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**THE SUBJECT OF METAPHYSICS
AND THE WAY OF ITS DETERMINATION**
A Philosophical Symposium at „Ignatianum”

On the 11th of January, 2001 the Philosophical Circle of the University School of Philosophy and of Education *Ignatianum* in Cracow organised a philosophical symposium on: *The subject of metaphysics and the way of its determination*. This problem seems important nowadays, although it has been discussed throughout the whole philosophical tradition. Solutions concerning basic philosophical problems have their impact on the understanding of reality, first of all the human being and the culture created by him which is expressed in knowledge, morality, arts and religion. Reflection on the foundations of philosophy is especially important in the contemporary intellectual climate which is dominated by relativism and nihilism. This is demonstrated by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, which also proposes the way of overcoming the crisis through the return to the philosophy of being, that is metaphysics. The guests invited to the symposium belong to the above-mentioned philosophical trend.

The guests at symposium were three philosophers from three Polish Catholic academic centres: the Catholic University of Lublin, the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Cracow and the University School of Philosophy and of Education *Ignatianum* in Cracow. The Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) was represented by Prof. Andrzej Maryniarczyk SDB, disciple and continuator of Prof. Mieczysław A. Krąpiec OP, one of the founders of the Lublin School of Philosophy. At present Professor Maryniarczyk teaches metaphysics at KUL, developing a philosophical trend known as existential Thomism. The representative of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Cracow was Dariusz Oko Ph.D.

His main concern is the metaphysical thought of transcendental Thomism, especially Lonergan's and Coreth's philosophy and theology. Professor Stanisław Ziemiański SJ, the third participant of the symposium, a lecturer at the University School of Philosophy and of Education *Ignatianum* elaborates his philosophy in the trend of Thomism which is open to science. The symposium was opened by the Delegate of the great Chancellor, Father Provincial Adam Żak SJ Ph.D.

Summaries of the lectures

Prof. Andrzej Maryniarczyk SDB: *Is being or notion of being the subject of metaphysics?*

The paper presents the main trends of the debate about the subject of philosophy which took place in antiquity (Ionic philosophers, Parmenides, Plato, sophists). The author points out that philosophy, thanks to Aristotle, has realised quite early that it has its own, different subject. Aristotle first paid attention to a few important properties characterising the subject of philosophy. This subject is being as such, something independent of our consciousness; it is being in its ultimate principles, causes and constitutive elements; it is substance, that is essence; being must be understood analogically. Thanks to Aristotle the main features of the subject of philosophy, i.e. realism, universalism and neutralism, were established.

The discussion about the subject of philosophy is closely connected with the determination of philosophy itself. The subject of philosophical inquiries decides what philosophy will be. The questions which appeared in antiquity come back in the contemporary debate, so it is useful to analyse the ancient solutions in order to avoid the old errors.

Dariusz Oko Ph.D.: *The subject of metaphysics as a correlative of intentional consciousness*

The problem of determining the subject of metaphysics is very important for philosophers from the Maréchal school, also called the Catholic school of Heidegger or transcendental Thomism. Bernard Lonergan SJ and Emerich Coreth SJ represent this trend. The main principle of Lonergan's thought is based on the acceptance of the anthropologico-transcendental change which has taken place in modern philosophy. This change has resulted in a wide use of transcendental and phenomenological methods. The application of those methods has led Lonergan to develop the theory of transcendental notion. This theory plays a decisive role in defining what being can be recognised as the subject of metaphysics. Thus this paper one attempts to study the

concept of notion and being as the notion. Then it reflects on the meaning of being as the notion and being as the global horizon of existence.

The transcendental notion of being is the pure desire of cognition. It is a unique, exceptional concept. The notion is the condition of the possibility of others concepts and of the whole cognition because it founds and penetrates all cognitive contents. It is the *a priori* of the human spirit, it is his pursuit of the wholeness, totality of existence. Understood in this way because of its subject, metaphysics is supposed to be the most general and, therefore, the most fundamental cognition of all that exists. The transcendental notion contains a kind of foreknowledge; thanks to this notion we know something, maybe very little, but about all things; thanks to this notion the whole horizon of existence is lit up, maybe very weakly, but it is.

