

Wincenty Myszor

A Faculty of Theology at a State University

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WINCENTY MYSZOR
University of Silesia, Katowice

A FACULTY OF THEOLOGY AT A STATE UNIVERSITY

After 1989, in the period of restoring structures of a democratic state, many academics in Poland thought about establishing faculties of theology at state universities. At a few of them the faculties were even founded. Yet it was not returning to the previous state of e.g. pre-war Poland period. The Universities where the government closed faculties of theology in 1954 (the Jagiellonian University and the University of Warsaw) did not return to the previous state. The Faculty of Theology in Cracow turned into the Papal Academy of Theology, a school independent on the Jagiellonian University, whereas the Faculty of Theology in Warsaw, as the Church and state institution, was incorporated by the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, which was founded on the basis of the Academy of Catholic Theology which existed from 1954 to 1999¹. New structures in form of new faculties of theology at state universities emerged². The first one was the faculty at the University of Opole³. It was founded simultaneously with the state school⁴. The situation was similar in case of the Faculty of Theology in Olsztyn, which was established together with the University of Warmia and Mazury⁵. The existing faculty of theology as a church institution ('Papal') in Poznań, was incorporated into the Adam Mickiewicz University⁶. It was 'nationalized'. Yet it did not take place in Warsaw. In Warsaw there are two faculties of theology, the Papal Faculty of Theology, as a structure of two sections⁷, exists parallel to the Faculty of Theology at the Cardinal Stefan

¹ The history of the Faculty of Theology in Cracow at the Jagiellonian University and outside its walls was well documented and presented in details by A. Kubiś, *Papieski Wydział Teologiczny w Krakowie 1954-1981*, in: *Wyzsze szkolnictwo kościerskie w Polsce. Wizja Kardynała Karola Wojtyły i jej realizacja*, Kraków 2002, pp. 9-164; whereas the history of teaching theology in Warsaw was described by R. Bartnicki, *Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie*, in: *Wyzsze szkolnictwo kościerskie*, pp. 209-222.

² Legal aspects of establishing faculties of theology in Poland are described by R. Sobański, *Rechtliche Stellung der theologischen Fakultäten in Polen*, Bulletin Europäische Theologie 13,1 (2002), pp. 112-119.

³ H. Sobczek, *Wydział Teologiczny Uniwersytetu Opolskiego*, in: *Wyzsze szkolnictwo kościerskie...*, pp. 337-349.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 341.

⁵ J. Wojtkowski, *Wydział Teologii w Olsztynie*, in: *Wyzsze szkolnictwo kościerskie...*, pp. 257-289.

⁶ M. Jędraszewski, *Wydział Teologiczny Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu*, in: *Wyzsze szkolnictwo kościerskie...*, pp. 291-315.

⁷ Cf. J. Miazek, *Papieski Wydział Teologiczny w Warszawie, Sekcja św. Jana Chrzciciela*, in: *Wyzsze szkolnictwo kościerskie...*, pp. 391-402; J. Bolewski, *Bobolanum – Wydział i Sekcja w Warszawie*, in: *Wyzsze szkolnictwo kościerskie...*, pp. 403-421; it exists in the structure of the two sections.

Wyszyński University. In Wrocław the Papal Faculty of Theology, existing there since 1968, despite long university traditions in German period, was not incorporated into the University of Wrocław⁸. The Church faculty of theology was and still is the Faculty of Theology at the Catholic University of Lublin⁹. Three faculties of theology were established in similar conditions as new faculties at existing state universities in Katowice, Szczecin and Toruń¹⁰. This situation of the faculty of theology is the most interesting for us. It is worth looking at how the faculty was established at the university founded by the leaders of the People's Republic of Poland in a city with no university traditions whatsoever in 1968. This is the University of Silesia in Katowice (established in 1968) and its Faculty of Theology (established in 2000). The faculty is an example of how a faculty of theology functions at a university where it would be a foreign body before 1989¹¹.

