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DILIGERE VERITATEM OMNEM ET IN OMNIBUS
(To Love all Truth and to Love it in Everything)

The first commitment of the philosopher is to the truth; it is the diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus. [...] To love truth in everything is very hard, no doubt, but we should commit ourselves to this goal, striving for authentic philosophy.

No adequate vision of man in Europe today is possible which does not recognise that man's first task is the search for truth, and the quest to build his life on the foundation of truth. For rational life of the intellect is impossible without making judgements and holding convictions about states of affairs, about things existing or not existing, about their being so or otherwise. And each judgement, each proposition that something is the case or not the case, makes a claim to truth, whether this claim to truth is fulfilled or not. The inescapable claim to truth of each judgement, a claim to truth which is inseparable from its essence, is the claim that our judgement about a state of affairs actually corresponds with the reality of that state of affairs, that things themselves are as we judge them to be. Whether our convictions and judgements about the being and value of things is arrived at by rational knowledge, by some belief based on probabilities, or by an act of trust or of faith in the word or testimony of others, it is impossible for man to live without making judgements about how things are. This idea that truth is the inner principle of human action and that no *actus humanus* is possible which does not aim at a foundation in the truth about man and about things themselves, stands also in the centre of the vision of man expressed by Pope John Paul II (already in *The Acting Person*) and in his Papal documents.

But if truth is everywhere presupposed, then not only the problem of what truth is but also the problems of how *knowledge* of truth is possible, and how error can be avoided are crucial. Aristotle states in his *Metaphysics* that such a claim to truth also presupposes the necessary truth of the principle of contradiction, which says that nothing can be and not be at the same time and in the same sense, and that therefore no judgement and its contradictory opposite can both be true. No assertion and meaningful action, Aristotle asserts, is possible without presupposing the truth of this principle. He adds that the radical sceptic, Cratylus, who denied all knowledge of truth, understood this and

therefore remained completely silent for many years. And yet – says Aristotle – he was not completely consistent. For he indicated with movements of his fingers how he felt or what he wanted – and in this he still presupposed the truth that what he affirmed to be the case was not at the same time the object of a true negative judgement. Only in a vegetative state without any thought, Aristotle observes, no truth-claim is being made. On the other hand, any distinction, any assertion and any action presupposes truth. Thus, truth as conformity of our judgements and propositions with reality, with the actual state of affairs, is not only a crucial theme of philosophy and science, but also of any human life and of any rational act. And therefore every vision of man must be built upon the foundation of recognising the indispensable and crucial role of truth for human life.

It is both a special joy and an honour for me to speak about the *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* (about loving all truth and loving it in everything), which is the ideal and motto of our Academy precisely at this meeting which constitutes the biggest encounter of faculty and students of the University of Lublin with members of the Board, faculty and students of the International Academy of Philosophy in the Principality Liechtenstein. This meeting is both the symbol and reality of a manifold and profound mutual relationship between our institutions to which already at a previous occasion the Rector of this University has made reference. A former student of the KUL, Father Józef Tarnówka, is presently proposing a doctoral thesis at our Academy which speaks of an LL-School (Lublin-Liechtenstein-School) – a school which is even less likely to be a mere invention than the “Cracow-Lublin-School” (of which I spoke in “Aletheia”)¹ and the legitimacy of which was disputed by Professor Georges Kalinowski and kindly defended by Professor Tadeusz Styczeń in “Aletheia” No. IV.

The new Lublin-Liechtenstein-School of philosophy was born from an encounter of the Polish thinkers who find a special home in Lublin with those philosophers who – in 1986 – elected Liechtenstein as the seat of their academic endeavours (some of them were active before in the USA). And the intellectual union of these two schools – through many lectures, dialogues, and courses – became so close and profound that the professors and some students of this university feel quite at home in Liechtenstein and we, professors and students of the IAP, also feel that Lublin is our spiritual home.

¹ Cf. J. S e i f e r t, *Karol Cardinal Wojtyła (Pope John Paul II) as Philosopher and the Cracow/Lublin School of Philosophy*, “Aletheia” 2(1981) pp. 133-194; G. K a l i n o w s k i, *La Pensée Philosophique de Karol Wojtyła et la Faculté de l’Université Catholique de Lublin*, “Aletheia” 4(1988) pp. 198-216; T. S t y c z e ń, *Reply to Kalinowski: By Way of an Addendum to the Addenda*, *ibid*, pp. 217-225.

