

REV. GRZEGORZ STRZELCZYK

THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS IN SELECTED
PUBLICATIONS (AFTER THE II VATICAN COUNCIL).
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF THE QUESTION

Abstract. The article makes a contribution to the history of the discussion on the knowledge of Jesus, which continues within the framework of systematic Christology. The analysis concerns the following single-authored monographs on these issues written in the 20th century, after the Second Vatican Council: H. Riedlinger: *Geschichtlichkeit und Vollendung des Wissens Christi* (1966), J. Galot: *La conscience de Jésus* (1971), W.G. Most: *The Consciousness of Christ* (1980), P. Kaiser: *Das Wissen Jesu Christi in der lateinischen (westlichen) Theologie* (1981), R. Maloney: *The Knowledge of Christ* (1999), J.G. Diaz Macabenta: „*Mystical Experience Theory*” in *Jesus human knowledge and consciousness. An Evaluation* (1993/2003).

Key words: Christology, humanity of Jesus, knowledge of Jesus, consciousness of Jesus.

The goal of this study is to contribute to the critical analysis of the history of problem of Jesus knowledge (as well as the discussion of the issue) and this paper as such is part of the broader research.¹ The subject of our reflection will focus on single-author works in book form² pertaining directly and entirely to this problem, written after the Second Vatican Council.³

GRZEGORZ STRZELCZYK – Catholic priest, PhD, contact: grzegorz@strzelczyk.edu.pl

¹ The following articles have been published within the series of monographs: “Wiedza Jezusa a hipoteza doświadczenia mistycznego,” *Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne* 39 (2006), no. 2: 272-81; “Wierność Chrystusa,” *Verbum Vitae* 11 (2007): 217-33; “Antropologiczne uwarunkowanie kwestii wiedzy Jezusa,” *Studia Bobolanum* 3 (2013): 89-98. Subsequent studies are to be published.

² This formal criterion is mainly connected with the fact that, generally speaking, only single-author monographs contain attempts at a comprehensive approach paired with conciseness of methodological assumptions. Collective works dealing with the issue under scrutiny were of much less contributonal value. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning here some significant monographic volumes of journals of the period we are interested in: *Divinitas* 13 (1969) and *Doctor communis* 36 (1983), vol. 1-2 (the latter is an extensive monograph dedicated entirely to the defence of the hypothesis of the beatific vision).

³ I have decided on this restriction due to an essential change of perspective on the issue we are scrutinising, which took into consideration the renewed understanding of the revelation, which stressed historicity.

1. HELMUT RIEDLINGER:

GESCHICHTLICHKEIT UND VOLLENDUNG DES WISSENS CHRISTI (1966)

The first comprehensive work about the knowledge of Jesus after the completion of the Second Vatican Council was published in the series entitled “*Quaestiones disputatae*” (vol. 32), which indicates indirectly the direction that the discussion of the issue took in 1960s. The conviction that the traditional solution (the theory of triperspectivalism) could hardly be final and binding had gradually become – despite the resistance on the part of neo-Thomistic circles – the opinion of the majority. What was intended here was initiating the discussion about the issue, rather than replacing the previous solution with a new one. The book in question, a thesis written by Helmut Riedlinger entitled *Geschichtlichkeit und Vollendung des Wissens Christi*⁴, is a prime example that illustrates the tendencies of that period well. The dialectics of historicity and perfection of Christ’s knowledge, which we see in the title, is an axis of this work, serving as its hermeneutic principle. On the one hand, historical research on the New Testament leads us to a radical affirmation of the historicity of Jesus the Man; on the other, dogmatics seems to demand – due to the salvific efficacy of the revelatory mission of Jesus – the acknowledgement that He possessed *qua homo* clear consciousness of His identity and mission. In the most extensive chapter of his study, Riedlinger demonstrates that this dialectics is already present in the New Testament, among the oldest testimonies (Gospel of Mark) and more recent theologically mature reinterpretations of the image of Jesus in light of the paschal experience (Letter to the Hebrews, Gospel of John). The conclusion is thus cautious:

Es wäre eine theologisch unverantwortliche Simplifikation, die “pneumatische” Darstellung des Johannes der “historischen” Darstellung der Synoptiker entgegenzusetzen und dem Johannesevangelium hinsichtlich des Wissens des irdischen Jesus jeglichen Zeugniswert abzusprechen. Andererseits wäre es aber beim heutigen Stand der Exegese auch unverantwortlich naiv, die johanneischen Texte einfachhin als historische Schilderungen psychologischer Fakten zu lesen.⁵

Elaborating on the history of the theological discussion about the knowledge of Jesus, the author notes that the perspective on John’s Gospel –

⁴ Helmut Riedlinger, *Geschichtlichkeit und Vollendung des Wissens Christi* (Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1966).

