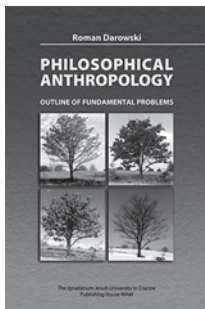




Roman Darowski SJ, *Philosophical anthropology: Outline of fundamental problems*

Translated from Polish into English by Łukasz Darowski SDS
Kraków: The Ignatianum Jesuit University / Publishing House WAM,
2014, 168 p.



The very book, entrusted to a potential reader, makes a contribution to a vast realm of writing that ponders upon the man and his thorough analysis from all possible angles and aspects. As such, its primary aim is to support those who seek the truth about mankind, as the author wants it. As it has been written in the Foreword: ‘The current book is a somewhat changed and revised English translation on the 4th edition of the book *Filozofia człowieka* [Philosophy of Man — R.K.] in the Polish language’ (p. 9). The book consists of three main parts. The first part entitled

Introductory questions discusses, among other things, the specific character of philosophical anthropology, the definition of this discipline, existential questions, the method of philosophical anthropology, the problem of ‘To be and to have’.

The fundamental part of the book bears the title: *The main problems in philosophical anthropology*. It consists of fifteen chapters, whose titles are worth listing here, as they give an indication of the content and structure of this book. These are: 1. *Humanity and the animal kingdom*; 2. *The human corporeality*; 3. *The spiritual constituent of a human being*; 4. *The relationship between the spiritual constituent and the material constituent*; 5. *Death and immortality*; 6. *The structure of the human mind and the process of intellectual cognition*; 7. *Human freedom*; 8. *The human person and his/her rights and duties*; 9. *The origin of human being*; 10. *Human being and values*; 11. *Human being as a creator of culture*; 12. *Human*

being as a historical being; 13. Human being as a dialogical being; 14. Human being as a social being; 15. Human being as a religious being.

The third part of the book deals with the problem of *Human being — an Absolute?* The following reasons prove this opinion: 1. *Limitless cognitive horizon*; 2. *Openness in the sphere of freedom*; 3. *Limitless possibilities of choice*; 4. *The spiritual element*; 5. *Human being and beauty*; 6. *Immortality*; 7. *Existential community*; 8. *Metaphysical insufficiency*; 9. *'God's Involvement' in human affairs*; 10. *Unique dignity*.

The presented layout of the issues of philosophical anthropology is linking the fundamental elements of the classical anthropology with the current thought. The book also contains: *Table of contents*, *Foreword*, *Essential bibliography*, *Index of names and subjects*.

The author of the book, prof. Roman Darowski SJ, has been connected with the Jesuit Faculty of Philosophy in Kraków for nearly forty years. In Darowski's philosophy, there is a noticeable inspiration derived from Aristotelian and Thomistic tradition. He makes many conscious references to both their essential and existential trends. He also tries to take into consideration the new philosophical thought, especially the personalistic and axiological trends, and also — in some way — the dialogical trend. He does not avoid some new life-science achievements; he attempts to integrate them with philosophy. In the application of his method, especially in its initial stages, there are many elements that resemble a phenomenological description. All of these fields of Darowski's scientific research are clearly noticeable in the very book.

The assumptions presented in this work constitute, above all, a reflection of the author's philosophical ponderings over subjects that are correlated with fundamental problems of human philosophy. Consequently, they fail to be mere commentaries on some deeply-rooted views. Such an approach contributes to the originality of the book and presents the reader with a systematic, as opposed to systemic, attitude towards philosophical thinking.

What further distinguishes the very work from similar literary attempts is certainly the thetic or thesis-oriented method of formulating ideas. According to this method, all basic questions are presented as theses (or theorems) and are then further developed. As the author himself puts it, such an approach

contains the following elements: the current state of the issue, the explanation of philosophical terms, views or opinions on the given subjects as well as the argumentation (proofs) which prove individual parts (propositions) included in the previously formulated thesis. The proofs here are understood broadly; sometimes they can be arguments for a given proposition (p. 10).

Previous editions of the book in question were designed to provide educational support, both to lecturers and, above all, to students, serving as

a somewhat abridged version of the studied material. This edition, on the other hand, makes one be under the impression that the author had done his best to present the contents of the book in an utmost 'universal' manner, leaving behind — though not entirely dropping — the didactic aspect of his work.

As we learn in the introduction, in comparison to the Polish edition, 'the last section *Human being — an Absolute?* was expanded, while the chapter *History of philosophical anthropology* and the section *Anthology of texts* were omitted'. In the opinion of the author of this review, Darowski might as well have left the removed chapters intact. It also seems that a foreign reader (*i.e.* the default reader), not being familiar with the Polish edition of the book, will find information on changes between both issues of the same work quite insignificant, probably not being able to get to know the latter anyway.

These few critical remarks, however, bear no importance once faced with the substantial matter of the book. Not frequently does one stumble upon such a clear and vivid presentation of essentially difficult ponderings over fundamental problems of human philosophy. What's also worth noting is the brilliant translation that faithfully reflects the original work and seems free from errors and misinterpretations.

Hopefully, just as subsequent Polish editions of the book have been of interest to a growing number of satisfied readers, in a similar manner the English version of the work, open to international recipients, will become an essential addition to any library — not just for those who dabble in philosophy, but for those who notice the significance of fundamental questions about the mankind.

Rafał KUPCZAK*

* Doktor nauk humanistycznych w zakresie filozofii, absolwent Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach oraz Akademii Ignatianum w Krakowie, badacz niezależny. E-mail: rafalkupczak@wp.pl.