1. Establishment and organization of the Faculty

Existence of a faculty of theology at a university, or the concept of university theology was remembered only by elder generations. It was known by the students of the Jagiellonian University before 1954. Creation of the University of Silesia (partially on the basis of the branch of the Jagiellonian University) for some among the clergy meant hope that the structure known from the Jagiellonian University would be recreated in Katowice. Yet when the idea of establishing a faculty of theology in Katowice became clearer (in 1989)¹², then hesitation and some doubts arose. In Katowice it was mainly the Church who had doubts. It was questioned whether one more faculty of theology is necessary in a situation when there are two located in nearby Cracow and Opole. One more faculty situated so close to them on the way from Cracow to Opole did not seem a sensible solution. Moreover the University of Silesia with its merely 30-year-long history did not resemble the Jagiellonian University. It is possible that the university authorities planned establishing a faculty of theology inspired by the example of the Jagiellonian University. The idea came true in 1998 in form of a resolution of the Senate of the University of Silesia. Yet the resolution was not just a slogan or an idea unsupported by previous consultations and studies whether it would be feasible. The Archbishop of Katowice, convinced of the necessity to have a faculty of theology in Katowice,

⁸ I. Dec, *Papieski Wydział Teologiczny we Wrocławiu*, in: *Wyższe szkolnictwo kościelne...*, pp. 363-389.

⁹ Cfr. A. Szostek, *Wydział Teologiczny Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego*, in: *Wyższe szkolnictwo kościelne...*, pp. 165-208.

¹⁰ Cfr. J. Bagrowicz, *Wydział Teologiczny Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu*, in: *Wyższe szkolnictwo kościelne...*, pp. 319-336; the Faculty of Theology of the University of Szczecin was established in 2004 r.

¹¹ The author was the Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Silesia from 2001 to 2008; the establishment of the Faculty of Theology was presented by W. Myszor, *Wydział Teologiczny Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach*, in: *Wyższe szkolnictwo kościelne...*, pp. 351-361.

¹² Cfr. ibidem, p. 353.

took up the idea of creating the faculty no sooner than in 1998 after consultations at the University. Previous agreements between the Church and the State i.e. the Concordat of 1993, the Education Act and agreements between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland, eased the legal procedure¹³. As far as the Faculty of Theology in Katowice is concerned the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland adopted the resolutions twice (on October 22, 1998 and November 26, 1999)¹⁴. The stages of creating the faculty show that the Church did not take hasty and insensible decisions, and show the play of the Church interests¹⁵. So it would be deeply unfair to think that the Church in Silesia, in Katowice entered the University enthusiastically and behaved as if they were going to reclaim what was rightly theirs. We have to mention here that the idea of establishing a faculty of theology came from the University circles. Here an additional motif appears in form of the motives of the academic staff in Katowice behind the decision and their scientific cooperation with the Church at the University which had showed no initiatives like that before¹⁶. The interest seems even more interesting in a situation when another university in Wrocław has taken a completely different approach in the matter so far. Waiting and uncertainty concerning the future may have been present among the future academic staff of the Faculty of Theology, what led to the situation when not all the independent academics i.e. the clergy of the Katowice Archdiocese moved to work at the new Faculty¹⁷. Maybe apart from personal motives and scientific plans connected with the theological centers outside Katowice they also had doubts concerning the University of Silesia and shared critical opinions on doing theology at the very university.

The most successful was the material aspect of the Faculty. The State, namely the state-owned university, by establishing the Faculty of Theology provided employment, scholarships for students and resources for scientific research. The University of Silesia did not have neither a suitable didactic building nor a theological library. In the intention agreement the Katowice Archdiocese planned erecting an appropriate building for didactic purposes and giving a collection of

¹³ Cfr. H. Sobczko, *Wydział Teologiczny...*, p. 338; J. Wojtkowski, *Wydział Teologiczny...*, p. 266 (in Opole and Olsztyn the Act established the University together with the Faculty of Theology); but in Poznań (M. Jędraszewski, *Wydział Teologiczny...*, p. 307), in Toruń (J. Bagrowicz, *Wydział Teologiczny...*, p. 331) in Katowice (W. Myszor, *Wydział Teologiczny...*, p. 355) and in Szczecin an Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland was sufficient. Legal situation of the faculties of theology in Poland was presented by R. Sobański (*Rechtliche Stellung...*).