⁵ Riedlinger, *Geschichtlichkeit*, 71.

following the period of initial diversity – must have gained the dominating position. Nevertheless, as for the interpretation of the scope and manner of functioning of Jesus complete, or “perfect,” knowledge, no universally accepted theory was worked out. Riedlinger pays a lot of attention to the denial of the theses of the traditional theology, resulting from the return to the historical sources of the period of Enlightenment. The case of A. Loisy is quoted as an embodiment of the entire process. A non-critical understanding of history as a science capable of (unmistakably) establishing facts must lead historical exegesis to a conflict with dogmatics (perceived as a speculative, detached from facts, formation of the communal consciousness). It is in the perspective of this conflict that – according to Riedlinger – we should interpret the Magisterium’s interventions about the issue of Jesus knowledge from the beginning of the 20th century. The way out of the crisis, followed by the pursuit of new solutions, was opened, on the one hand, by a critical approach to the capacity of historical studies and, on the other, the renewed conception of the revelation. Karl Rahner’s hypothesis (of the direct vision) is pointed out as one of the most promising.⁶ However, the author suggests that to reconcile Biblical data and systematic theology ultimately, we might have to depart from old categories and the terms associated with them altogether.⁷ As a result, he advises replacing the term “beatific vision,” or “direct vision” with the expression “historical vision of God.”⁸ The historicity in question is said to allow us to do justice to those passages from the Bible which indicate the imperfection of Jesus’s cognition and open the way for the “vision of God” to grant Him the “higher” knowledge about His own identity (including the consciousness of His divinity) and relation with the Father. Riedlinger’s terminological proposal – interesting as it was – did not catch on⁹; certainly, one of the reasons might have been the lack of an accompanying attempt at a profound and speculative resolution of the issue.

⁶ Followed by a series of critical remarks, though. Cf. *Ibid.*, 152.

⁷ “Wer nicht immer wieder in die alten Denkegeleise hineingelenkt werden will, wird schließlich nicht nur von den antiquierten Vorstellungen, sondern auch von den damit verbundenen Namen Abschied nehmen müssen.” Cf. *Ibid.*, 158.

⁸ “Geschichtliche Gotteschau.” Cf. *Ibid.*

⁹ I have yet to come across an author who makes use of these terms consistently.

2. JEAN GALOT: *LA CONSCIENCE DE JÉSUS* (1971)

In 1971 a monograph about Jesus consciousness and knowledge was published by Jean Galot.¹⁰ How did Jesus know what He revealed to us about Himself? [cf. p. 7]. This is the first sentence of the book that summarises the author's approach to the issue. First of all, he wishes to explain the way Jesus's human cognition was realised. Secondly, what serves as a hermeneutic backdrop of his reflections is the conviction that the proposed solution must correspond with the revelatory mission of Jesus, i.e. guarantee its efficacy. Galot endeavours to manoeuvre among the perspective of Biblical data, rather than dogmatic speculations.¹¹ Therefore, the two initial chapters are dedicated to the two New Testament self-determined Christ's titles – "Son of Man" and "I am." The author links the former with Christ's prophetic consciousness and concludes that the knowledge of Scripture alone cannot account for the self-consciousness He had [cf. p. 54]. The latter expresses its, as it were, deeper level, guiding us towards the mystery of His divine identity. The consciousness of the divine mystery is inscribed in the consciousness of truly being human and living amongst man [cf. p. 76]. However, what constituted the real keystone of Jesus self-consciousness was his relation to the Father. In Galot's opinion, the word *Abba* has a primordial meaning, which explicate all the expression of Jesus's consciousness [cf. p. 91]. The consciousness of Jesus was – according to Galot – above all, filial, which is the proper axis of the entire book.

