

## **Epistemology and Theology. International Conference**

*Bydgoszcz – 1-2 June 2016*

On 1 and 2 June 2016 took place in Bydgoszcz (Poland) Conference on “Epistemology and Theology”. It was the fourth conference organized jointly by Dariusz Łukasiewicz (The Department of Philosophy of Casimir the Great University in Bydgoszcz) and Roger Pouivet (The Laboratoire d’Histoire des Sciences et de Philosophie-Poincaré Archives – Université de Lorraine / CNRS, Nancy, France). The participants of the Conference tried to find answers to questions about the epistemological value of Theology and of the usefulness of theological research for solving epistemological problems. In the history of philosophy interactions between Epistemology and Theology were very deep and strong. At least since the time of Hume these areas have drawn away from each other, but in our time, again come close to one another. The Conference in Bydgoszcz was to find a way of mutual impacts, that will be both creative and safe for Epistemology and Theology.

Some papers, that common theme can be summed up as “Epistemology of Theology”, were dedicated to the release of theological consequences of the discussions turned in the area of Epistemology and the possibility of epistemological justification of theological claims. Stanisław Judycki (How Do We Recognize God) argued that philosophical knowledge of God, as well as biblical revelation and mystical experience, are possible by the manifestation of Gestaltqualität (“founded content”). Jacek Wojtysiak (An Epistemological Argument for the Existence of God) suggested, based on the schema of the Kantian moral argument, reasoning designed to show that our commitment to knowledge is rational only if there exists a being with perfect knowledge. Theological issues were also shown against the background of the discussions around the “Virtue ethics” (Paul O’Grady, Virtue and Wellbeing) and cognition of values (Gabriele de Anna, Knowledge of God and Knowledge of the Good).

There were also indicated epistemological problems that arise within the area of theology. Ireneusz Ziemiński (Philosophy of Religion as a Way to Skepticism) defended the idea that Philosophy of Religion (of every kind) inevitably leads to scepticism and can be grown only as a philosophy of a particular religious tradition. Roger Pouivet (Against Theistic Personalism) suggested that thinking about God as a person is the result of the impact of epistemology, understood as a prime philosophy. Meanwhile, in his opinion, a more adequate formulation is the treatment of God in concept of a supreme being, which is incompatible with

the personal view. Sébastien Réhault (Personalistic Theism, Classical Theism, And Rational Belief) presented weaknesses of the personalistic version of monotheism as well as its classic (nonpersonal) version. Marek Pepliński (Disagreement and the Epistemology of Religious Belief) reflected on the significance of contemporary discussions around the problem of the rational disagreement for the epistemology of religion. Elisa Grimi (The Epistemology of the Realistic Phenomenology, The Bet of Dietrich Hildebrand) and Ewa Odoj (Theological Knowledge Without Natural Reason? A Critical Study of Alvin Plantinga Position) discussed critically the views of philosophers who explored the borders of Epistemology and Theology.

The second group of papers was dedicated to the problem, which can be defined as “Theology of Epistemology”. Paul Clavier (God as Supreme Truthmaker) discussed God’s relationship to the laws of logic. Miłosz Hołda (The Embodied Mind of God) proposed ontology of Jesus Christ’s mind using the concepts of “Mind of God” and the “Embodied Mind” and pointed the ability to reuse these concepts in epistemology. Dariusz Łukasiewicz (Epistemic Deism and Probabilistic Theism) discussed the model of God’s action in the world that would be able to avoid the pitfalls of “epistemic deism”, and at the same time would allow to treat the chance as being governed by God.

The Conference in Bydgoszcz follows several requests. First: a serious epistemological reflection is necessary to anyone who wants to responsibly defend theistic beliefs. Secondly: Theology is able to demonstrate its cognitive value in the face of today’s epistemological discussions. What’s more – theology may shed new light on the epistemological problems. Thirdly: to build a correct relationship between Epistemology and Theology requires, on the one hand, being very careful and, on the other hand, being brave in crossing the boundaries that divide them. It is important to avoid irresponsible “theologization” of Epistemology. However, disregard of theological ideas, which could be useful in Epistemology, is also intellectually inappropriate. The Conference in Bydgoszcz was a great opportunity to learn how to wisely combine Epistemology and Theology and to take advantage of the occasion that gives their encounter.

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