¹⁴ W. Myszor, *Wydział Teologiczny...*, p. 355 and next.

¹⁵ The Rector of the Papal Academy of Theology in Cracow Bishop Professor Tadeusz Pieronek said about attempts of various Church centers to obtain the status of academic theology studies in his inauguration lecture at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Silesia in Katowice on October 2, 2001, *Droga odrodzenia polskich uczelni teologicznych*, Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Theologiczne 35, 1 (2002), pp. 7-16.

¹⁶ Since 1996 in Toruń at the Institute of Pedagogy at the Nicolaus Copernicus University there was the Department of Christian Education, since 1997 the University has been issuing a six-monthly magazine *Paedagogia Christiana*, so it had been done before the Faculty of Theology in Toruń started operating in 2001.

¹⁷ Cfr. W. Myszor, *Wydział Teologiczny...*, p. 358 and next.

books on theology and periodicals from the library of Wyższe Śląskie Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary) for the needs of the University. The Faculty of Theology which started its didactic work in the academic year of 2001/2002 found such didactic premises in the building of Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary). In 2004 the Faculty got a new seat built by the Archdiocese. In that way, as the only faculty of theology in Poland, it got a building, erected solely for the purposes of theology¹⁸. The Theological Library created on the basis of the collection of books of Wyższe Śląskie Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary) increased its volume thanks to steady subsidies by the Church and subsidies by the State which finance scientific research. The theological library remains in possession of the Katowice Archdiocese, materially it belongs to the library of Wyższe Śląskie Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary), but since the foundation of the Theological Library it has been serving the whole academic community.

2. Church and university status of the faculty

Relations between the State and the Church authorities are the most important for the development of theology as a university and ecclesiastic science. The relations as it is easy to guess are of financial matter. The University, although autonomous in its internal organization, is subject to the Act on Higher Education just like all the state-owned schools (and non-public schools as well). The Ministry sets the standards of education, requires certain level of scientific research and sets criteria of the academic promotion of the employees. The Congregation of Catholic Education which founded the Faculty of Theology at the University of Silesia, after moving the theology to the University, grant *nihil obstat* to the didactic employees. They grant *nihil obstat* directly (by the Grand Chancellor), but without the *Scientific Council of the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland*¹⁹. The ecclesiastic party has influence on the form of theology, through the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland, which sets the curriculum²⁰. The programme in the form of an education standard is distributed to all the faculties of theology as the ministerial programme. The right accreditation Commission of the Ministry qualifies and

¹⁸ At other universities in Poland most often buildings previously used by other entities were adapted.

¹⁹ The Scientific Council of the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland, “the organ supporting the Conference in its tasks concerning universities and the Church faculties”, “it files notifications from the Church schools and the Church faculties at state universities concerning granting an academic degree of Philosophy Doctor and Philosophy Doctor Habilitatus”, “files motions” and “gives its opinion on motions”... “submitted by faculty councils of the Church schools and the Church faculties of state universities to grant the degree of Professor”... vid. *Regulamin Rady Naukowej Konferencji Episkopatu Polski*, cfr. Cz. Rychlicki (ed.) *Struktura i kadra naukowo-dydaktyczna na Wydziałach Nauk Kościelnych w Polsce*, Płock 2004, pp. 13-15.