Subsequently, the author moves from Biblical data to "psychological" and theological interpretation. Firstly, he alludes to the discussion of the *I* of Jesus (P. Galtier), being himself in favour of the divine *I* in Christ¹², which automatically opens the way for the question of the relationship between the

¹⁰ Jean Galot, *La Conscience de Jésus* (Gembloux: Duculot-Lethielleux, 1971).

¹¹ Which is why his point of departure is a Biblically-based attempt at reconstructing the contents of Jesus's consciousness. I intend to discuss the methodological difficulties of this approach in a separate study.

¹² "Il y a lieu de reconnaître dans la personne un vrai principe d'opération, le principium quod de l'activité, selon la formule scolastique. Elle n'est pas simplement une condition, permettant à la nature, qui serait alors seul principe d'activité, d'opérer; elle n'est pas non plus simple sujet logique d'attribution, sans influence réelle. La personne est ce qui agit, et par conséquent, dans le Christ, la personne du Verbe est ce qui déclenche et dirige l'activité humaine. Elle opère par le principium quo, la nature, qui fixe la structure de l'action et fait qu'elle soit une action entièrement humaine. La personne divine qui a l'initiative et la direction des actions humaines, est donc toujours présente par son influx et son dynamisme dans la psychologie du Christ, en respectant néanmoins le niveau parfaitement humain de cette psychologie." Ibid., 125.

I and the human consciousness of it. The author goes on to discuss three hypotheses about this issue: a classical one (of the beatific vision), mystical experience¹³ and “through the hypostatic union” (which in fact is a collection of hypotheses comprising, above all, the ones by K. Rahner¹⁴ and J. Mouroux¹⁵). The second hypothesis is Galot’s original input. Its formulation is exceptionally concise:

N’est-il pas normal de penser que le contact intuitif avec Dieu, dont portent témoignage les mystiques, est susceptible d’éclairer les relations intimes de Jésus avec son Père? Le Christ a dû éprouver le premier, de la manière la plus authentique et la plu profonde, l’intuition de Dieu qui se cache dans l’expérience mystique [p. 152-153].

We learn about the fact that it comes down to an explanation alternative to the *visio beatifica* from an equally concise introductory paragraph, which makes it clear: the *visio* refers to the state beyond this life (*l’au-delà*), thus mystical experience is more useful to account for what pertains to Jesus’s earthly life [cf. p. 152]. Simultaneously, the author is of the opinion that this explanation should be integrated by means of the third of the aforementioned hypotheses so as to explain how Jesus reached the consciousness of the divine *I*.¹⁶

The foundation formulated in such a way makes it possible for Galot to explain, on the one hand, how Jesus’s consciousness could be liable to ordinary laws of human psychological development¹⁷; on the other, how the knowledge, exceeding what Jesus could have learnt by ordinary human cognitive skills, which are connected to sensual experience and reasoning, might come about within this consciousness. In the chapter devoted the final issue (with which the book ends), the author returns to Biblical data analysis and does so with a certain apologetic inclination, trying to prove that, in the light of what has been said earlier about the cognitive status of Jesus consciousness,

¹³ The author claims that it is irreconcilable with the state of humility linked with the incarnation.

¹⁴ Cf. esp. Karl Rahner, “Dogmatische Erwägungen über das Wissen und Selbstbewußtsein Christi,” in Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie*, vol. 5 (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1962), 222-245.

¹⁵ Cf. esp. Jean Mouroux, “Propositions sur la conscience du Christ et le temps,” in *Problèmes actuels de christologie. Travaux du symposium de l’Arbresle 1961*, ed. Humbert Bouëssé, Jean-Jacques Latour (Paris: Desclée, 1965), 179-200, esp. 427-432.

¹⁶ “Une comparaison avec des états mystiques ne peut nous montrer comment celui qui possède un moi divin arrive à en prendre humainement conscience.” Galot, *La Conscience de Jésus*, 168.

¹⁷ “Le fait exceptionnel qu’elle soit conscience d’un moi divin ne lui enlève rien de la consistance psychologique d’une conscience humaine.” *Ibid.*, 183.

there is no reason for looking at the texts about His extraordinary knowledge with suspicion. At the same time, however, the author seems to be in favour of a singularly minimalistic model – Jesus does not need to know and, in fact, does not know what He is not required to know to carry out the mission of salvation given to Him by the Father.