In the light of the reality of an LL-School, as sketched out here, such an encounter as the present one proves quite significant and takes on the almost historical dimensions of a meeting between representatives of this great seat of existentialist Thomistic *philosophia perennis* and of a new ethical personalism with the realist phenomenological school of Liechtenstein. And nothing could illustrate better the meaning of the relationship between our institutions than the words *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus*, which may well be regarded as the motto of both schools, and at the same time as the principle which led to the encounter and growing union of Lublin and Liechtenstein. In both schools the strict openness to things themselves, to the given, is regarded as the supreme principle of philosophy. And *epoché* (the bracketing of the existential autonomy or of the autonomy of essences *vis-à-vis* consciousness) can only qualify as an adequate method if being itself really requires a pure concentration of essence. Members of the LL-School both accept and reject many Aristotelian and Thomistic positions in accordance with the question of how closely they adhere to the given.

It is hardly possible to speak here about all aspects of the application of *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* to the specific thought of Karol Wojtyła, and more qualified interpreters of the Pope's thought will speak on this subject. Thus, allow me to speak here about all aspects of the application of *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* first of all as it applies to philosophy. In order to explain the elements involved in the *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* as it applies to philosophy, we have to consider a number of intellectual elements, conditions and goals.

1. In the first place, the primary task of teaching and research in an institute or school committed to our principle consists in philosophising about reality itself, and not in a primary effort of achieving historical knowledge about philosophical ideas.

At the centre of such a goal of philosophical work stands philosophising itself – the asking of philosophical questions and the gaining of philosophical knowledge – and in the first place its object, i.e. reality, being, essence, value, and the existence of things themselves. The *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* follows the conviction expressed by St. Thomas Aquinas, that philosophy is not just concerned with the opinions of others about things. For this reason, studies in the history of philosophy, however important they are, can never replace philosophy itself. Precisely this goal, as stated at the beginning of *The Acting Person* of Karol Wojtyła when he says that his goal consists in exploring the thing itself under consideration – namely the person himself – is characteristic of such a genuinely philosophical quest for truth. In contradistinction to philosophies which restrict philosophising to linguistic analysis, or to a hermeneutics of texts, such a genuine philosophising as the one described here aims at an ultimate methodological foundation of objective philosophical

knowledge in epistemology, ethics, philosophy of man, social and political philosophy, etc. A serious effort in this direction culminates in the interest for ontology and axiology as the investigation of principles and kinds of being and good (values). The research in the field of philosophy of being (ontology) reaches its climax in the metaphysics of the person and of the absolute reason of being. Such a classical conception of philosophy aims at a clear knowledge of the truth of things themselves, and seeks to attain as great a freedom as possible from all kinds of narrowness, undue restrictions, or distortions of philosophical knowledge. This is of special significance also in the field of ethics, as it was treated in the Lublin School – grounded, among others, by Karol Wojtyła and developed by T. Styczeń and A. Szostek. For at issue here are the highest values and human responsibility. Therefore, any intellectual aberration in this sphere has its dire effects on the level of the concrete being, and life of the individual and society. Europe today is especially threatened by a relativism and by arbitrary theories and ideologies as the foundation for human action, instead of being founded upon the principle of the truth about man and about things.

Precisely in view of the overwhelming new problems of ecology, medicine, in addition to many others, ethics – as clarification of the foundations, as well as of the essence and content of morality – assumes a significance it never possessed before. In this regard, the constant return of our thinking to experience also becomes decisive.

The knowledge of the history of philosophical ideas should always serve the knowledge of things themselves. The task of philosophy in a new Europe is inseparable from the effort to free oneself from any form of reduction of philosophy to its history. Certainly, scholarly acquaintance with texts and knowledge about the history of philosophy are indispensable for responsible philosophising today; and yet historical studies must never replace the proper philosophical understanding of reality. This also in no way means that thinkers or philosophy students are spared the effort of serious hermeneutical work. Intense studies of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Anselm of Canterbury, Descartes, Machiavelli, Kant, Hegel, Bolzano, Brentano, or Husserl are necessary in order to keep alive the great European and universally human tradition, and in order not to fall into the narrowness of a sterile philosophising of one's own in which the great discoveries of the past are lost. But also studies in the history of philosophy must stand under the primacy of the effort to know "things themselves." For, as Goethe observes, we cannot understand "the Ancients" if we do not ourselves attempt what they attempted: namely, "to understand the world and to express the fruit of this knowledge."

