Finally the problem of

„universals” is discussed. According to the author no „simple principle” solution does justice to the real world. Some elements of reality are substances, i. e. fixed, integrated but extremely complex entities. Their concepts are formed by a step-by step synthesis, which is dependent on the regularities discovered in the more superficial, accidental sphere of being. Some others concepts represent secondary, transient, accidental traits which can be easily purified by abstraction. One can also distinguish other, absolutely unique, „indentification” traits of the personal or just biological character, which escape any attempt at classification. Finally in our mind we produce different mental scaffolds, which temporarily can serve as mental tools in the complex procedures and processes of cognition. They have no strictly objective meaning. The problem of „universals” cannot, therefore, be solved by a single, simple theory, but by a complex of theories.

Chapter X consists mainly in a polemic with Galileo’s reasons for rejection of secondary qualities, and with Hume’s arguments against the natural ties within a causal/effect relation. Chapter XI consists in a detailed discussion of Kantian preliminary assumptions, his transcendental esthetics and his presentation of the intellectual *a priori* categories.

The next three chapters refer to some popular epistemological errors and discuss ways of overcoming them. One concentrates on some paradoxes created by the notion of probability. Several „probability miracles” are described to show their pseudo-rational character. Another chapter analyses several forms of agnostic and skeptical arguments and tries to show how a rational solution of them can be attained. Chapter XIV analyses the instance of charlatanery (astrology) and confronts it with Mill’s method of eliminative induction.

The chapter on cognition of moral law compares properties and sanctions of the physical, biological and moral law. It is an attempt to prove that the *essentially limitless and free development* of the life potential of *Homo sapiens* individuals constitutes the main frame of reference in moral evaluations, decisions and errors.

The penultimate chapter XVI compares the way modern, monist science on one side and a transcendental, monotheist religion on the other answers a list of perennial existential and moral questions.

The last chapter describes and discusses the relation between the rational, natural way of finding a full orientation in the real world and the way in which superhuman intelligent subjects may help us to know this reality deeper and better. Here the problem of veracity of Holy Scripture and Ecclesiastical Tradition is discussed. The problem of confirmation by miracles and prophecies is discussed in reference to the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church.

In „Contents” we have brief summaries of each chapter which gives a good view of the essential metaphysical and epistemological orientation of the work. The same summaries can be found in the book, at the beginning of each chapter. As the author intends to prepare a new edition

of „Elements”, it seems important to have these summaries in one of the congress languages. A systematic and name index together with a separate bibliography at the end of the book would be recommended. The book is written in A4 format, but the two column page setting makes the reading easy. Numerous tables and diagrams are clear and of great help during the study of the contents. The lively, witty language of „Elements” fascinates the reader and sometimes even creates an illusion of a direct, vocal contact with its author.

Józef BREMER SJ

Józef BREMER SJ, *Rekategorisierung statt Reduktion. Zu Wilfrid Sellars' Philosophie des Geistes*, Neue Studien zur Philosophie, Band 12, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997, ss. 228.

W swej pracy ks. Józef Bremer SJ zajmuje się problematyką relacji zachodzącej pomiędzy ciałem a umysłem. Pytanie o tę relację znane jest w literaturze – głównie angielsko-amerykańskiej – pod nazwą *problem psychofizyczny*. W dyskusji nt. tego problemu liczy się nazwisko amerykańskiego filozofa Wilfrida Sellarsa (1912-1989). Sellars reprezentuje materialistyczną lub, jak się ją często nazywa w fachowym języku filozoficznym, naturalistyczną czy fizykalną koncepcję umysłu. Omawiany filozof studiował matematykę, ekonomię i filozofię na uniwersytetach w Michigan, Buffalo, Oxfordzie i Harvardzie. Jego profesorami byli m.in. J. Austin, H.A. Prichard, I. Berlin. Swoją pracę jako wykładowca rozpoczął na uniwersytecie w Iowa, później spotykamy go na uniwersytecie w Minnesota i Yale, a pod koniec życia wykładał na uniwersytecie w Pittsburghu. Na tym ostatnim, między innymi dzięki takim postaciom jak: B. Skyrms, E. Sosa, A. Grunbaum i właśnie W. Sellars, powstał jeden z najbardziej znaczących ośrodków filozofii nauki. O wpływie Sellarsa na współczesną filozofię świadczy chociażby to, iż bardzo znana książka R. Rorty'ego *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (dostępna także w języku polskim) jest właściwie komentarzem do artykułu Sellarsa *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*. Sellars należał do nielicznej grupy filozofów analitycznych, zainteresowanych nie tylko szczegółowymi analizami językowymi, ale usiłujących stworzyć ogólną syntezę. Znane jest jego powiedzenie: „Analysis without synopsis (tzn. syntezy) must be blind”.

Gdy chodzi o problem psychofizyczny, Sellars rozwija szczególną formę fizykalizmu. Odróżnia on mianowicie tzw. problem *ciało-umysł* (*Das Leib-Seele-Problem*) od problemu *ciało-zmysły* (*Das Leib-Sensorium-Problem*). Pierwszy z nich dotyczy mentalnych stanów intencjonalnych (myśli, pragnienia), które są zawsze nakierowane na jakiś obiekt zewnętrzny lub wewnętrzny. Drugi problem odnosi się do stanów nieintencjonalnych (odczucia, wrażenia), które według Sellarsa takiego „obiekta” nie posiadają, lecz charakteryzują się określonymi jakościami (np. wrażenie bólu, kolorów).