

conflict between truthfulness and the right to discretion, i.e. keeping secret, or the conflict between the right to exist and the right to necessary defence against direct aggression. The Thomists' reference to the principle of double effect is in this case not convincing. Thus the introduction of the co-ordination of values leads to the fact that the victim's life is defended by the principle: Do not kill, and the aggressor's life is by himself placed beyond this principle. The norm 'do not kill' is generally important, but with the restriction: the exception of direct aggression.

In the perspective of the presented axiology T. Ślipko reinterprets the existing Thomistic deontology. In this approach natural law, moral imperative, is rooted in moral values. Values penetrate natural law with their axiological contents, their reference to person's dignity, to an ideal model of person's improvement. In relation to values moral imperative reveals its normative dissimilarity thanks to the relation of necessity to realise that superior model of personal perfection of man. Imperativeness, normativeness of natural law is not, therefore, a necessity to realise natural inclinations nor a necessity to realise the ultimate goal, but a necessity to improve oneself as person.

The ethics, presented and developed by T. Ślipko, avoids naturalistic and eudaemonistic interpretation of moral good as well as its subjectivism or relativism. It is a personalistic and perfectionist ethics, which at the same time gives an ultimate explanation of moral being.

Tadeusz BIESAGA

Józef BREMER, Ludwig Wittgenstein a Religia – Wprowadzenie [Ludwig Wittgenstein and Religion – Introduction], Kraków 2001, Ignatianum-WAM, 156 p.

Józef Bremer's book, *Ludwig Wittgenstein and Religion*, is the first extensive Polish commentary on Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion and is worth reading even if for no other reason. As author suggests in the subtitle, the book is not intended for specialists. However, it is difficult to understand the arguments without a general knowledge of Wittgenstein's philosophy. It has a loose structure and can be regarded as a collection of essays preceded by a chapter introducing the problems of Wittgenstein's philosophy. The task which the author has undertaken is very ambitious, because even a sketchy presentation and interpretation of Wittgenstein's remarks on religion is difficult – precisely because it is sketchy. There are several reasons for this. First, understanding Wittgenstein's views concerning religion requires a perfect understanding of all aspects of his philosophy, since it is impossible to separate his considerations on religion from the rest of his investigations. Secondly, Wittgenstein's writings are full of ambiguous aphorisms and not always conclusive mini-dialogues, which is why there exist many alternative interpretations of his texts. Thirdly, only a few of his notes about religion have been published.

In his book Bremer takes into account all of Wittgenstein's crucial remarks referring to religion. He also shows the connections between Wittgenstein's

philosophy of religion and other philosophical questions with which he was concerned. He underlines that according to the author of the *Tractatus* the main purpose of philosophy is description, not explanation. Philosophy should clearly present what we have previously grasped obscurely. Its task is neither to come to know new facts nor to explain those that are well-known. Philosophy is not a science. All attempts to understand Wittgenstein's remarks on religion fail if they do not take into account this meta-philosophical thesis. Bremer's treatment of texts which refer to religion and ethics involves a short presentation of the tractarian theory of projection and an elucidation of the concepts of language game, form of life, and meaning.

The author rightly points out that a central and constant aspect of Wittgenstein's approach to religion is treating it not as a theory but as an attitude toward the world which plays an important role in life only if it has vital practical consequences: „Here believing obviously plays much more this role: suppose we said that a certain picture might play the role of constantly admonishing me, or I always think of it. Here an enormous difference would be between those people for whom the picture is constantly in the foreground and the others who just didn't use it at all. Those who said: 'Well, possibly it may happen and possibly not' would be on an entirely different plane”¹

Bremer's commentary is not devoid of shortcomings. The most important defect is the repeated use of texts from Wittgenstein's 'later' period to elucidate the doctrine of the *Tractatus*. As is well known, Wittgenstein's views evolved. According to the *Tractatus*, every possible language serves only as a description of the world. The world consists of facts – there are no values in it; that is why ethics and theology are ineffable. At the beginning of the thirties Wittgenstein rejected his earlier beliefs about language. He acknowledged that language does not have only a descriptive function and started to claim that religious and ethical statements are not senseless, even though they do not describe any facts. Bremer is of course aware that Wittgenstein's views evolved, but he does not always clearly distinguish between Wittgenstein's 'earlier' and his 'later' philosophy. This is especially evident in section four of chapter five, where, analysing the *Lecture on Ethics*, the author cites Wittgenstein's later texts. Such practice can lead to the overlooking of essential differences between Wittgenstein's 'earlier' and 'later' philosophy. It must be said to Bremer's credit that in the section which recapitulates aforementioned chapter, the author does point out the differences between the approach to religious statements which is presented in the *Tractatus* and that which can be found in the *Investigations*, but he does so too briefly.