2. A second aspect of philosophising which is committed to the principle *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus*, can be summarised in the following way: Back to Things in Themselves (with the stress on phenomenological real-

ism and ethical personalism). Pursuing a philosophical research which – always harkening back to the classical and medieval, as well as to modern sources – at the same time returns to things in themselves, the philosopher today also fulfils in a special way the call of Edmund Husserl – “Back to Things in Themselves” – in the original realist and objectivist interpretation of this exhortation. This Husserlian maxim was later carried out and applied to different areas of philosophy by A. Reinach, M. Scheler, D. von Hildebrand, R. Ingarden, H. Conrad-Martius, E. Stein, and by thinkers close to the analytical tradition of philosophy, such as R. Chisholm and – again in a different fashion – by the representatives of Polish ethical personalism: by K. Wojtyła, T. Styczeń, A. Szostek, and others.

In the ethics of Polish ethical personalism and in the thought of Karol Wojtyła, to whose vision of Europe the present conference is particularly dedicated, Husserl’s maxim assumes the form of a return to the most eminent “thing itself”, to the person in his or her specifically moral dimensions. Such a personalism in ethics finds its full expression only in a phenomenology and in a metaphysics of the person – as inspired by Max Scheler, Edith Stein and Dietrich von Hildebrand.

Certainly, an authentic personalism is possible also without ultimate epistemological and metaphysical foundations, as the work of some French personalists, for example E. Lévinas, proves. However, it requires a firm metaphysical foundation, which is a distinguishing goal both of the thought of Karol Wojtyła and of the new LL-School.

Also Augusto Del Noce, by whose philosophy Rocco Buttiglione – who is going to be honoured at the end of this conference – was inspired, fits into this line of thought which seeks to return also with respect to the vision of Europe and of man in European history, to a great metaphysical and epistemologically founded vision of society and politics, a vision based on the truth about man and the indefatigable search for truth.

3. A third main goal of any philosophy committed to the *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* is a critical new foundation of philosophical realism, which could also be described as a movement “back to the *noumena*” – to the knowable “things in themselves”. Although *noumena* – in purely linguistic terms – means the intelligible things, Kant meant by this term a totally unknowable object, which – according to his view – can be designated by a mere limit-concept: “thing in itself”. In the aftermath of Kant and of British Empiricism, it appears to most philosophers from the eighteenth century onwards that it is impossible to do philosophy as a science of that which is in itself. Husserl saw in 1901 almost no philosopher who kept his thought entirely free from general relativism, and after 1905 he himself fell into a transcendental relativism which led to the abandoning of objectivist realism – with meaningful exceptions – within the phenomenological movement.

Deeply convinced that an authentic philosophical realism continues to be rationally and critically justifiable, also after Kant's "Copernican turn" towards the subject and Husserl's conversion to subjective idealism, and that the insights of realist phenomenology and personalism opened the way for the new formulation of classical metaphysics in twentieth century, Karol Wojtyła and his co-founders of the realist school in Poland – as well as other related tendencies such as realist phenomenology in Liechtenstein – are in a critical but open dialogue with all these philosophies of the past and future which, since the ancient sceptics, and especially since Hume and Kant, have called into question the possibility of metaphysics and of the objective theory of being and value in general.

Not without the impact of such works as M. Scheler's *Formalismus in der Ethik und die Materiale Wertethik*, or the epistemological writings of Dietrich von Hildebrand, the school of thinking in philosophy, theology and ethics – inspired in a decisive way by Karol Wojtyła – has achieved the radical new formulation of phenomenological method. It has pointed out that precisely the philosophy which returns to the things themselves and to the person, also today can know and demonstrate the essential structure and existence of the world and of being which are in themselves and totally independent from human thinking. Equally, it discloses the values and foundations of moral action which are not the result of subjective human decision, but are discovered by man.

