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# The Metaphysical Aspect of Christian Philosophy in *Fides et Ratio*

**Abstract:** The encyclical *Fides et Ratio* is a continually inspiring document in which John Paul II sought to answer the question of the relationship between faith and reason, and thus between theology and philosophy. It follows the tradition of the Church, but at the same time reflects the post-Conciliar view of the autonomy of the empirical sciences and the humanities. The present study deals with philosophy which John Paul II calls “Christian philosophy.” The concept of metaphysics, which has influenced Christian philosophy, is crucial here. Despite a lot of criticism concerning metaphysics since the modern period, John Paul II defends the metaphysical position as an integral part of the Christian philosopher’s thinking. His understanding of metaphysics will be discussed in the following study.

**Key words:** John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, Christian philosophy, metaphysics, mysticism

## Introduction

John Paul II, already as Karol Wojtyła, was a member of the personalist-oriented Thomistic-phenomenological school of thought. He drew on Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy and was inspired by thinkers, such as Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel and especially Max Scheler. Their influence led to his deeper focus on the personal dimension of humanity. He realized that the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition represents the best treatment of only one of the two main experiences of the man, which is the external experience. However, it fails to appreciate the internal experience that points to the personal dimension of the man.

The concept of “a person” becomes the key element of his philosophical thought because it points to the essence of the man. This does not show itself immediately but can be discovered in the human acts of love, freedom and knowledge that make

the man a being open towards the world and himself. Thus, in Wojtyła's work, questions connected with the analysis of acts of consciousness, the man's moral activity, his nature and inner experience, personal perfection, profound experience, but also human freedom, love and responsibility, finally resulted in a metaphysical concept of the person.<sup>1</sup>

Wojtyła asserts that "philosophical anthropology and theological anthropology constitute, in fact, irreducible fields of knowledge about the human being, which complement each other."<sup>2</sup> Philosophical anthropology is not the last word on the man, but demands the completion of Revelation, which represents the last truths about the man. Later, as the Pope, he emphasized this in *Fides et Ratio*. With the light of reason, human beings can know which path to take, but they can follow that path to its end, quickly and unhindered, only if accompanied by a rightly tuned spirit they search for within the horizon of faith.<sup>3</sup> The key to understanding the man is Christ. "The truth communicated in Christ's Revelation [...] is offered to every man and woman who would welcome it as the word which is the absolutely valid source of meaning for human life. [...] Through this Revelation, men and women are offered the ultimate truth about their own life and about the goal of history. [...] Seen in any other terms, the mystery of personal existence remains an insoluble riddle."<sup>4</sup>

In this context, it is needed to understand the philosophy of Wojtyła and later John Paul II. Therefore, we can say that it is also appropriate to use the term "Christian philosophy," which is embedded in the metaphysical dimension of human life to which he also refers in the encyclical *Fides et Ratio*. This problem will be addressed in detail in the present study, following the analytical method combined with the comparative method and synthesis.

## Christian Philosophy in *Fides et Ratio*

The very term "Christian philosophy" can provoke various opinions and controversies, especially in the field of philosophy, but also among thinkers claiming

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<sup>1</sup> Zlatica Plašienková, „Súčasná katolícka etika,“ in: *Súčasná etické teórie*, ed. Vasil Gluchman and Miloš Dokulil (Prešov: LIM, 2000), 211.

<sup>2</sup> Milan Fula, *Antropológia ženy a náuka Jána Pavla II* (Bratislava: Don Bosco, 2004), 128.

<sup>3</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 16, accessed Jun 13, 2023, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_14091998\\_fides-et-ratio.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html).

