

Introduction to the Issue

This is the second issue of *Argument: Biannual Philosophical Journal*. Seven articles — out of the nine presented here to the Reader — undertake our leading theme: *Tracing Liminal and Boundary Experience in Philosophical and Religious Discourse*. Three articles from that group (written by Małgorzata Bogaczyk-Vormayr, Piotr Augustyniak and Anna Szyrwińska) explore various aspects of the boundary experience in a historical perspective. The next four pick up the same theme in a contemporary perspective: the articles of Joachim Piecuch, Tadeusz Gadacz and Antoni Szwed discuss the philosophy of Józef Tischner, the article by Urszula Idziak presents the debate between Jacques Derrida and Paul Ricoeur concerning the boundary experience of death. The remaining two articles published here are not connected with the leading theme — Magdalena Nowak presents a history of the concept of *Einfühlung* and Jacqueline Dale tries to improve the diagram method used in logical argument analysis.

The article of Małgorzata Bogaczyk-Vormayr *Veränderung zur Praktike. Kleine Bemerkungen zur Lebensphilosophie des Evagrius Pontikos* analyses the boundary experience of crisis (depression, dissipation, fatigue) which is not necessarily a sign of final defeat, but — according to ancient philosophers and the early Christian Desert Fathers — can be a turning point for finding oneself and discovering new possibilities of action. The Greek philosophers and Christian thinkers are here in agreement — the art of life should consist in the capability of accepting the variability of human condition and keeping the balance both in front of luck and lack of luck. This is precisely the aim of a philosophy designed as a practical exercise in the art of dying — it taught not only that life does not last and has its own limits, but also that the experience of these limits can be the source of power and the opportunity of finding inner peace.

The article by Piotr Augustyniak *Meister Eckhart's God Confronted with the Nietzschean Critique of Christianity* also picks up the problem of the boundary experience of life and death but in the medieval context and in a different perspective. Meister Eckhart tried to eliminate certain draw-

backs which appeared in a Christianity connected on the one hand with the common experience of projecting spatial visions on transcendent otherworldliness and, on the other hand, with the pragmatic, trading rationality of everyday life, which sees salvation as the prize obtained in the other world for a good life in this world. Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger see here the essence of Christianity as “the Platonism for the masses” but Meister Eckhart’s Christian vision of God and salvation is completely different. Anticipating to a great extent Nietzsche’s critique, Eckhart tries to show that the widely spread medieval metaphysical and anthropological assumptions of Christianity as a concern for one’s own happiness in the other world are wrong. Eckhart maintains that a genuine Christian must understand that his salvation is being realized here and now, and that he must undergo the experience of completely giving up the concern for his own happiness. In this process he questions himself radically and becomes ready to accept death. Only such a complete resignation can carry within itself the boundary experience of *Gelassenheit*, a liberation and calmness which is the beginning of true life.

The article by Anna Szyrwińska *Die Grundlagen der Normativität bei Kant und Spener* analyses the problem of the transformation of the explicitly religious and mystical discourse of the founder of German pietism, Philip Spener, into the transcendental philosophy of Kant, which explicitly rejects all mystical and supernatural connections. In *The Conflict of the Faculties* Kant discusses the Spener problem connected with the theological concept of being born again as a result of conversion, he takes over the theme of second birth and of the radical inner change of disposition (*Gesinnung*). Spener connects the second birth with the necessity of transcending the boundary between the natural and the supernatural, but Kant disagrees with it. According to Kant the inner transformation is done by submission not to a supernatural and divine law, but to the law of reason. In spite of these differences there are important similarities between these two authors. First of all they both assume that reason is the condition of moral actions and capabilities; secondly they both assert the existence of tensions between individual inclinations and general moral law and, in the third place, they both assume that the will of submission to moral law and of following its injunctions is based on the rational recognition of that law. Using these three elements Kant builds a consistent theory of inner moral motivation the general outline of which is already present in Spener’s writings. The religious pattern of second birth, which indicates the boundary experience of sin, and liberation from sin, undergoes a change in Kant, but maintains its validity — to follow the gener-

al moral rule of action one has to break with individual sensual inclinations.