²⁰ Now there is a difference between requirements set by the curriculum of theological studies in the Church institutions (seminaries and faculties) in 1999 (cfr. *Zasady formacji kapłańskiej w Polsce*, Częstochowa 1999) and the requirements set for theology studies by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Both curricula have the acceptance of the Scientific Council of the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland! We can only assume that the latter one, issued in 2005, is in force.

checks teaching theology just like it does with other studies. Whereas the ecclesiastic party i.e. the Congregation and the Conference of the Episcopate, are interested in the contents of the studies and didactics, the state institutions, and indirectly the University care about the quality of the studies and scientific research. Here we can see the differences between the two educational systems. In the ecclesiastic three-tier system the highest and the last academic degree is doctorate, in the secular also a three-tier system it is habilitation. The process of adjusting different educational systems at European universities concerns faculties of theology two-fold i.e. it means arranging agreements between the State and the Church parties and "church" (at universities) with "church" (at Church schools). Despite the differences it seems that Polish theology in fact gains at the faculties of theology of the state universities. The state requirements, at least formally, 'force' improvement of the scientific level of theology. The Faculty of Theology in Katowice at the very beginning of its operation had to report for such qualifications²¹. The agreement between Wyższe Śląskie Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary) in Katowice and the Papal Faculty of Theology in Cracow signed in 1973 served well the quality of didactics. It was the Faculty of Theology that controlled the quality of teaching theology in Katowice. The faculty of Theology in Katowice at the beginning of its operation used the expertise of other university faculties e.g. concerning procedures of contests for positions in research and didactics, reporting results of research, monitoring quality of teaching, reports for university specialist commissions. The Faculty of Theology at the University of Silesia as almost the last faculty created at a university, simply applied all the procedures and requirements, which other faculties comply with. Theology in Katowice became subject of university studies and scientific research.

The liaisons with the university and both ecclesiastic and scientific identity of a faculty of theology let us make a few observations of general and more specific nature. The general view was presented by W. Góralski who explained the ecclesiastic aspect of a faculty of theology in general²². According to Góralski it is the Church identity that is the most important for a faculty of theology. It means close liaisons between a faculty of theology and the Church i.e. its Magisterium. In the legal aspect the liaisons are visible in establishing the faculty itself and in nihil obstat of the Church authorities. It refers both to the organizational structure and dealing with theology by the academic personnel. The right resolution on that matter can be found in the Regulations / Statute of the Faculty of Theology. The liaison between a faculty of theology and the Church is not only of legal nature. The ecclesiastic identity is revealed in aims of a faculty of theology. According to Góralski the aims concentrate on three areas: conducting and developing scientif-

²¹ In 2002 it got from The Central Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles the right to grant the degree of Theology Doctor, and in 2008 the right to grant the degree of Theology Doctor Habilitatus.

²² Cfr. W. Góralski, *Tożsamość eklezyjna wydziału teologicznego*, bk. *W poszukiwaniu pełnej prawdy*, (Warszawa 2003), Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne (Katowice), 71 (2003), pp. 487-494.

ic research, educating students, preparing the Church personnel and giving help to churches, help in evangelizing efforts. As far as the first task is concerned (scientific research), the university and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education set the same requirements. It is similar with the duty to educate students. If in our higher education system a faculty of theology belongs to the scientific branch it means it has obligations towards both the society and the Church. The tasks of a faculty of theology both in public and non-public (private schools of theology) areas are respected by European standards²³. It is a bit different with the third task of a faculty, mentioned by Górecki i.e. providing help to the Church in evangelizing²⁴. In the description of the aid the author quoted a fragment of *Ordinationes* of the Congregation for Catholic Education, i.e. commentary to the Apostle Constitution *Sapientia Christiana*. The support provided by the faculty of theology concerns ‘ministry, ecumenical and missionary activities of the Church and is aimed at understanding the faith, guarding and defending it; evangelical ministry involves the whole culture and human community’. In the further dissertation the author shows teaching and scientific aspects of the support. Teaching the Church personnel is support of its educational mission. It does not mean only priests who, according to *Sapientia Christiana*, should have a higher education degree, but Religion teachers of public and non-public schools as well. Religion teachers receive the canonnic mission from the Church authorities on the basis of their higher education diploma in theology. Góralski sees the role of theologians in their participating in the right ministry and catechesis commissions; in preparing catechetical books, ministry and homiletic programmes²⁵. It is understood that the liaison between the Faculty of Theology and local church depends on the mandate of the Church authorities. That means the authorities who make decisions about ministry, catechizing and ministry teaching. Participating in such Church activities does not result from the nature of the faculty as a university institution.