<sup>4</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 12.

the Christian tradition. So, what do we mean by “Christian philosophy” and is the term even legitimate? The origin of the term “Christian philosophy” dates back to the middle of the 2nd century, when the term “Christian philosophy” referred to versions of Neo-Platonic philosophy that corresponded with the Christian doctrine of creation and the man. The first of the philosophers who claimed to be a Christian without ceasing to be a philosopher was Justin. He considered himself a Platonist, although Stoic themes were prevalent in his work.<sup>5</sup> Christian philosophy was largely influenced by Neo-Platonism and Stoicism. It also influenced the formation of Christian theology itself. This was evident in St. Augustine’s writings.

Alongside the use of Greek philosophy in the formation and argumentation of Christian theology, personalities and currents emerged that rejected the conflation of the Christian tradition with philosophy. Well-known figures included Hypolytus of Rome or Tertullian, who proclaimed that incomprehensible and misleading philosophical procedures could not be used in the interpretation of faith. Although Tertullian partially collaborates with the philosophical tradition, he nevertheless refers to philosophers as “patriarchs of heresy.” In his opposition to philosophy, Tertullian unreflectively uses many terms that are originally philosophical concepts and practices, and have passed into common parlance in this form.<sup>6</sup> These attitudes largely influenced and partially devastated the contemporary Western theology, which was gradually reformed, largely due to Augustine’s efforts.

Later, the scholasticism of the High Middle Ages was responsible for the replacement of Platonic inspiration by Aristotelianism.<sup>7</sup> Modified Aristotelianism would thus be considered Christian philosophy in the metaphysical tradition until the 20th century. In the 1930s, however, the problem of Christian philosophy began to be intensely debated. Thinkers dealing with the subject included Emile Bréhier, Léon Brunschvicg, Maurice Blondel, Jacques Maritain, Etienne Gilson, Fernand van Steenberghe, and many others.<sup>8</sup> Thinkers such as Maurice Blondel and Jacques Maritain held that there was a distinctive Christian philosophy. Others rejected it.

For example, Christian thinkers such as Józef Tischner or Stefan Swieżawski reject the term “Christian philosophy.” For Swieżawski, philosophy is neither

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<sup>5</sup> Zdeněk Kratochvíl, *Prolínání světů. Středoplatónská filosofie v náboženských proudech antiky* (Praha: Herrmann a synové, 1991), 98–99.

<sup>6</sup> Jozef Špirko, *Patrológia* (Prešov: Spolok P. P. Gojdiča, 1995), 78–79. Zdeněk Kratochvíl, *Prolínání světů. Středoplatónská filosofie v náboženských proudech antiky* (Praha: Herrmann a synové, 1991), 104.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Porubec, „Katolícka cirkev a stredoveká univerzita,“ in *Disputationes quodlibetales XXIV. & XXV. Konzum a kríza v súčasných okolnostiach & Quo vaditis, cives academici?*, eds Pavol Dancák, Radovan Šoltés and Daniel Porubec (Prešov: GTF PU, 2022), 151.

<sup>8</sup> Claude Tresmontant, *Teodicea* (Košice: Knižná dielňa Timotej, 1997), 29.

Christian nor pagan, but simply philosophy.<sup>9</sup> To limit philosophy to Christianity can become very problematic in a contemporary, historical context. The Christian religion itself is always bound to the content of its faith, which is a priori given by Revelation. Theology will, therefore, always be bound by the content of Revelation, and its role is also to ensure that this content is not arbitrarily altered or misinterpreted. It is an extremely difficult task, and one that is subject to many temptations to definitively enclose Revelation within the framework of our ideas and principles. Philosophy would then literally become the handmaiden of theology, whose role would consist solely in finding expedient arguments for what will already be accepted and defined in advance.

The essence of philosophy is that it cannot uncritically bind itself to preconceived premises because by that very act it would cease to be philosophy in the true sense of the word. Philosophical argumentation itself must critically justify its claims if they are to stand up to a philosophical audience. Philosophical systems that have failed to justify their claims and premises, and yet have held fast to them, unwaveringly are termed ideology.

