



MAŁGORZATA GWARNY
UNIwersytet Łódzki

*Metaphysics (...) is older than all other sciences,
and would survive even if all the rest were swallowed up
in the abyss of an all-destroying barbarism¹*

I. Kant

GOD OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

Having previously presented the readers with the first monographic issue of *Hybris* dedicated to mystical experiences of the Supreme Being, this time we are offering - as a sort of counterbalance - an insight into the philosophers' concept of God.

Formerly our intention was to attempt a construction of a approximately coherent, still not pretending to be considered as exhaustive, depiction or the frame of mysticism, therefore, by means of premeditated selection and sequence of articles, a kind of network was included, the structure of which was meant to invoke an association of the labyrinth with Ariadne's thread set up beforehand². Since it seems obvious that a conceptualization of God, as well as of experiencing a peculiar union with him, cannot be regarded by the mystics as their particular focus of attention, it came as no surprise that the concept of God did not occur to become the main point of interest thus far. The things take a different turn when referred to "God of the philosophers"; moreover the conceptualization in question appears to belong in the area of a special relevance for both the Authors of the articles hereby presented and the thinkers they are invoking.

¹*Critique of Pure Reason*, Preface to the second edition.

<http://staffweb.hkbu.edu.hk/ppp/cpr/prefs.html> (2013.06.23). The e-text version of this book is based on the 1929 Norman Kemp Smith translation, it was originally prepared by Stephen Palmquist and placed in the Oxford Text Archive in 1985.

² See: Małgorzata Gwaryn, *The Labyrinth of Mysticisms*; *Hybris* 20 (2013).

“God of the Philosophers”

It seems useful to start from a polemically inspiring remark of Ryszard Paradowski (See: *Defining God in The Book Of Genesis And Experiencing the Absolute*) on an inaccuracy of the term “God of the philosophers”, as the one referring to the image of God shared mainly by “the philosophizing theologians” like Augustine and Thomas, or by “the philosophers such uncertain of their philosophical identity as Kierkegaard”, or else “the avowed conformists and hedgers like Pascal”. To the abovementioned writers the Author constitutes counterweight of the philosophers after the manner of Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza or Descartes, all of them being distinguished by a special attitude to the question of God, namely by their interest in the concept of God inherited from religious thinking rather than in a religious “being”, transcendent in religious sense of the word.

Is that necessarily “God of the theologians” by which “God of the philosophers” is meant? Quite the contrary, one could respond subversively, and as far as the present selection of pieces is concerned, the intention of its originator appears to be utterly different; thus the readers of this issue will come across Descartes, Kant and Hegel, since they will not encounter Augustine nor Thomas.

A. N. Whitehead holds that Aristotle was “the last European metaphysician of first-rate importance” who was “entirely dispassionate in the consideration of his metaphysics”; therewithal, he continues, “on the subject of his Prime Mover, he would have no motive, except to follow his metaphysical train of thought whithersoever it led him. It did not lead him very far towards the production of a God available for religious purposes. It may be doubted whether any properly general metaphysics can ever, without the illicit introduction of other considerations get much further than Aristotle”³. Aristotelian *primum movens immobile*, well-known also as “self-contemplative thought” and famous for his devotion to the “thinking of thinking”; Cartesian omniscient being who created the human mind along with the knowledge which it is able to cognize, and who is represented by adapted to human cognitive powers, and therefore inadequate, idea; Spinozian *Natura naturans*, the single irrelatively infinite substance

³ A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, New York: Macmillan 1967, p. 173.

with an infinity of attributes ascribed, all of which sharing “infinity of its kind”, the notion deduced in geometrical order by this “God-intoxicated man”; finally Leibnizian Supreme Monad, the subject of all perfections and the guarantor for the existence of the most perfect world possible – each of these notions constitutes a specification of “God of the philosophers”. There is, however, common denominator for all of them, or a characteristic which to a certain extent furnishes a probable opponent with grounds for laying claim that they were inherited from religious thinking altogether with its religious connotations – namely, stronger or weaker belief in a parallel between the concept of God and God himself.

Although the Author of the fourth article (See: Tomasz Śliwiński, *Denotational Identity of Inadequate Idea of God with the Idea of Finite Human Mind in the Philosophy of Descartes*) cogently demonstrates that an approach to the Cartesian idea of God after the manner of Hegel enables a creative interpretation of it as a significant step toward “God” of enlightened man according to Kant, we should not lose sight of the fact that this is the Königsberg philosopher, who introduced an entirely new quality into the meaning of “God of the philosophers” term.