A very important advantage of the book is the presentation of the polemic character of Wittgenstein's thought. The author accurately reports objections which are raised by Wittgenstein to Freud and Frazer. Bremer indicates that Wittgenstein rejected the view according to which religion is a transitional stage of thought between magic and science. This is a peculiar phenomenon for the

¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, Oxford B. Blackwell 1966, p. 56.

author of *On Certainty*. Religion requires no explanations such as those which were given by Freud, for example. In addition, it is worth noting that Wittgenstein treated psychoanalytical explanations of dreams and works of art as a special kind of mythology. Another advantage of this book is a brief presentation of connections between Goethe's considerations on morphology and Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy. The comparison between James' and Wittgenstein's approaches to religion is also very interesting.

It is difficult to understand why the author does not raise objections to Wittgenstein's conception of religion, which, as is well known, is very controversial. Especially doubtful is the way in which Wittgenstein understands religious statements. Bremer explains Wittgenstein's conception of the meaning of religious sentences as follows: „Wittgenstein would say, I think, that a meaning will be given to religious sentences when we manage to translate them into moral sentences and the approval of these sentences must manifest in a form of life. For example, the sentence 'God is love' means that we treat love in our life as an absolute value.”² It is not clear that such a translation of the sentence 'God is love' conveys the intended meaning of the sentence. This problem is connected with the question of whether religious statements should be regarded as having truth-value or not. If we agree with Wittgenstein that religious statements should not be considered as true or false, the translation cited above could be regarded as a reasonable attempt to explicate the meaning of the sentence 'God is love'. However, if we assume, as religious people do, that when they predicate something about God, they try to say something true about the absolute reality, then such a translation is wrong, for our evaluation of love and our attitude toward it cannot be regarded as true or false.

Finally, I would like to indicate a few small mistakes in interpretation. In footnote 26 of chapter two the author suggests that according to Wittgenstein facts are not contingent because any one of them modifies 'The whole logical world'. This is not true, because according to the *Tractatus* the possibility of additional states of affair would change the logical space, but the existence or non-existence of a state of affair does not in any way modify the logical space. *Which* possibilities are actualized, that is, what is a fact, is in Wittgenstein's opinion contingent, but *that* something is possible is not contingent. In section four of chapter four Bremer maintains: „basic empirical propositions can be affirmed by experience or can be deduced from others.”³ We can guess from the context that basic empirical propositions are those which belong to a world-picture. It seems that Wittgenstein did not regard such statements as verifiable by experience: „But I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself of its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false”⁴ „In that case it would seem as if the language game must 'show' the facts that

² Józef Bremer, *Ludwig Wittgenstein and Religion – Introduction*, Kraków 2001, p. 31.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 95.

⁴ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, Oxford B. Blackwell 1979, p. 102

make it is possible. (But that's not how it is)⁵ It is also difficult to agree with subsequent readings, which we can find in chapter five on pages 116 and 117. In the first it is suggested that there can exist a logical contradiction between a fact and a value. This is not true, for a logical contradiction is a relation which can exist only between sentences. The second reading is following: „... Wittgenstein adds the thought that any describable point of view cannot be a point of view which anyone must accept with logical necessity. Recalling the fact-reaction distinction, we can say that such necessity would obtain if a reaction were implied by a fact; then such a reaction would be a necessary reaction.” However, I think that even if this were the case, we could not say that we accept a given point of view with logical necessity, for no fact is logically necessary. The necessity described by Bremer is a relative necessity, but in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein rejected the existence of such necessity: „A necessity for one thing to happen because another has happened does not exist. There is only logical necessity.” (6.37)⁶

The mistakes in interpretation mentioned above are not crucial for the evaluation of this book. The author competently discusses and explains the philosopher's views, whereas a comparison of his thoughts with other conceptions of religion allows the reader to understand better what Wittgenstein regarded as essential for religion and which approaches to it he rejected.

Jan WAWRZYŃIAK

Józef BREMER, *Elementy logiki* [The Elements of Logic], IGNATIANUM – WAM, Kraków 2002, pp. 211.

The Elements of Logic is conceived as an academic textbook that includes mainly material for a basic course in logic for students. Based on his own reflections as well as national and foreign literature on the subject (authors such as K. Ajdukiewicz, J. Łukasiewicz, T. Kotarbiński, G. Frege, L. Wittgenstein). Dr. Józef Bremer, S.J., presents in the following four chapters systematized knowledge of the problems embraced by the titles of each part of the book.

The main aim of the author is the presentation of the problem of deductive reasoning. Another aim of this book is not only to teach how to formalize, but also to show why we generally do formalize. *The Elements of Logic* is a successful attempt to answer this question.

Chapter I contains material related to logic and its understanding. In this chapter the author presents some texts on the historical development of the question: „what is logic about?” He also presents short texts on three related sciences: syntax, semantics and pragmatics.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 623.

⁶ L. Wittgenstein *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, London 1933.