As questionable as Galot's approach to Biblical data¹⁸ may be, his book deserves attention for two reasons. Firstly, it introduced the hypothesis of mystical experience to the discussion on the issue. Secondly, through emphasis placed on the relationship between Jesus and the Father, i.e. on Jesus filial consciousness, it contributed to a gradual reorientation of the debate. Thus far what had been at the heart of it was the question about the human consciousness of the divine identity (Galot himself is influenced by this perspective¹⁹). However, with time, bigger and bigger role will be played by the very question of the filial identity and consciousness thereof.²⁰

3. WILLIAM G. MOST: *THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF CHRIST* (1980)

Although it is true that the works by theologians who had departed from the hypothesis of triperspectivalism dominated the theological market from the beginning of the 1960s, we cannot say that they had completely got off the stage. In 1980 William G. Most published the work, whose goal was to defend the neo-Thomistic views.²¹ The monograph is extremely polemical. The author quotes and confutes the arguments of the opponents of the classical hypothesis, which obviously is not of assistance to the constructive demonstration of his own ideas. Over half of his work²² is taken up by Biblical issues. Most opposes all that is, in his opinion, the abuse of historical and critical exegesis, being in favour of the historical credibility of the Gospel. Subsequently, he attempts to show that none of the Biblical arguments, as if

¹⁸ Which is slightly fossilised – what dominates here are the author's interpretations carried out in the style typical of systematicians, without referring to the research of historical and critical exegesis.

¹⁹ This may be why he deems the hypothesis of mystical experience (on its own) insufficient and suggests its integration by means of Rahner's hypothesis.

²⁰ The impact of Galot's book will obviously be correlated with other factors, such as e.g. B. Lonergan's influence. He was the one to approach this issue in a different way – from the speculative side.

²¹ William G. Most: *The Consciousness of Christ* (Front Royal: Christendom College Press, 1980).

²² Pages 8-92 and 174-228 with less than 230 pages that the book has (yet its ending is an methodological appendix dedicated the criticism of forms).

pointing to Jesus's lack of human knowledge, is decisive.²³ The author's inconsistency is also striking. After his enthusiastic call for the affirmation of the historical credibility of the Gospel in the introduction, in the subsequent four chapters he tenaciously avoids literal treatments of the passages that may prove the imperfection of Jesus knowledge, only to return to this kind of understanding of the testimonies in the chapter dealing with the singularity of His human knowledge. The feeling that the interpretation is biased so that it may confirm the previously assumed thesis is irresistible. Besides, the author does not seem to be interested in refuting it, as he consciously looks at the issue from the perspective that has been determined by the patristic Tradition and anti-modernist declarations of the Magisterium from the first half of the 20th century, which in his opinion are conclusive. What is puzzling is that Most discusses neither the Chalcedonian Definition (and the following councils connected with the impact of monophysitism) nor the Medieval output in detail. The reader may then conclude that the modern Magisterium has grown directly from the Father's testimonies.

In a relatively brief systematic part, Most criticises (quite cursorily) the views of K. Rahner, F. E. Crowe and J. Maritain, and sets out his own, in fact neo-Thomistic solution, defending only the *visio beatifica* – the theory of the infused knowledge disappears completely. The fact that Jesus possesses the knowledge of the “beatific vision” has been deduced from the very concept of the vision:

So, clearly, there are two requirements for the beatific vision in an ordinary soul: the elevation of its capacity by grace, and the joining of the divinity to the soul without any intermediary.