During the ceremony of consecrating the building of the Faculty of Theology in Katowice at the inauguration of the fourth academic year October 12, 2004, the Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski in his inaugurating lecture outlined the main tasks of the faculty in the intra-church and university perspective²⁶. The Cardinal Prefect in the first part of his speech presented the Faculty from the intra-church perspective, i.e. mentioned the key features which should characterize each faculty of theology²⁷. Because of the subject we are most of all interested in the Prefect’s of the Congregation for Catholic Education opinion on a faculty of theology at a state university²⁸. In Cardinal’s

²³ Even secular France (where for the last hundred years there have been no faculties of theology at state universities!) finances teaching theology at non-public schools.

²⁴ W. Góralski, *Tożsamość eklezjalna...,* p. 493 and next.

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ Z. Grocholewski, *Wydział teologiczny na uniwersytecie państwowym*, in: *Wydział Teologiczny Uniwersytetu Śląskiego*, red. L. Szewczyk, K. Kukowka, Katowice 2005, pp. 86-98.

²⁷ Ibidem, pp. 87-98.

²⁸ Ibidem, pp. 93-98.

opinion the motto of the idea is St. Augustine's *gaudium de veritate* i.e. 'joy of seeking the truth in all aspects of knowledge, discovering it and sharing it' (it is a quotation on catholic universities from *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, the Apostle Constitution of John Paul II). In Cardinal's opinion it refers also to universities in general, so also to state universities, especially if they have a faculty of theology in their structure. The central issue of theology as a science is, just like in other disciplines, seeking the truth. According to the Prefect of the Congregation in our times the special requirement is the one of seeking the truth about a human being. So he treats theology as one of humanities. In the search for the truth on a human being he can see the need to look for the sense of human existence, so in the specific meaning characteristic for theology it is the search for the sense of the existence towards God. From the methodological and scientific point of view he cannot see the opposition between faith and reason. He shows different ways of reaching the truth in theological studies and in science in general. The Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education explicitly admitted that a faculty of theology at a state university is valuable and that it may enrich the faculty and theology itself²⁹. In the opinions of J. Góralski, T. Pieronek and Z. Grocholewski we can find the official standpoint of the institutional Church concerning existence of a faculty of theology at a state university, so also the Faculty of Theology at the University of Silesia in Katowice. The speech of the Chairman of the Congregation for Catholic Education could not be different as it was the Congregation that approved foundation of the faculty and transferred the department of catholic theology from Wyższe Śląskie Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary) in Katowice to the University of Silesia.

3. How was the Faculty of Theology at the University of Silesia received by the Church and University societies?

In the first years of its operating research into reasons why to start such studies was conducted among students of the first year at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Silesia³⁰. The results of the research are very interesting. For the students of Pastoral specialization (future clergy of the Archdiocese of Katowice) the main motivation was the work in priesthood which they get prepared to at Wyższe Śląskie Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary) as well. The research confirmed the alumni of the Seminary 'prefer the religious formation at the Seminary to university intellectual education'³¹. University theology is treated by future priests only as a subject of studies. For future Religion teachers i.e. secular students of Teaching specialization the main motive is the desire of spiritual development. Marek Wójcik, author of the research, says that for them 'the curric-

²⁹ Z. Grocholewski, *Wydział teologiczny...*, p. 97 and next.