Philosophy, therefore, requires autonomy like any other science, and only in this freedom can it be of benefit to humanity. "He is neither a believer nor an unbeliever, neither a Christian nor a Muslim – he is only a man who philosophizes," Swieżawski claims.<sup>10</sup> Many ideas have not yet been thought out, and there are just as many topics that will not be fully exhausted during the whole history of thought. Stimuli come from different kinds of impulses, whether from a religious source or from natural sciences. In a hundred years, as Swieżawski writes, an impulse may suddenly appear that we would not even think of today.<sup>11</sup>

However, if we speak of Christian philosophy from a theological perspective, we must emphasize the fact that Christian theology is not merely a theology of myth or Revelation, but in its historical form developed inseparably from a philosophical approach to the world that interpreted the experientially lived world in relation to the absolute Being.<sup>12</sup> Out of this concept developed specific metaphysics that has undeniably influenced the thought of the Western man. It is this aspect that Claude Tresmontant emphasizes. According to him, we can speak of Christian philosophy precisely because Christian thought, following on from Hebrew thought, contains certain metaphysics which presupposes a certain concept of being, of the relationship between the uncreated and created beings, of the one and the many, a certain

<sup>9</sup> Stefan Swieżawski, *Nový výklad sv. Tomáše* (Brno: Cesta, 1998), 28.

<sup>10</sup> Swieżawski, *Nový výklad sv. Tomáše*, 55.

<sup>11</sup> Swieżawski, *Nový výklad sv. Tomáše*, 27.

<sup>12</sup> Pavol Dancák, "The Fundamental Issue in Education and the Problem of Responsibility," *Journal of Critical Realism* 4 (2021): 381–395.

understanding of the visible world, of time, of agency, of the man, of the soul and the body, and of the human sense of life, in contrast to other metaphysics (Greece, India, China).<sup>13</sup> Thus, according to Tresmontant, Christian philosophy exists because “there is an organon of true metaphysical science inherent in Christianity and Judaism which human reason can discover, verify, and define by means of its methods.”<sup>14</sup>

This aspect becomes crucial for Tresmontant. For if the existence of Christian philosophy was based solely on the books of Holy Scripture, it could be argued that it is exclusively revealed theology and metaphysics. But in Christian philosophy the rational justification of Revelation plays an indispensable role, which is also understood in theology itself as a historical-progressive process, and thus also requires rational interpretation. A rational approach is essential if we are not to fall into ossified fundamentalism. Christian philosophy is, therefore, according to Tresmontant, the true philosophy that Christianity embraces because it is a way of thinking that is compatible with Christianity. Inherent in Christian philosophy is an inductive and rational procedure in which one starts from experience rather than from Revelation, and in which one merely works towards what Revelation teaches. It is precisely because Christian theology is compatible only with this mode of philosophy, and not with philosophies based on myth, such as Plato’s myth of the pre-existence of souls, or Hegel’s myth of the tragic birth of the Absolute, or Nietzsche’s myth of the eternal return, that we can speak of Christian philosophy.<sup>15</sup>

This is precisely the aspect that John Paul II has in mind in *Fides et Ratio*. If a philosopher is a Christian, he cannot ignore his faith in philosophy. His faith will logically form part of the presuppositions that influence philosophizing itself. This, however, can take various forms. In this sense, he speaks of the legitimacy of the term “Christian philosophy” and emphasizes that it is not meant to refer to a kind of official philosophy of the Church: “The term Christian philosophy includes those important developments of philosophical thinking which would not have happened without the direct or indirect contribution of Christian faith.”<sup>16</sup>

In this context he speaks of the “subjective aspect” of Christian philosophy, which consists in daring to ask the most radical questions of a metaphysical type the Christian thinker finds difficult to grasp without the knowledge received from Revelation and the “objective aspect” of Christian philosophy which entitles the thinker to examine the rationality of certain truths of Scripture.<sup>17</sup> So, it is not a question of artificially tying philosophy to religion and, therefore, we cannot

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<sup>13</sup> Tresmontant, *Teodicea*, 60–61.