... The first requirement, grace to elevate the powers of the soul, He quite obviously possessed in its fullness. Did He have also the second, the union of His human soul with the divinity, without any intermediary? He not only actually fulfilled that requirement, but could not conceivably have done otherwise. It was inevitable because of His structure or make-up. ... Some theologians have supposed it was only most highly fitting that He have that vision in his human soul. It was indeed fitting. But we must say more; we must say that in view of Him structure, He could not conceivably have lacked that vision.²⁴

The successive sentence is surprising: “Further, we may say He had something actually beyond the ordinary beatific vision.” Here we leave the

²³ The author that Most counters most is R. E. Brown and especially his theses presented in the book *Jesus, God and Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

²⁴ Most: *The Consciousness of Christ*, 166-7.

territory marked by the thought of Thomas Aquinas, heading for a suggestion that a more perfect (?) human knowledge, exceeding the beatific vision, existed in Christ. What it could have been is not explained by the author in detail, yet in the final paragraphs²⁵ of the book he stresses the *directness* of the picture and its relationship with the metaphysical structured of the Incarnate One. What is distinctive is the final sentence of the monograph: “His consciousness was, therefore, fully in keeping with His two natures – human and divine – in one Divine Person.”²⁶ The author ultimately speaks about *His consciousness* in the singular. However, due to a not entirely clear context, it may hardly be accepted as a formal declaration of acknowledging only one personal consciousness in Christ. Nevertheless, having such an ambiguous phrase as the conclusion of the study shows the author’s sensitivity.

4. PHILIPP KAISER: *DAS WISSEN JESU CHRISTI
IN DER LATEINISCHEN (WESTLICHEN) THEOLOGIE* (1981)

In 1981 in Regensburg a comprehensive monograph by P. Kaiser titled *Das Wissen Jesu Christi in der Lateinischen (Westlichen) Theologie* was published²⁷, which, in my opinion, adds one of the most important voices to the discussion about the knowledge of Jesus. This is so not necessarily due to the solution to the problem²⁸ put forward by the author, but rather to its very accurately developed historical part²⁹. His synthesis, which is centred, as the title suggests, around western Latin theology, starts with Tertullian and ends with an extensive discussion of the views of K. Rahner, E. Schillebeeckx and P. Schoonenberg.³⁰ It may constitute, also owing to a comprehensive corpus of quotations from the sources, an excellent introduction to the problematic aspects with but one reservation. Kaiser has a tendency to

²⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, 168 (this is the factual ending of the book, followed by a few-dozen-page-long appendix).

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ It is a reworked version of the author’s post-doctoral thesis from 1970.

²⁸ He influenced, for instance, Czesław S. Bartnik, a renowned Polish theologian: *Dogmatyka katolicka*, vol. 1 (Lublin: KUL, 1999), 596.

²⁹ Were we to include the discussion of the New Testaments testimonies and the pronouncements of the Magisterium, it would cover four of five parts of the book (over 260 out of 300 pages). These are not all results of Kaiser’s research, as especially in the part dedicated to the Medieval times, he might have relied on previous studies.

³⁰ It was more or less the peak of the impact and discussion of these authors’ views, which explains why he was interested in them so much.

downplay the fact that the theory of triperspectivalism was not universally rejected in either 19th³¹ or 20th³² centuries, and, as a result, he does not take into account its supporters' arguments, limiting himself to general statements that it is unsustainable in the light of the contemporary Biblical knowledge and anthropology. Additionally, his focus on the theories of the above mentioned authors is at the cost of ignoring others; for instance, J. Galot's works, along with his hypothesis of mystical experience, are virtually unknown to him.³³

Kaiser's own solution³⁴ is undoubtedly inspired by the theology of K. Rahner. Nevertheless, he distances himself from the distinction, so typical of it, between pre-categorical and categorical cognition. The emphasis is put on the dialogical nature of self-consciousness and cognition. The dialogue takes place in the horizontal (Jesus's interactions with man and the world) and vertical (in relation to the Father) dimensions, and thus enables Jesus self-consciousness to mature so that eventually His divine identity is also revealed to His human consciousness at the very heart, as it were, of His human experience.³⁵ Therefore, the difference between Jesus and other people should not be sought in an indefinite depth (*die Tiefen*) of His psyche, but rather in the relation with the Father.³⁶

³¹ As he seems to claim on page 184: "Die scholastischen Unterscheidungen zwischen den verschiedenen Wissensweisen wurden allgemein abgelehnt." We may not agree with this claim, because the theory of triperspectivalism was then taught wherever classic textbooks were in use (e.g. by de Lugo, Tommasin, Petavius). Also, a few more recent works stood by the classical solutions.

