

## Editorial

The present issue of “Theological-Historical Studies of Opole Silesia”, the second of 2018, which is published in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the publication of its first volume has a thematic character. For the second time in the half-century of the publishing of this journal which has experienced some different changes to its format, as it is now possible to publish an issue of which papers are dedicated to one definite leading theme. In this case, it is the problematic theme: *Theology in the public arena*. It is one of the most important questions of theological reflection in the present day and is concerned with the foundations of understanding and the identity of theology, its character and tasks which theology has to fulfil in the different kinds of public arena bear a wide understanding. The notion of “the public arena” concerns different dimensions of public life, in spheres such as politics, the economy, the health service, the education system, universities, culture and the media that is the Press, Radio, TV, the Internet, Cinema and publicity. In all of these arenas, there is and should be, a place for theological contents. The theme of this issue searches for answers to questions which are both concerned with place and the possibilities and problems, difficulties and challenges connected with the presence of theology and theologians in different dimensions of public life. Inasmuch as possibilities and challenges are different in diverse countries of Europe the problematic concerns are not only of Polish society but also speaks about specific depictions from a German and Slovenian perspective. This is due to the enrichment of research perspectives with experiences from other European countries. The question on the presence of theology in the public arena is a wider research project of which one part among other things was the international conference on this theme which took place at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Opole on 21–23 March 2018. In this conference theologians from different academic centres of Poland gathered and participated alongside theologians from Germany and Slovenia too.

The present thematic issue opens with three papers which show a general understanding of the public character of theology, its tasks, possibilities and difficulties in Germany, Slovenia and Poland. Some of the presented experiences show simi-

larities with what is connected the process of globalisation and the occurrence of similar problems in different European countries. There are clear differences and specific problems connected with different social and cultural background of countries and they search for ways in which the presence and impact of theology can affect particular emerging problems.

The next articles contained in the issue present the concerns of specific themes connected to particular branches of theology. The articles focus on the impact of the contemporary questions which are the object of debate in different spaces of the public arena. The first paper is from the range of biblical theology which is concerned with the practicalities of the prophetic message about social justice. The next paper is from the range of fundamental theology and concerns a question which is permanently present in the public debates on evil, suffering and salvation, and is understood from the position of naturalism and theism. The next two articles are from dogmatics. The first explains the diaconal dimension of the mission of the Church in frame of reference to the Diaspora situation as exemplified by the problems of the East-German diocese of Magdeburg. The second paper discusses the problem related to an understanding of time and the modern approach to temporality from the perspective of eternity as understood from the point of view of the Trinity.

The presence of theology in the public arena takes place especially by the way the liturgy is celebrated as it has public character and is celebrated in different places of the public arena. The problems in relation to this respect is discussed in the next two articles. The first of them explores and discusses the celebrations of liturgy during the national and state feasts in Poland and highlights both historical questions and contemporary problems and challenges. The second paper from the theology of liturgy discusses the imperative of prayer for the fatherland and imperators in the euchologies of chosen East Churches.

An important other place of the public arena today is the media which opens wide possibilities for the communications of different content, including the transfer of theological content. The question of the possibilities and problems of the presence of theology in the media is present in the next two articles. The first of them discusses the research of the new ways to preach the Gospel in contemporary media as exemplified by the activity of Adam Szustak OP. The second paper is a critical analysis of two German magazines for youth which discusses the ways of transferring theological content and the dangers of trivialisation of the Christian message.

The last two articles on the presence of theology in the public arena are concerned with historical questions. The first of them shows the significance of modern

parishes for the process of industrialisation in Upper Silesia at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The second one presents the person of Kurt Reuter (1908–1965) and his activity connected with the posting of theological books to different ecclesial centres in Poland which is shown as an element of the process of reconciliation between Polish and Germans.

The column *Reviews – Materials – Reports* contains texts concerned with the leading theme of this issue on theology in the public arena. The first one is a review of the book on religion in secularised Europe edited by O. Höffe and A. Kablitz which was published in 2018 by *Wilhelm Fink* publishing house in Paderborn, Germany. The second review concerns the project of ethical culture at universities written by leading American moral theologian James F. Keenan and was published in 2015 by *Rowmann & Littlefield* publishing house in the USA. The next text is a description which contains the introduction of the apostolic constitution *Veritatis gaudium* published in December 2017 by Pope Francis about the activity of Catholic universities and ecclesial faculties. The last text published in the presented issue is a report of the conference on theology in the public arena which took place at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Opole on 21–23 March 2018.

The texts presented in the present issue of “Theological-Historical Studies of Opole Silesia” concerning the possibilities and problems of the presence of theology and theologians in the public arena do not exhaust the complex question but are an inspiration for further research in this field. Problems, questions and challenges of the present day incite the search for answers to the question in which way theology and its particular branches can help towards understanding reality and bring constructiveness into searching for right and responsible solutions. The texts contained in the present issue are an attempt to answer this question.