This principle which St. Augustine formulates by saying that such truth about man *non facitur, sed invenitur*, stands in the centre of the vision of thinking about man which, according to the present Pope, can help to renew European culture today. This principle of a great intellectual father of Europe – St. Augustine – involves the receptivity of knowledge, that the movement of knowledge goes essentially from being and the intelligible nature of things, towards the human intellect.

It involves the resistance to all Promethean tendencies of constructionist thinking and reductionisms which do not do justice to being and to a spirit of openness, of penetrating into the structures of reality itself.

It involves an overcoming of the sceptical despair of truth and the discovery that in all errors many true insights are already contained, and that no man is able to avoid the search for truth, much of which he already presupposes and often understands.

4. A fourth goal of philosophy truly committed to *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* concerns a knowledge of the whole of reality and of man – a knowledge which resists the fragmentation and tearing apart of philosophy and of human thought, as such, into little partial disciplines. At least since the time of Plato and Aristotle, philosophy has laid claim to a knowledge of reality as a whole. And it had presented itself as an ordered whole of partial sub-disciplines, which extend from epistemology, logic, and formal ontology,

to the philosophy of nature, as well as from a philosophy of man, of the state and of society, up to metaphysics, and to a philosophy of the first and absolute being. Sharing the claim of philosophy to a universal knowledge of the whole, whose idea was elevated in German idealism to the rank of alleged "absolute knowledge," certain fields of philosophy possess primordial significance: epistemology, as it aims at an ultimate foundation of all knowledge and of all science, including philosophy; logic, as the most general theory of all sciences and as the foundation of the specific methods of particular sciences; ontology, as the exploration of the most universal principles of being, and metaphysics of absolute being. This classical claim – inseparable from the essence of philosophy – of attaining a systematic and therefore ordered body of knowledge, appears in the history of philosophy mainly in three forms:

a) In the form of ancient philosophy which – in spite of its claim to universal knowledge, especially of the absolute Being and Good (Plato, Aristotle), and in spite of its attempts at replacing the weak Greek religion by purely philosophical religion and teaching about salvation – also insists on Socratic ignorance and on man's awareness of the limits of his own knowledge, and – at least in Plato, and even more so in Socrates – is open towards higher wisdom, beyond the reach of human reason.

b) In the form of Mediaeval *Summa*, according to which the universal understanding of reality is only possible as a symbiosis of philosophy (reason) and of revealed theology (faith).

c) In the form of the "system-thinking" of modern philosophy from Descartes to Hegel, and in a less dominant form up to the present day. It attempts to achieve an autonomous and universal "absolute knowledge", in which other sciences and religion appear only as moments which are both cancelled and preserved by means of pure reason alone. This "system-thinking" culminates in Hegel.

After the historical breakdown of Hegel's system – and even more in the face of the increasing distrust of the Western and Eastern world against Marxist and other "comprehensive visions" of the world – led to a breakdown of any faith in absolute systems, philosophy fragmented more and more and concentrated on specialized research of particular issues. The philosophers abandoned their aspiration to a knowledge of the whole, and it was often natural science which usurped more and more the claim to comprehensive knowledge. This claim, abandoned by the philosophers, reappears today in many absolutisations of partial knowledge by scientists: evolutionism and other ideological explanations of the whole world through accident or necessity, or through the sub-conscious, or in terms of social determinisms and of history, etc.

A special task of the school of thought about man and the spiritual foundations of Europe, inspired by Karol Wojtyła, can be seen as a rehabilitation of the ultimately unrenounceable, systematic character of philosophy, and, in the

first place, its aspiration to the universal truth about man, remaining in accord with the revelation, faith and the teaching of the Church.

But how is this possible, precisely from the point of view that remains close to the given? According to the principles of rational knowledge, at least the third above-mentioned notion of philosophy must be greeted with scepticism.

A justified scepticism *vis-à-vis* any human claim to a comprehensive universal knowledge, in the context of which each single question would be perfectly answerable, does not entail or justify a scepticism towards any systematic proceeding of philosophical knowledge, nor to the aiming of philosophical knowledge at completeness, logical coherence and a cognition of the first principles of being, thought and action. Thus, the great Thomistic philosophical tradition in Lublin – complemented through the personalism of Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II, which constantly seeks to return to experience – is characterized by a lively interest in metaphysics as the knowledge of “all being” and of “being as such,” as it was understood by Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas.