Prof. Stanisław Ziemiański SJ: *Abstraction or Separation?*

Die Frage nach dem Gegenstand der Metaphysik und nach der Methode seiner Bestimmung gehört zu den meist diskutierten philosophischen Problemen. Die bekannteste aristotelische Definition der Metaphysik lautet: Eine Wissenschaft, die das Sein als Sein betrachtet. Nach dieser Auffassung stellt der Seinsbegriff, als Gegenstand der Metaphysik, den allgemeinsten Begriff dar. Dabei drängt sich gleich das Problem auf, wie man bei der Bildung dieses Begriffes die Verallgemeinerung durchführen kann, ohne die Realität der Individuen, auf welche der Seinsbegriff sich bezieht, preiszugeben. Welche Methode ist dabei am günstigsten und am geeignetsten? Auf diese Fragen will der vorliegende Text antworten.

Die Meinungen der Philosophen darüber gehen auseinander. Einige (z. B. L. B. Geiger, M. V. Leroy, E. Gilson, M. A. Krapiec) messen einer Separation, d.h. einem negativen Urteil die führende Rolle bei der Bildung des Seinsbegriffes bei. Die anderen (z. B. G. Van Riet, K. Kłósak und der Autor) meinen, die Abstraktion sei viel wichtiger bei diesem Prozeß.

Da Thomas von Aquin zwei Arten von Abstraktion unterscheidet, eine ganzheitliche und eine partielle, entsteht noch das Problem, welche davon sich besser zur Bildung des Seinsbegriffes eignet. Eine eingehende Analyse legt nahe, daß die ganzheitliche Abstraktion in dieser Sache die richtige ist.

Auf den Einwand, daß ein durch Abstraktion erhaltener Seinsbegriff leer sei, und daß in diesem Fall eine Realisierung eines Abstrakten stattfindet, kann man antworten: Der Seinsbegriff ist zwar inhaltlich sehr arm, aber nicht ganz leer. Er bedeutet doch, obwohl allgemein und verschwommen, etwas Existierendes. Da die Abstraktion von aktuell

existierenden Sachen ausgehend durchgeführt wird, „erbt“ der Seinsbegriff, der dabei gewonnen wird, die Realität dieser Seienden, obwohl er im Intellekt nur als mentaler Zustand vorkommt.

Im letzten Absatz des Vortrags wird das Problem diskutiert, wie die Transzendentalität des Seinsbegriffes garantiert werden kann, wenn er doch aus dem begrenzten Seinsbereich entstammt. Die Antwort ist: Der Seinsbegriff ist so einfach, allumfassend und analog, daß er auch auf die immateriellen Seienden und auf Gott selbst extrapoliert werden darf.

The lectures were followed by a two hours' discussion, first between lecturers and then with others participants of the symposium. The whole meeting was conducted by the President of the Philosophical Circle of The University School of Philosophy and of Education *Ignatianum* Jacek Poznański SJ M.A. and discussion was led by Jarosław Paszyński SJ Ph.D. On the occasion of the symposium there took place the exhibition of papers and books written by the lecturers and the professors of the Faculty of Philosophy of the *Ignatianum*, organised by Jacek Drabik SJ.

The philosophical symposium had the following purposes:

1. Development of scientific co-operation between the Faculty Philosophy of *Ignatianum* and other academic centres by means of discussion on important philosophical issues.

2. Serious philosophical discussion which on the one hand makes it possible to develop metaphysical research and on the other hand helps to promote the classical metaphysics among Cracow's intellectuals.

3. Promotion of philosophy among the students and seminarists in order to deepen their philosophical formation. Therefore the invitations were directed to the students of the Pontifical Academy of Theology, of the Jagiellonian University as well as of Cracovian theological seminaries.

The topic discussed at the symposium awakened great interest. Therefore the Philosophical Circle intends to organize another such meeting which may make it possible to discuss the principles of different philosophical trends, in order to seek the truth and to develop philosophical thought. Undoubtedly philosophy has great influence on the understanding of human culture and it may contribute very much to the solution of social and theological problems.