³⁰ Cfr. M. Wójcik, *Motywacje i oczekiwania studentów I roku Uniwersytetu Śląskiego związane z podjęciem studiów teologicznych*, Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Theologiczne 38, 2 (2005), pp. 449-463.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 461.

ulum of the studies does not fit, what may cause frustration'. The remaining two motives of undertaking the studies i.e. an interest in theology and a desire of intellectual development seem to fit theology as a university specialization. For the sake of accuracy it must be added that the students of the Faculty at the Pastoral specialization (future priests) get there the necessary training to work at school, so in fact they study additional Teaching specialization. The choice made by the candidates for priesthood is usually accepted in their society, whereas 'candidates for Religion teachers are generally misunderstood, often criticized and totally unaccepted'³². Not only the closest relatives of the students have such doubts, so do priests. The Silesian clergy very often pose secular theologians question what they will do in life as graduates of a faculty of theology. (I think students of the College of Theology, a Church school, were not asked such questions even when they got the Master's degree in Theology at the Faculty between 2002 and 2005). The least motivated group are students of general theology, at least it is so during the first year of the studies. They want to study something, have a Master's degree and general practice in Humanities. Their aim at getting higher education helps consider theology as one more university specialization. The students of general theology, who persevere to the Master's degree, choose theoretical issues for their theses and are more interested in theology as a science. They also have higher expectations towards the studies concerning their intellectual and spiritual development. Their ideas of career after the studies probably resemble the ones of the students of Philosophy.

The pragmatic attitude of the Silesian academic society affects approach towards theology as a university specialization in a very peculiar way. The question why and where to study theology bothers both the Church and university circles. Asking academics and students the question about the place of theology at a university it would be good to look at the proceedings of a very interesting session titled '*Church and University*' organized by Koło Naukowe Teologów (Theology Scientific Club) on November 23, 2002. In fact it was on theology at a university. The participants made a number of interesting observations during the panel discussion on 'Faculty of Theology at a State University'. Also the participants of the research from among the students of Social Sciences of the University of Silesia took part in the discussion, although indirectly. The research was conducted by Prof. Wojciech Świątkiewicz, a sociologist and a lecturer of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Silesia, and he summed up the results of it³³. I was particularly interested in the opinions against the Faculty. I mean the voices which were skeptical, or even critical and favorable (only for one institution: the University!), within the subject *Church and University*. The students who were against 'close liaisons' of the two institutions, the Church and the University, ac-

³² This is how Wójtowicz, *Motywacje...*, p. 461, sums up the research.

³³ W. Świątkiewicz, *Równość – Autonomia – Tolerancja*, in: *Kościół a uniwersytet. Materiały z sympozjum 23 listopada 2002*, Katowice, pp. 38-43.

cepted the fact of establishing the Faculty of Theology and its operating at the University. So it might have meant their loyalty towards the University of Silesia or acceptance of the fact that theology is taught at the University³⁴. The opponents of the relations between the Church and the University agreed that priests must be educated and they even appreciated the benefits of the studies for the Church. They understood rational arguments in favor of the Faculty of Theology at the University or as a separate Church institution. Probably they meant the clergy educated at Wyższe Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary). The students generally associated theology with the clergy, representatives of the Church, in both categories of answers: 'for' and 'against'. In their voices I did not find opinions on educating secular theologians. Probably it would not be much different from the opinions of the first year students of the Faculty of Theology, or even clergy ('who needs secular theology?').

The voice of Prof. Barbara Skarga concerned the presence of the Church, through the Faculty of Theology at the University. She was for the separation of the two (or opposition of faith and reason). If I understand correctly the Professor associated the reason with the University. She said 'That is why when I notice the Church in Poland would like to be ubiquitous, in all public and political institutions, I fear the breach of rules of the separation'³⁵. If the Faculty of Theology means institutional presence of the Church at the University, then Prof. Skarga expresses her deep anxiety over teaching theology at the University. 'Interference of religion and the Church in different aspects of secular life and its attempts to subdue them totally are dangerous. The examples are countries ruled by religious fundamentalists'. The sentence precedes the opinion on institutional presence of the Church in public and political institutions. The skeptical remarks of Prof. Skarga concern associating the religion and the reason as well. For her the reason is inextricably connected with doubts, and doubts cannot be, in her opinion, connected with accepting the truths of the faith. 'Progress in science requires transformation, it requires challenging common truths. Doubts are the first step towards knowledge (...) That is why all the dogmas, even the ones supported by a strong institutional apparatus, in time, under influence (of reason and doubts) crumble, just like the dogma that the royal power comes from God, the dogma that communism is a historic necessity, the dogma of scientificity proposed by various positivist thinkers etc³⁶'. Simplifying, Prof. Skarga links dogmas of the Catholic religion (the dogma that the royal power comes from God is not a dogma of the Catholic religion!) with the political, scientific, theological or the Church dogmas. Yet it seems that it is not the point in theology or dogmatic theology. Professor Skarga by saying about (doubting and critical) thinking states 'I must make it clear that I do not mean only training mental