At the same time, Karol Wojtyła connects the aspiration to knowledge of the whole, based upon the love for truth, with humble recognition of the limits of human knowledge. If the limits are not accepted, the aiming at the systematic universal vision of reality succumbs to the danger of a premature systematisation which obscures the true nature of things themselves, as it was characteristic of reductionist philosophies of the past and present. The John Paul II vision of man constitutes their opposition in the sense of Socrates’ knowledge of one’s own ignorance. In it there is always an awareness of the abysses of human suffering and of the apories and mysteries of being – as in many thinkers such as B. Pascal, S. Kierkegaard, J. H. Newman or G. Marcel. This awareness does not permit any purely rational explanation or even deduction of all the truths, and forbids man the Promethean ethics which ignores the limits of human knowledge, and against which Hans Jonas has especially warned.

The complex relationships between philosophy and religion in Karol Wojtyła’s thought involves the eminently positive mutual enrichment of both. Fundamental, and today almost universally accepted discoveries such as the equal dignity of man and woman, freedom or universal human rights which forbid, for example, slavery, and which in Poland in the days of Solidarity, and before the liberation of many European countries from Communism, acquired a crucial political significance, were gained historically only after centuries of influence of the Christian vision of man. Pope John Paul II during his first visit to Poland presented to Europe in an impressive way the connection of human rights to philosophy and religion – as well as to the history of Poland and the protest of King Sigismund August against the principle *cuius regio eius religio*: freedom of conscience, freedom of religion – but freedom committed to truth!

Also, an atheist will hardly overlook the actual positive influence of Christianity and of John Paul II's vision of Europe, based on faith and philosophical insights.

Thus, the vision of Europe presented by Pope John Paul II is at the same time profoundly rooted in Western tradition and modern, open to contemporary philosophical contributions.

But the vision which is implied in the motto of IAP – which I dare to consider also as the motto of the vision of Europe of John Paul II, this vision cannot be restricted to a purely intellectual vision of Europe. If we consider the motto of an academic institution, *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus*, we might first be struck by the fact that it begins with the word *diligere*. How can an academic institution given to learning, to study, to knowledge, exhort its members to give a response of their hearts and will to truth? Where knowledge counts, which role does love play?

Maybe we will see that immediately and why a commitment of the will is extremely important in practical fields concerned with human actions, for example in medicine, because it is quite clear that medicine is not only a matter of studies and of detailed theoretical knowledge about the human body, about the causes and cures of disease, and about the health of the human body, but also possesses a crucial practical and ethical dimension. It therefore requires the commitment of medical professionals to use their knowledge according to the ends and purposes of medicine, as the Hippocratic *Oath* expresses so admirably.

Even with regard to a science of such practical dimensions as medicine, however, it was by no means universally recognized that it requires a free commitment of the will to its final end. Aristotle, for example, says that the end of medicine, namely the promotion of health, is willed by any physician as necessarily as – according to him – happiness is necessarily willed by every man. Since Aristotle thought that the ultimate end of human actions is willed necessarily, he could not hold that the final purpose of medicine or of human action can and must be an object of free choice. Therefore the physician can, accordingly, only deliberate concerning the means to achieve his fixed goal, the health of patients. But when we consider the practice of euthanasia or of abortion, or when we consider the recent history of the concentration camps where Nazi doctors damaged the health of people, or when we think of all the doctors of all times who, oppressed by political systems and political powers, consented to harm their patients or prisoners, or confined healthy persons to mental hospitals, when we consider all the crimes committed by medical doctors in Chile and in other totalitarian regimes in which doctors were forced or were seduced to become the instruments of torture of the innocent, then we see easily that the goals of medicine, the values for the service of which medicine was instituted, can be quite radically violated by a member of the medical profession. We understand, however, that when physicians fall victim to such temptations,

their activity no longer deserves the name of medicine: for instead of serving life it destroys life, instead of saving the life of people who are dying, it delivers them to death or to torture, and thus it becomes clear that the values medicine serves, that the ethics and ethos of medicine, must be freely chosen.