³² As he suggests, though more carefully, on page 236: "Die scholastische Dreiteilung des Wissens Christi ist praktisch aufgegeben und wird bestenfalls nach einer Uminterpretation in eine neue Konzeption aufgenommen." The author ignores the works by, e.g., A. Piolanti, as well as the simple fact that in many countries in the 1960s and 70s, Neo-Scholastic textbooks were still used in theological studies.

³³ Only the footnote 38a on p. 295 mentions Galot's book *La conscience de Jésus*, yet his hypothesis of mystical experience is not referred, as Kaiser's remark focuses on Galot's approach to Jesus's sonship.

³⁴ Cf. esp. 282-300.

³⁵ Kaiser, *Das Wissen Jesu Christi*, 294-5 (original italics preserved): "Als der Menschgewordene ist Jesus der Sohn Gottes. In seiner Selbsterfahrung als Mensch wird ihm seine eigene Gottessohnschaft offenbar. Auf diese Weise bleibt die Einheit und das wahre Menschsein Jesu am besten bewahrt, ohne daß etwas von seiner Göttlichkeit verlorengeht. Je mehr Jesus so als Mensch bei sich selbst ist, um so mehr geht ihm auch auf, was er eigentlich ist, der Sohn des Vaters. Damit ist auch gegeben, daß das *fortschreitende menschliche Selbsterkennen* verbunden ist mit einem *zunehmenden Wissen und Bewußtwerden seiner Göttlichkeit*, da ihm diese nicht jenseits seiner Menschlichkeit gegeben ist, sondern in und mit dieser."

³⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 292.

Although I believe that making use of the category of dialogicality in the reflection on Jesus's self-consciousness should be considered as Kaiser's valuable contribution, as it helps us to think of His knowledge and self-consciousness as truly human, it is difficult to accept his solution as sufficient. He essentially leaves off one of the most important issues – namely, the way the vertical dialogicality was realised. Whence did Jesus eventually gain the awareness of His own filial (divine) identity? Was it all about an “ordinary” human way of prayer and reflection? Or a singular gift of the charismatic sphere? Kaiser limited himself to the claim *that* the vertical dimension makes it possible to transcend the horizontal one³⁷, but he does not explain *how* it is possible or *how* it is achieved in practice.

5. RAYMOND MALONEY: *THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST* (1999)

In 1999 a brief book by the professor of the Miltown Institute in Dublin, R. Maloney, entitled *The Knowledge of Christ*³⁸ was published. Its structure, after the introductory chapter that deals with the method, generally follows of path of historical sequence of witnesses.³⁹ Then he moves on to modern and contemporary times and pays a lot of attention to them. The author begins with discussing selected protestant views (F. Schleiermacher, kenotic Christology and process theology) and goes on to three Catholic approaches, deemed particularly representative, of K. Rahner, H. U. von Balthasar and B. Lonergan – the last of whom was in fact the main focus of Maloney, who

³⁷ Ibid., 290: “Obwohl die Geistigkeit Jesu eingebettet ist in den Horizont wirklich irdisch-menschlicher Bedingungen, ist ihr dennoch gleichzeitig ein Überstieg möglich. Wenn dieses Transzendieren auch niemals ein absolutes Verlassen der irdisch-menschlichen Dimension bedeutet, so liegt doch gerade in ihm die Möglichkeit, daß die Einzig-artigkeit Jesu für ihn selbst und den Glauben erkennbar wird. War Jesus auch in den Verstehenshorizont seiner Zeit eingebunden, so war er ihm doch *nicht radikal ausgeliefert*. Nur so ist verständlich zu machen, daß Jesus einen einzigartigen Anspruch erheben konnte, der über den allgemein menschlichen hinausging.”

³⁸ Published by Continuum (London-New York) as part of the series “Problems in Theology.”