³⁴ During the initial voting on the plan to establish such a faculty the students of the University of Silesia were against it (Resolution of the Senate of the University of Silesia, March 26, 1991; cfr. information Gazeta Wyborcza 79 April 7, 1991).

³⁵ B. Skarga, *Kościół a uniwersytet. Materiały z sympozjum 23 listopada 2002*, Katowice, p. 34.

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 35.

fitness, aimed at pragmatism and practical tasks. No, I mean real thinking, which keeps on asking questions and keeps on looking for the truth. Such thinking, no matter which route it takes, is saturated with doubts and does not take any truths for granted’³⁷. So in Prof. Skarga’s opinion theology at the Faculty of Theology could be the reflection over the clergy in form of applied theology, homiletics. Of course if the proponents of such a solution could be convinced that the setting up a faculty of theology at a state university does not mean creating a bridgehead of a ‘dangerous’ organization hostile towards freedom of thought, namely the Church. The notion of reducing the theological education to merely its practical (applied) aspect, maybe even accepted by ‘practitioners’ and clergy, is common in Poland and not only in the university circles. German theology is criticized as well³⁸. Reducing theology to its merely practical or historical aspect, as the condition necessary to accept theology at a university as a scientific subject, for Ratzinger means treating it like an ideology and the whole concept is close to doing science like Marxism³⁹ (practical liberation theology). According to Ratzinger ‘theology is not just an auxiliary activity for the Magisterium. It is not limited to gathering arguments to support what it has stated. In such a case the Magisterium and theology would turn into ideology aimed at gaining and keeping power’⁴⁰. Ratzinger’s remarks on doing university theology, especially its unity and pluralism⁴¹, despite their surface conflict, seem coincide with what Prof. Barbara Skarga says about freedom of thought, which she considers the basic condition of doing university science. ‘Thinking is freedom and it seems to have no limits. Its nature does not let it have any limits, it cannot be confined in limited space, it reaches towards infinity, towards what is beyond the reality surrounding the man, beyond human nature here and now (...) The University should be the forge of thinking minds. And let me add here that the Greeks taught us that thinking in its nature is ethical as it despises falsity. It must be honest and see other arguments revising its own ones. So it teaches respect to others, the ones who think different’⁴². Thinking and searching are important both for a philosopher and a theologian. Although the matter of interest is of different nature for a philosopher and a theologian, because for theologians it is the Word of God, yet the method (‘scientific’) is the same, as it is searching and open-mindedness towards the truth. Searching the truth obliges to spread it, hence the duty of academic teaching. Freedom is then determined by an ethical rule of unconditional searching and spreading the truth. According to Ratzinger it is not a limitation, but the right, ethically expressed term of freedom⁴³. To understand the need of theology, so also the presence of a faculty of theology at a state university, it is necessary to understand the Church as a community of believing and thinking

³⁷ B. Skarga, *Kościół a uniwersytet...*, p. 34.

³⁸ Cfr. J. Ratzinger, *Prawda w teologii*, Kraków 2001, pp. 144-146.

³⁹ Cfr. criticism of the rule: Ratzinger, *Prawda w teologii...*, p. 90 and next.

⁴⁰ J. Ratzinger, *Prawda w teologii...*, p. 121.

⁴¹ Ibidem, pp. 110-114.