Against this background, we understand the significance of one of the great texts of mankind: the Hippocratic *Oath*. The free commitment to values it entails is even more urgently needed today and is more up to date than ever before. For the practitioners of medicine at the time of Aristotle could perhaps be believed to adhere necessarily to their noble goals – although even in Aristotle's times, of course, this was not true. Hippocrates in fact introduced the text of this *Oath* as a solemn condition for bestowing the right to practice the medical art on doctors because of the great temptation of physicians to abuse their art. Only for this reason did he require the physician to swear solemnly never to abuse the patient, never to be more concerned with payment than with the welfare of the patient, never to damage health intentionally, never to give a pregnant woman a deadly potion to kill her baby, never to refuse medical treatment for reason of poverty, never to intend any other ends more than the good of the patient, etc. In a word, the Hippocratic *Oath* requires from all physicians to refuse all the *intrinsece mala* which they will be tempted to commit in their professional life. And thus this *Oath* is one of the precursors of the Encyclical *Veritatis splendor* with its insistence on the existence of actions which are evil in and of themselves, and can never be justified by consequences of calculations of good effects. And from the solemn and magnificent text of this *Oath* it was clear that the doctors also at the time of Hippocrates and Aristotle could freely choose other ends, not merely the ones which medicine is supposed to serve. Today this is clearer than ever. And it is likewise clear that the characteristic essence of medicine – in contradistinction to organised crime through technical medical means – has as part of itself the moral dimension and commitment of the physician.

In philosophy – although its very name means love of wisdom – or in other purely theoretical disciplines it is more difficult to understand why a commitment of love should have any decisive place. But in a certain way for philosophy – and of course also for theology and other kindred disciplines – love, in the sense of a free moral commitment, is even more essential than for medicine and, as a matter of fact, co-constitutes the very essence of authentic philosophy. A medical doctor may abuse his art, even commit crimes, and still retain the ability to solve medical problems and be a superb doctor for certain patients. He can do excellent work in part – even if his free attitude to the goals of medicine is bad. But since philosophy consists in the pursuit of higher truth and wisdom, the fundamental moral commitment to the *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* is even more essentially and absolutely necessary for the philosopher than the fulfilment of the medical oath by the physician. For as

soon as the philosopher abuses his more technical skills, his intellectual faculties, his learning, his ability to think and to make distinctions, his knowledge of great texts, his ability to interpret them, his ability to unfold and to use ideas, to deduce certain consequences from premises or to defend certain intellectual positions, he becomes a sophist and does not reach the fundamental goal of philosophy which, according to texts of St. Augustine and of St. Thomas Aquinas, does not have as task the study of the mere opinions of other philosophers, but rather to know the truth of things.

As soon as the philosopher abuses his learning and mental abilities for the sake of his own glory, or of money, he will immediately turn into a sophist, which Plato in all his dialogues presents as the great antipode, as the antithesis of the philosopher. Thus we should recognise that all our learning, all our knowledge, all the knowledge on which we can be tested in an examination – is not the most essential part of being a philosopher. The very essence and soul of the philosopher is his knowledge of things themselves and his free commitment to the highest goal of philosophy: namely the pursuit of wisdom, of knowledge, of the whole truth which he should love in its most modest parts, as Plato says. This, of course, does not diminish but increases the weight and significance of receiving and acquiring proper intellectual and scholarly training in philosophy.

A free commitment of the will to the authentic values and goods which philosophy should serve and a free acceptance of the responsibilities and duties which one has as a philosopher are required. And this commitment of the will is in a certain way more essential for the philosopher than his purely intellectual achievements. Because the most refined mind, when it is straying from the truth, and does not even search for it, is an antithesis to the philosopher. The most brilliant, devilish mind is even more opposed to the essence of the philosopher than the simple farmer or child who has a moral commitment to the pursuit of truth. So from a certain point of view, the freely chosen pursuit of truth, even though this is not philosophy proper, academically speaking is a factor more important in the constitution of the essence of the philosopher than is the intellectual ability of knowing, distinguishing, or analysing the essences of things. The radical example of the devilish mind should teach this unambiguously.