<sup>14</sup> Tresmontant, *Teodicea*, 62.

<sup>15</sup> Tresmontant, *Teodicea*, 64–65.

<sup>16</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 76.

<sup>17</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 76.

speak of Christian philosophy in some exclusive sense from the position of which only one philosophy, one philosophical system, one method would be Christian and the others would not. We can, however, speak of Christian philosophy as a philosophy inspired by Christianity, specifically oriented towards metaphysical ways of inquiring and seeking answers.

## Christian Philosophy and Metaphysics

It cannot be denied that metaphysics has played a major role in the history of theology and philosophy. Philosophical-theological thought up to the phase of the modern period was predominantly based on metaphysical, Aristotelian-Thomistic thought which was considered (and still has many advocates today) as the best alternative for linking philosophy and theology. The modern turn in philosophy, however, opened up serious questions for which the classical speculative scholastic way of thinking was insufficient. Even the non-scholastic renewal, directly supported by Rome in the modernist conflict, kept up the pressure for pluralism and the necessity to rethink the school metaphysics.

However, Neo-Thomism and Neo-Scholasticism themselves could not remain enclosed within the paradigm of medieval philosophy and theology, although they were also prioritized for quite a long time because of the ecclesiastical sanctions to which different alternative proposals for theology or any questioning of scholasticism were often subjected. In addition to the revival of the Thomistic tradition and the rethinking of many themes, there was necessarily a need to think through the problems with the use of the methods and schools of thought of other philosophical and theological approaches. Until the turn of the century, a rather defensive apologetic stance had prevailed, which had defended itself against the errors of the age and had insisted on the “ownership” of truth. Since the 1920s and 1930s, an open-minded approach has been promoted that takes into account the insights and problems of modern philosophy from the perspective of Christian thought.

In the field of theology, one of the pioneers was the Jesuit Rousselot, who became convinced through his own study that modernism pointed to real problems and therefore began to seek a satisfactory answer at the heart of scholastic theology itself, namely, a completely new interpretation of Thomas Aquinas’s writings, especially his interpretation of the concept of faith. Similarly, the theologian M.-D. Chenu emphasizes Thomas’s understanding of faith as directed towards God as salvation. It is a knowledge in which the will plays a decisive role – always forcing thought into

a never-fulfilled and never-ending attempt to penetrate the transcending mystery. This mystery touches upon the problem of the immutability of the revealed truths and the dogmatic development and evolution of historically contingent knowledge.

Even scholasticism understood the analogy between dogmatic development and the progress of human knowledge. Chenu, however, understood that this progression is not merely an analogy, but the proper principle and psychological basis of dogmatic development. As the old scholastic principle has it, – the *knower adapts the knowable in the knower to the possibilities of his knowledge*. Thus God can only speak to us in human language, in human words, which have become ever richer and more fitting with the development of knowledge. Chenu realized that if Thomas applied this only to the development of Revelation, it applies equally to the development of the treasure of faith entrusted to the Church.<sup>18</sup>

Other notable figures included Erich Przywara, who dealt with Kant, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche and Romano Guardini, who tried to perceive the uniqueness of the person in a new way. Joseph Maréchal attempted to interpret metaphysics using Kant's transcendental method which, with Kant's critique of knowledge, had been until then considered in Christian thought as a justification for complete subjectivism and relativism. We can also mention other thinkers such as Etienne Gilson, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Johan B. Lotz, Emerich Coreth or the theologian Karl Rahner. Many were also inspired by existentialism or the philosophy of Martin Heidegger.<sup>19</sup>