⁴² B. Skarga, *Kościół a uniwersytet...*, p. 35.

⁴³ On “academic” freedom J. Ratzinger, *Prawda w teologii...*, pp. 37-41.

people, not only as an institution, which is accused of striving for political power. A theologian needs a connection with both the community of believers and the community of the searching ('doubting'), namely a university. Does the Faculty of Theology at the state University of Silesia in Katowice give a chance to do such theology? Time will show.

For the Church community of believers it is important where and how their priests will be educated and trained (their Religion teachers as well). Founding faculties of theology at state universities we can consider as improvement of conditions of teaching theology. A similar situation, i.e. establishing faculties of theology and increasing their number, has taken place in Germany since the 1960s. The Faculty of Theology at the state university does not draw only on the Polish tradition (as it was at the Jagiellonian University), but on the Western traditions of German-speaking countries as well. So what was the source of the crisis described by Joseph Ratzinger, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the 1990s and previously professor of theology, in the unpublished diagnosis *Problem of educating priests in Germany*?⁴⁴ Observations of the professor of theology in Germany, now the Pope Benedict XVI, deserve our attention on account of the situation of faculties of theology and seminaries in Poland, and also at the University of Silesia in Katowice and Wyższe Śląskie Seminarium Duchowne (Seminary).

Translated by Bruno Stefanski

WYDZIAŁ TEOLOGICZNY NA PAŃSTWOWYM UNIWERSYTECIE

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Po roku 1989 na kilku uniwersytetach państwowych w Polsce powstały wydziały teologiczne. Wydział Teologiczny w Katowicach, powołany uchwałą Senatu Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach oraz dekretem Kongregacji Wychowania Katolickiego, rozpoczął pracę naukowo-dydaktyczną w roku akademickim 2001/2002. Wydział Teologiczny jest zatem na państwowym uniwersytecie instytucją kościelną i z tej racji ma swoją kościelną tożsamość, a jednocześnie, podlegając przepisom państwowym, zobowiązany jest do prowadzenia prac badawczych i studiów na poziomie akademickim. Wydział Teologiczny w Katowicach uzyskał, zgodnie z prawem państwowym, uprawnienia nadawania stopnia doktora (w 2002 r.) i doktora habilitowanego nauk teologicznych (od 2008 r.). Kształci przede wszystkim teologów przyszłych duszpasterzy, także teologów nauczycieli religii, świeckich katechetów dla szkół oraz teologów świeckich w zakresie ogólnej teologii. Środowisko akademickie państwowego uniwersytetu przyjęło ten fakt pozytywnie, mimo że najczęściej kojarzy kształcenie teologów jako przygotowanie osób duchownych do pracy w instytucjach kościelnych, w parafiach. Podobnie środowisko kościelne, a nawet sami

⁴⁴ J. Ratzinger, „Problem kształcenia księży w Niemczech”, in: *Prawda w teologii...*, pp. 143-152.

zainteresowani studiami teologicznymi, klerycy, traktują studium teologii w Katowicach pragmatycznie, to znaczy, wykształcenie wyższe w naukach teologicznych jako przygotowanie do pracy duszpasterskiej. Mniej oczywiste i zrozumiałe są natomiast cele badawcze Wydziału Teologicznego. Dla niektórych pracowników nauki, filozofów i socjologów te cele Wydziału Teologicznego na państwowym uniwersytecie wydają się nie do pogodzenia z celami naukowymi. Praktyczne i pragmatyczne nastawienie środowiska kościelnego wobec studiów teologicznych i krytyczne opinie o teologii jako nauce na uniwersytecie mogą się składać między innymi na sytuację kryzysową nauk teologicznych, o której wobec środowisk akademickich w Niemczech swego czasu pisał Joseph Ratzinger, profesor teologii w Niemczech (obecnie papież Benedykt XVI). Jego uwagi krytyczne o kształceniu na wydziałach teologicznych i seminarach duchownych w Niemczech warto wziąć pod uwagę także na Śląsku.