It is interesting to note that in Plato – who always insists on the love of truth as the foundational virtue of philosophy (the IAP motto being just a transcription of some Platonic texts in the catalogue of virtues of the philosopher from book VI of Plato's *Republic*) – you find two ideas of philosophy and of the philosopher: one is quite academic and really a goal for very few, brilliant, academically-oriented people of the highest class. Only a few are able to be philosophers in this sense – and, of course, also and especially these most gifted philosophical natures are bound to use moral criteria to love the truth in

everything and to hate falsehood; otherwise they turn into seeds of corruption and sophistry and "nothing healthy is in them," as Plato puts it.

But at the same time there are passages in Plato's works in which he not only praises love of truth and other virtues as philosophical virtues, but in which he praises the simple man as the one who pursues truth and justice: for example, in the *Crito* Socrates praises the very simple jailer who served Socrates before his death, and he says of this man that he is a wonderful, fine man who pursued justice and truthfulness truly in everything. So Socrates in a certain way presents this simple and humble man to his own students of philosophy as an example of someone who loves the truth. This reminds us a bit of the role of the child in the Gospel. Thus you find also another idea of philosophy in Plato, universally accessible to every man and simply constituted by the free and profound commitment to the pursuit of wisdom, of truth and of wisdom.

In the sphere of the intellect the free commitment to noble goals is, in a certain way, even more difficult to achieve and at the same time more profoundly important than in medicine. As long as a given society will punish a doctor if he substitutes the care of health by destroying health, he will easily abstain from prescribing poison. After prescribing poisonous pills, he will be immediately put to jail and perhaps stay there for two and three decades. But in philosophy, if somebody sells poisonous pills and earns a lot of money, if he writes books full of devastating errors which can in fact lead a nation to the abyss of ruin, he has rather excellent chances to be praised and to become a super-star on television, to be mentioned by every newspaper and become much richer and more famous than if he practised philosophy in a more noble manner. Already in Athens the philosopher Socrates was poor and the Sophists were so rich that they could erect golden statues of themselves. The temptation of aspiring more to fame than to truth is great for philosophers.

Recently, Prof. H. Lübbe from the University of Zürich, who defends a functionalistic idea of truth in his philosophy of religion, said before the General Assembly of the European Academy of Sciences in Salzburg that the responsibilities of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, of the humane disciplines, are enormous. He believes that in the future the thing that will be most frequently mentioned about this century is that in it more people were murdered by political systems than in any other age before: through the Stalinist system, through the Nazis, and many others. Lübbe added that one will be inclined today to think that this constitutes a relapse of the twentieth century into a barbarian, primitive mode of thinking. But he expressed the conviction that while perhaps a certain state of mind in former Yugoslavia, in Croatia, in Serbia, Georgia, Sudan, and many other countries, constitutes simply a relapse into barbarism, the greatest crimes of the century were coolly planned and were the fruit of the philosophical and very sophisticated intellectual ideas of Marx and of many

others. It was such ideas that led to the intellectual defence of millions of murders committed in the name of ideologies and ideas. And therefore, Lübke argued, the responsibility of the *Geisteswissenschaftler* shows itself to be even larger than that of any other scientist. For while philosophy does not so immediately influence society as technology or medicine, it does so indirectly and most powerfully. It is the ideological ground of great political systems or of general ideas which dominate society. And thus philosophy plays a crucial role in public and political life, as background and source from which revolution and reforms spring. Even if revolutions and reforms, especially religious and spiritual ones, require much more than ideologies or philosophical ideas to happen, and even if it takes great and inspired personalities to bring them about, the philosophical ideas and atmosphere of the time and country will exercise tremendous influence upon men. In the form of racism, of the oppression of parts of society, of abortion laws, of euthanasia, and of countless other concrete social and cultural realities, it is really philosophical ideas which cost the lives of many more people than any medical mistake. If you ask the question whether each human being has an inherent dignity or not, than the answer to this philosophical question is much more decisive for millions of people, living or dying, than the question of certain malpractices or medical mistakes. In his racist and false philosophy of man, a Hitler could write-off systematically millions of human beings worthy of protection. And this was done by the force of mistaken philosophical ideas. And Karl Marx did the same with members of certain classes.