After the Second Vatican Council, Thomism could no longer be considered the only alternative for the Christian-minded philosopher or theologian. The Polish thinker Stefan Świeżawski, who attended the Council as a lay auditor and actively participated in the drafting of the constitution *Gaudium et Spes* and, in part, the decree on the apostolate of the laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, also perceived this shift in the same way. In his philosophical career, Świeżawski was actively engaged in Thomas Aquinas's writings, yet he pointed out the negative aspects of their purposive use. He draws attention to the distinction between the work of Thomas, the Thomism that emerged from it, and the ideologized Thomism. According to Świeżawski, it was the Second Vatican Council that brought to an end two epochs in the life of the Church, namely the Constantinopolitan and the Thomistic stages. Yet he himself regards the work of Thomas as a great contribution which still has much to say. Nevertheless, he points out that philosophy cannot be limited

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<sup>18</sup> Ted Schoof, *Aggiornamento na prahu 3. tisíciletí? – Vývoj moderní katolické teologie* (Praha: Vyšehrad, 2004), 148.

<sup>19</sup> Emerich Coreth, Peter Ehlen and Josef Schmidt, *Filosofie 20. století* (Olomouc: Nakladatelství Olomouc, 2006), 96–97.



to one way of thinking. It cannot be commanded but must be the fruit of freedom. Philosophy and theology, according to Swieżawski, must be pluralistic because there are myriad of ways to interpret Revelation. It was precisely according to Swieżawski that the Council put an end to the practice of imposing one philosophical-theological ideology identified with Thomism.<sup>20</sup>

It may be surprising, then, to see a kind of appeal for a return to metaphysics in *Fides et Ratio*, where John Paul II gives as an example the concept and approach of St. Thomas Aquinas and emphasizes as certain foundation the metaphysical position of the Christian thinker. In relation to the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas and the Thomistic tradition, he speaks of still valid heritage that has influenced both philosophy and theology and has made it possible to establish in an appropriate way the relationship between reason and faith.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, he points to the enrichment of theology by other philosophical movements: “Yet the Thomistic and neo-Thomistic revival was not the only sign of a resurgence of philosophical thought in culture of Christian inspiration. Earlier still, and parallel to Pope Leo’s call, there had emerged a number of Catholic philosophers who, adopting more recent currents of thought and according to a specific method, produced philosophical works of great influence and lasting value.”<sup>22</sup> Thomas is thus singled out in *Fides et Ratio* not to suggest the exclusive position of Thomism as one of the key types of philosophy, but one that is now part of a legitimate philosophical plurality that can equally enrich Christian theology.<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, John Paul II sees an important dimension of philosophy in the relationship between faith and reason in the metaphysical orientation. He points out that a metaphysical approach is indispensable for the relationship between faith and reason: “Therefore, a philosophy which shuns metaphysics would be radically unsuited to the task of mediation in the understanding of Revelation.”<sup>24</sup> Only from this metaphysical conception can a profound unity between faith and reason be born.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, in connection with the interpretation of Revelation is “the need for a philosophy of *genuinely metaphysical* range, capable, that is, of transcending empirical data in order to attain something absolute, ultimate and foundational in its search for truth.”<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Swieżawski, *Nový výklad sv. Tomáše*, 7–8.

<sup>21</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 76, 57.

<sup>22</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 59.

<sup>23</sup> Harold E. Ernst, “New Horizons in Catholic Philosophical Theology: *Fides et Ratio* and the Changed Status of Thomism,” *The Heythrop Journal* 1 (2006): 34.

<sup>24</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 83.

<sup>25</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 48.

<sup>26</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 83.



However, when one speaks of “ultimate” and “foundational,” he refers to meta-physics. Inquiry into principles will be a perennial mode of truth-seeking for the Christian thinker, whether he be a theologian or a philosopher. This is the reason why John Paul II speaks of the necessity of metaphysical questioning. The question is raised, however, whether there is only one type of metaphysics, as it was dominantly presented in the Christian milieu even in the first half of the twentieth century.