³⁹ Jesus's proclamation of the Kingdom of God is the point of departure, laying the foundations for the New Testament testimony. Subsequently, the author pays attention to the twofold nature of this testimony as for the knowledge of Jesus. On the one hand, we have a series of texts that suggest its development and limitations; on the other, a group of speeches that indicate its perfection and supernatural character. The patristic and medieval theological tradition has been formed under the influence of these texts, favouring the image of Jesus's perfect knowledge that emerges from the latter series. The impact of a more empirical Aristotelian philosophy led to change of the paradigm. More attention was then paid to experimental and human knowledge of Jesus.

overtly sympathises with his viewpoint.⁴⁰ The book ends with chapters presenting respective teachings of the modern and contemporary Magisterium, as well as the author's own proposal.⁴¹ However, it can hardly be called an actual hypothesis of the solution to the issue. Rather, Maloney makes an effort to gather the elements which, in his opinion, can be seen as a solid foundation for the reflection. According to him, these comprise: 1. The conviction, linked to the manner and content of Jesus teaching, that he relied on a singular communication of knowledge between Himself and the Father. 2. The assumption that we ought to distinguish various levels of Christ's cognition in such a way that he may have known something on one without knowing it on the other. 3. The conviction that the knowledge of Jesus does not equal omniscience. 4. The belief that we should retain the centrality of the vision of God while interpreting Jesus's knowledge [cf. p. 126-8]. Subsequently, Maloney oscillates between a certain apophatic approach, which makes him constantly refute the possibility of working out the solution, potentiality of particular solutions, metaphors, etc., and an attempt at describing the consciousness of Jesus at its most difficult moment – the death on the cross.⁴² The author slips here into something against which he has just warned, i.e. an attempt to reconstruct the conciseness of Jesus self-consciousness. Its details are not as relevant to our analysis as their underlying conviction⁴³ that they in fact depend on the soteriological model to be assumed at the beginning of the reflection. Maloney's model is consistently descending, which means that it entails a conviction that Christ the Man must have had a clear understanding of His identity, mission and goal He

⁴⁰ It should be added that the reception of B. Lonergan's thought with regard to the issue of Jesus's knowledge is very narrow and almost exclusively limited to R. Maloney and F. Crowe.

⁴¹ With a suggestion that the consistent absence of the term "beatific vision" in the recent documents of the Magisterium and papal commissions leaves "a wide field of reflection open to the theologian and the exegete." Cf. *Ibid.*, 125.

⁴² The difficulty of this approach is appropriately conveyed in the following excerpt: "It is impossible for us to conceive what such a confrontation might have been like, but the language of the New Testament seems to suggest that it consisted less in simple blind endurance than in some achievement in which knowledge and discernment played a part; indeed it seems to point to the ultimate vanquishing of darkness by light, and to the unmasking of the forces of evil and deceit, which lie hidden at the heart of the world." Cf. *Ibid.*, 138.

⁴³ It is not explicitly elaborated on by the author, yet reflecting on Christ's passion is carried out in a paragraph which distinguishes between two models of thought about salvation (as humanisation and deification). Cf. *Ibid.*, 132]. Maloney seems to be in favour of the latter, thus asserting that "the Christ who has come to transform us, does so, not simply by being what we are, but by being more than we are. ... It is only within this context than we can appreciate the question of Christ knowledge and consciousness." Cf. *Ibid.*, 132-3.

headed for. The central question about the “mechanism” of human cognition in Christ remains to be answered and the reader is invited to “appreciate the mystery.”⁴⁴

6. JOSÉ GLEN DÍAZ MACABENTA:
 “MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE THEORY”
 IN JESUS HUMAN KNOWLEDGE AND CONSCIOUSNESS.
 AN EVALUATION (1993/2003)

In 2003 a PhD thesis, titled “*Mystical Experience Theory*” in *Jesus Human Knowledge and Consciousness. An Evaluation*⁴⁵ created 10 years before⁴⁶ by J. G. Díaz Macabenta, was published at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome. The subject thereof is, according to its title, the analysis of the “theory” of mystical experience as a proposed solution of the issue of Jesus knowledge. The stances of three authors are here under scrutiny – of J. Galot⁴⁷, M. Bordoni⁴⁸ and M. González Gil⁴⁹. However, this very choice may raise objections – as long as Galot may be connected with this theory, in the case of Bordoni it is dubious⁵⁰ and González not only fails to base his interpretation of Jesus knowledge on the theory of mystical knowledge, but in fact seems to be moving away from it⁵¹, suggesting a way of interpretation along the lines of Thomas’s idea of cognition *per connaturalitatem*⁵². First of all, Díaz Macabenta extensively (with a number of repetitions) discusses the views of the mentioned authors and moves on to outlining a kind theory

⁴⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, 137-8.