Kantian “Supreme Good”, conceivable and postulated as an essential being and a ration for existence of the phenomenal world, undoubtedly indicates a purely rationalistic construction, “God of the philosophers” in its bare form of a transcendental idea – not even a being, inasmuch as the character and ontological status of the object for that notion remains in fact scarcely defined by the famous formula: *as if (als ob)*. Having revealed an illusion of man’s cognitive efforts, in order to relieve an enlightened man of his “nonage”, Kant made him “know himself”, that is, *nolens volens*, to face his finitude and limitations. (See: Ryszard Panasiuk, *God and Religion of Enlightened Man according to Kant*). Regardless if one agrees or disagrees with an outlook of R. Panasiuk that Kantian findings with respect to a phenomenon of human religiousness have not been enriched ever since, a statement of the most clearly expressed by the author of the famous *Critiques* disunion, or separation the idea from its object, seems irrefutable.

God of the Philosophers versus God of the Mystics

In his prolific (and humanistic throughout) article Marek Kozłowski writes: “To confront mystics and philosophers in respect of the ways they experience God’s presence we assume that they all agree about sense of reference to the absolute being as well as that both parties accomplish that in their own, qualitatively different way. Treating mysticism with the respect due to its contribution to render religious truth of humanity accessible, philosophy transcends the religion of a shepherd lordly priming his flock and becomes the dialogue which transforms the flock into a community of intelligent people participating in the whole accessible truth through their own »I think«”. (Marek Kozłowski, *God of Philosophers versus God of mystics. Superiority without Condescension*).

The Author suggests not but one idea of God - as an alternative to which he reinterprets a meaning of the Trinity in his own and at the same time truly Hegelian way, which appears to be quite far from the orthodoxy. According to the reinterpretation in question, the distinctness of the two, mysticism and philosophy, seems to be expressed accurately by the figures of the Son and the Spirit; whereas the former entangles primarily emotions and imagination, thus becoming the source of the religion, the latter represents philosophy’s striving to grasp conceptually the deity as wholeness.

As far as comparison of the two approaches is concerned, R. Paradowski makes an interesting remark: the two “Gods”, philosophical and mystical, as much as philosophy and religion in general, have something in common, namely, all these are the method of coping with death; however, the difference seems even more relevant: the philosopher alongside with his accenting the separation from non-I proclaims life, while both the theologian and mystic, when disowning conceptually the individual, they vanish in non-I and thus they proclaim death.

To seal the subject, one more observation is worthy of note, i.e., it appears significant, that since the opposition to the rationalistic, mainly occidentalist philosophy of God, manifesting itself in a resistance to its insufficiency regarding an ability to grasp the experience of “lively God” absorbs mystics’ attention remarkably, the addressers do not

reciprocate this interest or they do with a relatively modest involvement.

Of Metaphysics and its Alleged Poor Condition

Somehow it happened that recently philosophy has been caused to excuse or justify herself, therefore the question of topicality of this noblest of all disciplines has again become focus of unfriendly attention. All the more metaphysics has outwardly found itself in pitiful conditions, or at least, quite popular trend to impute such a current may be noticed. However, there is no need to worry about its future fate; the area to be concerned about is culture in the broadest sense of the word, not metaphysics itself. Had Leibniz been given grace of foreseeing demagogical perversion inflicted to his sublime idea of mathematization spoiled and reduced to arithmetical dehumanization, he would certainly thrown ashes over his head. The individual number of each monad ("Essences of things are like numbers", Leibniz writes), was intended to be a sign of the dignity implied by its origination from the Supreme Monad, as well as of its exceptionality in the great chain of being, not a faded number tattoo on the arm, nor IP address exposing all the operation to tracing among other sequences of zeros and ones, finally not the absurd system of arbitrarily ascribed "points" as equivalents for unmeasurable fruits of intellectual work.

As to "topicality" and "usefulness" of philosophy, let the readers forget another declaration and pass their own judgement.

Once again wishing everyone to whom it may concern pleasant and fruitful reading I take this opportunity to express my special thanks to the Authors for their cooperation.

Małgorzata Gwary
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