## The Mystical Aspect of Metaphysics

Christian theology and philosophy are aware that reason, because of its finitude and limitations, will never be able to know truth as it is fully expressed in Revelation. The metaphysics of which John Paul II speaks is, therefore, not merely speculative reasoning, but a way of experiencing the truth of Being that is not graspable categorically because Being is Being without forms, and in this sense cannot be grasped by the discursive type of thinking to which a certain form of metaphysics has fallen victim. Blondel aptly puts it when he points out that an overly abstract mode of thought appeals only to reason, whereas faith requires the effort of the whole person: “The speculative proof of God’s existence does not touch the heart and shake the will to action.”<sup>27</sup>

“Faith alone makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently.”<sup>28</sup> Only in the plane of faith does the metaphysical approach allow us to transcend our horizons to the last total horizon of being. Therefore, God is neither fully comprehensible nor aptly nameable.<sup>29</sup>

In the philosophical reflection on religion, therefore, we cannot do without a form of mysticism. In this sense, the appeal to metaphysics is legitimate if we see it as the possibility of going “beyond” physics and “beyond” a discursive type of thinking that opens up deeper planes of experience with God. The metaphysician is thus, in a sense, a theologian.<sup>30</sup> Finally, John Paul II emphasizes this fact when he speaks of a philosophy of authentically metaphysical outreach, which is “a philosophy of *genuinely metaphysical* range, capable, that is, of transcending empirical data

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<sup>27</sup> Karel Říha, *Filozofie konání – k 100. výročí Blondelovy „L’Action“* (Olomouc: Matice cyrilometodějská, 1993), 78.

<sup>28</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 13.

<sup>29</sup> Mikuláš Kuzánsky, *O učenej nevedomosti* (Bratislava: Pravda, 1979), 39.

<sup>30</sup> Swieżawski, *Nový výklad sv. Tomáše*, 54.

in order to attain something absolute, ultimate and foundational in its search for truth.”<sup>31</sup> This is the reason why another remark of John Paul II is important: “Here I do not mean to speak of metaphysics in the sense of a specific school or a particular historical current of thought. I want only to state that reality and truth do transcend the factual and the empirical, and to vindicate the human being’s capacity to know this transcendent and metaphysical dimension in a way that is true and certain, albeit imperfect and analogical.”<sup>32</sup> That he does not refer to one type of metaphysical reasoning is evidenced in paragraph 72 of the encyclical, where he speaks of other great metaphysical systems, especially in the milieu of India, which is characterized by great spiritual fervor. It is the task of Christians in that culture to be able to select from this rich treasure the elements compatible with their faith so that the enrichment of Christian thought results.

John Paul II does not, therefore, defend the position of speculative philosophy that wants to describe structures, definitions, and indeed everything clearly in a way that subjects the whole to pre-given schemes regarded as definitively valid. This type of thinking has unfortunately been dominant in Western culture and has been very successful in empirical science, but it has become sterile to the problem of being and the existence of the man.

A metaphysical approach that is open to questioning and searching for the whole is legitimate and cannot fail to be meta-physical. Finally, it is also inherent in the belief in God, who is the principle of the existence of a holistic reality. In knowing truth, then, it is not a discursive type of thinking that wants to lay a hand on being, but rather an experience with the truth of being. This is done only through experience, which we can label as mystical. Unfortunately, our Western culture has been too enchanted by analytical thinking, which is excellent in science but which does not touch at all upon the essential questions of human existence. That is why John Paul II incorporates the relationship between faith and reason into anthropology which is metaphysical in character and attempts to define the ultimate foundation and meaning of human life.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 83.

<sup>32</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 83.

<sup>33</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 81.

