

SUMMARY

The present issue of the “Ethos” is a tribute to the output of Zygmunt Krasiński, Polish Romantic poet and thinker, best known for his *Un-Divine Comedy*. The articles we have included in this volume refer to various implications of Krasiński’s work for the history of ideas, in particular for the philosophy of history.

The text *From the Editors* presents a twofold, philosophical and theological, approach to the understanding of history, and it is aimed at posing the problem of how the history of Man-God can constitute the norm for universal history.

In an extract from the 1982 final meditation for the Way of the Cross led in the Roman Colosseum and in an extract from his speech to representatives of the Institute of National Heritage delivered in Rome this year, John Paul II stresses that throughout history the Cross has been the symbol of Life born out of suffering and death, and therefore the Cross should become the point of reference for the disciples of Christ in their earthly pilgrimage, which inevitably involves the effort to shape their humanity so that they could become closer to each other and thus closer to God.

Giovanni Reale shows that the evil gnawing at modern man has its source in the nihilistic attitude which has dominated our culture, yet it can be overcome if we return to the wisdom of ancient Greek philosophy, which teaches us that: 1. so-called scientific reason is not the only type of reason, 2. ideology cannot replace truth, 3. contemplation is as significant to the human person as technology is, 4. happiness cannot be reduced to material welfare, 5. abandonment of violence is a necessary condition of the power of persuasion, 6. beauty should be recognized as a value that reveals the Good, 7. the true sense of human love must be regained, 8. we need to return to the proper – metaphysical – understanding of the constitution of man, 9. the universe must be seen as manifesting a finality, as opposed to its being perceived as chaos, 10. we need to understand Plato’s message included in his concept of the second sailing.

The articles included in the first block offer general reflections on *Philosophy and Theology of History*. Fr. Piotr Moskal describes various approaches to historiosophy and presents an outline of his own proposal of a realistic philosophy of history. Then Adam Rodziński penetrates the sense of human existence by referring to various elements of philosophical anthropology and theology, and shows that the Holy Trinity, which constitutes the pattern of genuine union between persons, reveals personal dignity as the principal value of personal existence. Andrzej Stoff in turn argues that examination of the relations between literature and history necessarily involves a combination of two complementary cognitive perspectives, namely, seeing literature as both testimony to history and inherent part of culture (and thus as part of history), and he argues that literature, whose important function consists in a presentation of history, is ultimately aimed at the affirmation of existence, and therefore its presence in culture is unquestionable. Fr. Antoni Tronina presents the Biblical vision of human history that can be found in the Old

Testament: history as *gesta Dei*, *historiai* and *diatheke*, and points that according to the New Testament, together with Christ came “the completion of the time” (Ga 4: 4) and the time of salvation, thus the Christians should now turn their look towards the future.

The succeeding set of articles is entitled **K r a s i ń s k i ’ s R e a d i n g o f H i s t o r y**, and it includes texts whose authors confront Krasiński’s historiosophic vision with the actual historical events of his time and with his personal experience of history. First Fr. Jan Siennicki describes Krasiński’s Christian vision of the logic of history in which the Romantic poet succeeded in reconciling two apparently contradictory approaches: traditional providentialism and a modern understanding of history. Then Andrzej Waśko, in an extract from his book *Zygmunt Krasiński. Oblicza poety* (Kraków 2001) [Zygmunt Krasiński. Faces of the Poet], presents Krasiński’s conception of man (as composed of body, soul and spirit), the maturing of his views on the theory of poetry, his sociological and political reflection, as well as his thought on the philosophy of history, seen against the background of his epoch. Zbigniew Sudolski reconstructs the reception of Henryk Kamieński’s ideas by Zygmunt Krasiński, and describes the ideological controversies between the two Romantic thinkers. Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak points that despite the undoubted dominance of the prophetic element in Krasiński’s literary output, the poet’s sensibility to visual beauty, as well as his tendency to contemplate beauty in the surrounding landscape (which thus gained a revelatory function), enriched his historiosophic visions with the spiritual and the metaphysical. Concluding this section, Anna Kubale analyzes the problem of man faced with suffering and evil in Z. Krasiński’s *Un-Divine Comedy* and *Before Dawn*, and points that according to Krasiński, overcoming evil and suffering is an absolutely essential human experience.