To develop a philosophy for vain glory's sake is a tremendous danger, especially for philosophers, who do not perhaps gain money so easily, but gain recognition and acceptance by the academic community; to be "in," to be in the main stream, to be recognised, to publish in well-known journals, to be on good terms with colleagues, etc., are tremendous seductions. In fact, Lübke also said very well in his talk in Salzburg, that it is the sweet poison of fame that seduces almost every academic in one way or another. And I think this is indeed a poison which is very attractive and very dangerous. To resist this, to pursue truth even when it is unpopular, even when it goes against the stream, even when this means perhaps risking one's life, is a very difficult task. The persons who received honorary doctorates from the Academy had this in common, that they risked their lives for the truth: Viktor Frankl refused to escape with his wife – because he decided not to show impiety towards his parents, leaving them in the hands of the Nazis. And he saw the death of his wife, of his parents, and of other relatives. Radim Pauloš, to whom we gave an honorary doctorate, defended Charter 77 at great personal risks. President Cossiga took political responsibilities upon himself when he could easily have been murdered for this reason. And this applies *a fortiori* to Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

So the first commitment of the philosopher then is to the truth; it is the *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus*. In an admirable text from the *Apology*, Socrates asserts that virtue does not come from money, but in pursuing truth one also pursues the good of mankind.

The IAP's original text for pledging the *diligere veritatem omnem et in omnibus* said: "Mindful of the dignity and of the limits of my personal vocation in philosophy [...] I vow and promise to love all truth and to love it in everything." This is a very stern pledge. I remember always a charming female freshman (the student in the first year of American College) at the University of Dallas. When I spoke about the virtues of the philosopher, referring to Plato in book VI of the *Republic*, I went through the long list Plato gives of the philosopher's virtues: he must not fear death in the pursuit of truth, he has to be courageous, he has to love all truth and hate all falsity and all lies, he has to love honesty and nobility, and not be petty and small-minded, etc. The mentioned girl suddenly stood up, almost furious and passionate, and she said: "Professor Seifert, are you a philosopher? I think nobody was a philosopher if this is what a philosopher is." And I said: "Yes, yes, this is true. The virtues demanded from the philosopher are an ideal vocation and almost all professors of philosophy fall short of being fully philosophers."

To love truth in everything is very hard, no doubt, but we should commit ourselves to this goal, striving for authentic philosophy. The previous text of the IAP professional pledge for philosophers continued:

I pledge always to honour philosophy by speaking and acting righteously, so as not to inflict shame on the institution and the name of philosophy [...] I shall not consent freely to error or falsity.

Keeping this pledge is particularly difficult of course under totalitarian regimes, at times of oppression; but it is also difficult when someone is too dependent on public opinion, or when he is a coward, or when he uses sophisticated arguments in writing or in speech, or is under political or private pressure. Dietrich von Hildebrand, to whom the inspiration of this Academy is owed, risked his life professing the results of his philosophical insights. He had to leave Nazi Germany, then Austria, then France, and always on the Nazi list of the first people to be killed. We could all fall again under such a regime, and this could in fact possibly require martyrdom.

In the original long text in which the Academy expressed this moral commitment of the philosopher, it demanded always to be rigorous [...] to be faithful to the evidence which proceeds from the nature of things themselves, not to construct and not to violate the given, to learn from objections, etc.

It is a very common thing among professors, but also among students and other men, to react to criticism simply by some kind of hardening of one's line or even by some personal attack on others. In fact, Socrates says in a marvelous passage in *Gorgias* that normally when he comes to refute somebody's

errors or shows him that his philosophy is contradictory, then this person who is refuted feels ashamed and gets angry. The persons whose errors he refutes start to use foul language and hurl such insults at the man who delivers them from their error that even low-level workers would be ashamed of using such terms in a public debate. Socrates does not consider this response rare, but says that that is the normal reaction men take towards the truth.

Socrates observes that men normally react to justified criticisms as if it were the greatest evil to be refuted in one's errors. But a philosopher should regard it as the highest good to be refuted, and should much more love to be refuted and shown that he is in error than to refute someone else. In being refuted a man receives a great service, namely, the blessing of being healed from an error and of being led to true knowledge, whereas in refuting others he only renders this service to others but does not profit from it.

The totality of such virtues of loving the truth to the end belongs to this holy, saintly philosopher of whom the student told me that neither I nor any other frail human person will ever manage to become. It is to this context indeed that the important speech of Cardinal Ratzinger on Christ as archetype and model for philosophers applies. For no finite subject can embody the pure love of truth perfectly. Only Christ can.