The article by Joachim Piecuch *Józef Tischner's phenomenology of boundary experience* shows Tischner's phenomenology as realizing Husserl's postulate (*Zurück zu den Sachen selbst*) and trying to reach the source experience, due to which the experience of the surrounding world acquires meaningful sense. The author shows that consistent phenomenological thinking leads to the conclusion that the idea of source experience is identical with the idea of boundary experience. The ways of apprehending boundary experiences depend to a great extent on metaphysical assumptions, which constitute various paradigmatic phenomenologies. There are four phenomenologies like this in Tischner's philosophy depending on the different concepts of source experience: 1) the transcendental "I", 2) the axiological "I", 3) the historical *Dasein*, 4) the meeting. The paradigm of meeting — the relation with the Other — deserves particular attention. It is precisely in this relationship that Tischner saw a form of boundary experience which also sets the boundaries of phenomenology itself. Here Tischner follows Lévinas — the face of the Other is not an ordinary object phenomenon, it does not appear in the same way as any other object, but reveals itself as its own expression. According to Tischner being is endowed with meaningful sense because of the phenomena of liberty and goodness, but these phenomena must be analyzed within the perspective of the boundary experience of meeting.

The article of Tadeusz Gadacz *Das Problem des Bösen in der Philosophie Józef Tischners* presents Tischner's phenomenology of evil. According to Tischner evil is not one of the many phenomena that surround us because it is not a phenomenon at all but an appearance situated outside being and sense. In Tischner's language the "agathological" experience of evil is an experience of what should not be. In this sense this experience shows the problematical character of existence — by revealing the negative side of the surrounding world it also marks the limits of humankind. To be human we must justify our own existence. The "agathological" experience is always a sort of rebellion experience, which starts the serious thinking responsible for the Other, before whom man tries to justify himself. This is why for Tischner the face of the Other is a gift of the "agathological" horizon, a gift which provides ethical bearings. Agathology does not cancel or replace axiology. It marks not only the limits of humankind but it is also a rebellion against evil, a call to action ruled by an axiological order. As a dramatic boundary experience of what should not be agathology not only leads to axiological thinking according to values but it can also reveal the structural evil inherent in values.

The whole system of acquired values may reveal itself as something that should not be. In this sense agathology performs a controlling function of axiology.

The article by Antoni Szwed *The Reception of Søren Kierkegaard's Thought in Józef Tischner's Philosophy* concentrates on a few key experiences of both philosophers: the experience of beauty, despair and solitude. The first part gives us a knowledgeable and finely nuanced reconstruction of Kierkegaard's philosophy and of Tischner's ways of reading Kierkegaard's texts. Tischner's interpretations reveal hidden tragic dilemmas, especially the threat of madness lurking in the experience of loneliness. In Tischner's thought the experience of loneliness together with the experience of despair becomes an autonomous subject of analysis. Tischner's analysis is different from that of Kierkegaard because he interprets these experiences within the perspective of what he calls Polish melancholy.

The article by Urszula Idziak *Ricoeur and Derrida — the Heritage of Death* presents the debate between Ricoeur and Derrida concerning two different ways of understanding the boundary experience of death, called "survival" by Derrida and "life until death" by Ricoeur. Both authors agree that learning to live means learning to die. For Ricoeur, however, learning to die means learning to give up oneself and learning to transfer one's own love of life onto someone close to us. This act of transfer shows the fidelity of the dying person towards those fundamentals which transcend human finitude. Derrida analyzes the problem of learning to die from a completely different perspective. For him each dying person becomes close to us. We have not learnt to live and to die because in life and death we are visited by spectres — here Derrida recalls the ghost of the father who visited Hamlet, Kierkegaard and Kafka. These spectres not only prevent us to learn to live and to die, but also show a paradox peculiar for each individual, one impossible to be repeated, expressed or transferred to someone else. Standing on the side of Hamlet, Kierkegaard and Kafka, Derrida claims that deconstruction teaches a fidelity towards our spectres. It is a fidelity not towards ourselves (one's own life and death) but towards the difference, towards everything impossible to be expressed and it is at the same time precisely this difference which constitutes our individuality.

Two following articles are not connected with the leading theme of this issue. Magdalena Nowak in her *The Complicated History of "Einfühlung"* presents not only a history of the concept of *Einfühlung* but also its contemporary renaissance in human sciences in particular its uses in the Dominic Lacapra projects of historical research. Whereas Dale Jacqueline

in *Enhancing the Diagramming Method in Informal Logic* argues for application of the diagramming method of testing logical coherence to such cases as vicious circle, contradictions or *reductio ad absurdum*, as useful pedagogically in teaching basic logic a critical reasoning skills at all levels of scientific education.

This issue contains also Ivo Frenzel and Willy Hochkeppel's talk with Herbert Marcuse translated by Jacek Zelek, and five reviews by Seweryn Blandzi, Maciej Urbanek, Tomasz Borycki, Wojciech Hanuszkiewicz and Kinga Elert.

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