## Conclusion

It is a question for further reflection how this metaphysical approach can be mediated in today's Western world, which has become too accustomed to a one-sided type of discursive and quantitative thinking. The mental structures created in this way are characterized by a one-sided focus and thus tend to be fixed, which in turn gives them strength. Descartes's famous sentence: "I think, therefore I am," essentially aptly characterizes the problem of our time, which has relied too much on thinking and from which it began to derive its being. As we have already said, this way of thinking is excellent for science, but it cannot be applied to society as a whole and certainly not to human life. Metaphysical thinking in a whole-oriented dimension can be a certain counterbalance if it does not itself remain closed in a dualistic mind. This seems to be what is significant in John Paul II's writings in which he also pointed out other possible metaphysical traditions.

Thus, it is not meant to be exclusive adherence to Thomistic or neo-Thomistic philosophy. The latter is only one of several philosophical approaches enriching metaphysically oriented Christian thought. John Paul II was also inspired by thinkers from the ranks of philosophy of dialogue or phenomenology. Finally, in the encyclical he also speaks of culturally distinct major metaphysical systems (for example in India) that may also contain elements that enrich Christian thought. Metaphysics, then, is not a finished project, but receives new forms of expression that are more experience-centered. This is also how, for example, the French Dominican Jean-Pierre Torrell interprets the work of Thomas Aquinas.

The deepest experiences across religions cannot be explained by speculative rationality alone because they must be experienced. However, even those who experience them can never present them in words and concepts in ways that someone who has not had such experiences can understand. This idea is presented by the Jesuit and missionary Enomiya-Lassalle, a sympathizer of non-dual thinking.<sup>34</sup> Metaphysics can therefore be an attempt to go "beyond thought," but not in the subject-object sense, but in an attempt to perceive reality as a whole, which is a framework for individual parts. Only from the position of the whole is it then possible to understand our everyday situation and discover what is the basis of our nature and, therefore, our goal.

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<sup>34</sup> Hugo M. Enomiya-Lassalle, *Kam se ubírá člověk* (Brno: Cesta, 1998), 40.

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## L'aspect métaphysique de la philosophie chrétienne dans *Fides et Ratio*

### Résumé

L'encyclique *Fides et ratio* est un document qui continue d'inspirer, dans lequel Jean-Paul II a cherché à répondre à la question du rapport entre la foi et la raison, et donc entre la théologie et la philosophie. Elle s'inscrit dans la tradition de l'Église, mais reflète en même temps la vision postconciliaire de l'autonomie des sciences empiriques et des sciences humaines. La présente étude traite de la philosophie que Jean-Paul II appelle « philosophie chrétienne ». Le concept de métaphysique, qui a influencé la philosophie chrétienne, est ici crucial. Malgré les nombreuses critiques dont la métaphysique a fait l'objet depuis l'époque moderne, Jean-Paul II défend la position métaphysique comme partie intégrante de la pensée du philosophe chrétien. Sa conception de la métaphysique sera examinée dans l'étude qui suit.

M o t s - c l é s : Jean-Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, philosophie chrétienne, métaphysique, mysticisme

Radovan Šoltés

## L'aspetto metafisico della filosofia cristiana nella *Fides et Ratio*

### Sommario

L'enciclica *Fides et ratio* è un documento fonte di continua ispirazione in cui Giovanni Paolo II ha cercato di rispondere alla domanda sul rapporto tra fede e ragione, e quindi tra teologia e filosofia. Essa segue la tradizione della Chiesa, ma allo stesso tempo riflette la visione post-conciliare dell'autonomia delle scienze empiriche e delle discipline umanistiche. Il presente studio tratta della filosofia che Giovanni Paolo II definisce "filosofia cristiana." Il concetto di metafisica, che ha influenzato la filosofia cristiana, è fondamentale in questo contesto. Nonostante le numerose critiche mosse alla metafisica a partire dall'età moderna, Giovanni Paolo II difende la posizione metafisica come parte integrante del pensiero del filosofo cristiano. La sua concezione della metafisica sarà discussa nel seguente studio.

P a r o l e   c h i a v e : Giovanni Paolo II, *Fides et ratio*, filosofia cristiana, metafisica, misticismo