The next part is entitled “**D i v i n e o r u n - D i v i n e ?**” **H i s t o r y i n L i t e r a t u r e**, and it includes texts whose authors have undertaken the problem of the transcendent sense of history, as it is reflected in literature. It opens with an article by Dorota Klimanowska, CSSF, who examines the influence of Stoic philosophy on the shaping of Cyprian Norwid’s outlook upon the world and on his vision of man’s presence in history. Then Bogdan Burdziej presents the figure of Julian the Apostate, the last pagan emperor, whose dying words were supposedly *Galilae, vicisti!* (the concluding words of Z. Krasiński’s *Un-Divine Comedy*), and who thus became a literary inspiration for 19th century Polish poets Felicjan Faleński and Adam Asnyk. Ryszard Zajączkowski provides an analysis of the works of Alexander Wat, whose literary output includes a genuine testimony to the inhumanity of the life under the Soviet regime, and who demonstrates in his autobiography, as well as in his numerous essays, the “un-Divine,” indeed devilish, side of communism. Maciej Nowak in turn analyzes the literary output of Hanna Malewska, a somewhat forgotten Polish novelist, and aims to reconstruct her deeply Christian reflection on history, as it is reflected in her novel *Przemija postać świata* [So passes the shape of the world]. Finally, Pál S. Varga writes about the visions of human history that can be found in Imre Madách’s *Tragedy of Man*.

The articles grouped under the heading **C o n t e m p o r a r y C o n t r o v e r s i e s o v e r I d e a s a n d H i s t o r y** address the problem of moral appreciation of historical events. Dariusz Skórczewski undertakes the problem of how the value crisis in European culture during the 1930’s affected the literary criticism of that time, and focuses on the fact that numerous critics, especially those following French thinker Jacques Maritain, thought it a task for literary criticism to point to the values literature should manifest, and extended the guiding role of literary criticism also to other spheres of social and individual life. Robert Piłat in turn concentrates on the problem of how it can be possible to make moral appraisals of historical events, and whether, or to which extent, such appraisals can involve an individual perspective of opinion; he examines the views of St. Augustine, I. Kant and F. Fukuyama, and points that the controversy over the moral appraisal of history is at the same time a controversy over the sensibility of historiosophy.

In the section **I n t e r v i e w s** of the “**E t h o s**,” Fr. Alfred Wierzbicki talks to Rocco Buttiglione, Minister for European Affairs in the Italian Government, about the axiological background of European integration, which must not be seen merely in the economic terms.

In the section **T h i n k i n g a b o u t t h e F a t h e r l a n d**.. Czesław Walesa describes his tragic childhood: deported, together with his family, to the Soviet Union during the Second World War, he experienced life in exile, but was offered a chance to return to his homeland.

The section **P o l e m i c s** includes a polemic between Andrzej Tyszczyk and Wojciech Chudy concerning W. Chudy’s article on veracity and the nature of falsehood in art, published in “Ethos” No. 4(52) 2000.

The section **N o t e s a n d R e v i e w s** opens with a review by Piotr Lipski and Cezary Hunkiewicz of Z. Krasieński’s *Pisma filozoficzne i polityczne* [Philosophical and Political Writings]. Then Agnieszka Bielak reflects on two recently published collections of Z. Kubiak’s essays, *Uśmiech kore* [Kore’s smile] and *Nowy Brewiarz Europejczyka* [The European’s New Breviary]. Anna Kawalec and Paweł Kawalec review a monograph *Polska filozofia wobec encykliki “Fides et ratio”* [Polish philosophy facing the Encyclical *Fides et ratio*]. The section concludes with the **P r o p o s a l s** of the “**E t h o s**.”

In the section devoted to **R e p o r t s** Tomasz Korpysz writes about three sessions on the literary output of Cyprian Norwid held recently; Andrzej Derdziuk, OFM Cap, reports on the annual meeting of the Society of Polish Moral Theologians; Adam Fitas gives an account of the 4th Axiological Conference, and Fr. Jacenty Mastej presents his reflections on the 2nd International Congress of Fundamental Theology.

The section **T h e P o n t i f i c a t e i n t h e E y e s o f t h e W o r l d** includes a personal account by Arman Nurlanov of John Paul II’s apostolic visit to Kazakhstan.

In the column **T h r o u g h t h e P r i s m o f t h e E t h o s**, Cezary Ritter writes about the significance of moral and religious values for the future of Europe.

The volume concludes with a **B i b l i o g r a p h y** (by Fr. Artur J. Katolo) of John Paul II’s selected speeches on the Christian sense of history, which is followed by **N o t e s a b o u t t h e A u t h o r s**.