⁴⁵ Supervised by J. A. Riestra, who may have had a strong influence in its execution. Cf. José A. Riestra, “Experiencia mística y visión beatífica en Cristo según Santo Tomás,” in *Atti del Congresso Tomistico Internazionale*, vol. 5: “Problemi teologici alla luce dell’Aquinate (Città del Vaticano: , 1991): 318-325.

⁴⁶ For this very reason, I am presenting it at the end, yet I count it as a 20th-century work.

⁴⁷ Discussed above.

⁴⁸ Concerning, above all, the theses set out in an extensive work *Gesù di Nazaret. Signore e Cristo*, vol 3 (Brescia: Herder, 1986).

⁴⁹ The these recalled come from a comprehensive, two-volume Christology of this author *Cristo, el misterio de Dios* (Madrid: BAC, 1976).

⁵⁰ He is much closer to Rahner’s theses, considering mystical experience rather analogical.

⁵¹ Cf. González Gil, *Cristo*, vol. 1, esp. 407 and 424.

⁵² Cf. Marco D’Avenia, *La conoscenza per connaturalità in S. Tommaso d’Aquino* (Bologna: ESD, 1992).

of mysticism.⁵³ The declared “evaluation” is merely found in one chapter⁵⁴ and is carried out from the point of view of neo-Thomistic Christology,⁵⁵ which the given authors move away from. The conclusion is then foreseeable – the theory of mystical experience is found inadequate and insufficient to explain the issue of Jesus knowledge, which is based on an apparently decisive argument of “gnoseological inadequacy.”⁵⁶ It is only the beatific vision that guarantees Jesus’s cognition adequate to His ontological status. Since the author does not venture on a deeper analysis of the motivation the given authors have to reject the classical hypothesis of triperspectivalism, he does not have to face the problems encountered while defending it outside the Neo-Thomistic context. In fact, the study appears to be a secondary apology of the (neo-)Thomistic tradition (or rather, its part) than an attempt to thoroughly discuss the opponents’ arguments.⁵⁷ Anthropological problems are

⁵³ Consistently remaining in the neo-Thomistic perspective. The reflection on the mysticism is constrained to Christian mysticism only, yet the most extensively discussed issue is the belonging or lack thereof of mysticism to the sphere of actualisation of the theological virtue of faith. Such neo-Thomistic frames run through the entire study. At the cost of the fact that Galot did not refine his concept of mystical experience (he rather resorted to the phenomenon as such), Díaz Macabenta put forward his own, neo-Thomistic idea. Such a model of mystical experience will then be claimed insufficient in the case of Jesus’s knowledge.

⁵⁴ Chapter 3 of Part 3. Ibid., 245-65.

⁵⁵ What is telling, as far as the author’s interests are concerned, is the declaration opening this chapter: “St. Thomas Aquinas has nothing to do with the ‘mystical experience theory’ as proposed and expounded by our three selected authors.” Ibid., 241. In fact, it would not be necessary as the given authors consciously *distance themselves* from Thomas’s solution, if Díaz Macabenta did not keep juxtaposing their opinions with Thomistic ideas (more than those of Thomas himself, as he means the views of P. Parente and the theologians of his school).

⁵⁶ “Mystical experience as such, even in its most exceptional character, isgnoseologically inadequate to express by way of consciousness the supreme manner of actuation in the ontological order, namely, the hypostatic union.” Ibid., 271.

⁵⁷ The penultimate paragraph of Díaz Macabenta’s study is particularly interesting in this respect, as it in fact reveals its unambiguously apologetic character: “For our part, we find in the traditional doctrine of Christ’s beatific vision a more solid and secure teaching to explain more fully the human psychology of Christ. It was through his beatific vision that Jesus knew God, and it was through his beatific vision that Jesus became conscious that he was the Son of God. However, our endorsement of this traditional doctrine is not so much based on the principle of perfection or principle of convenience, but derived from the exigency demanded by the very nature of the hypostatic union. We also believe that the arguments based on the revelatory mission of Christ and his fullness of grace could help a lot in laying a firmer foundation to this doctrine. It would not be wise to lay aside the different magisterial interventions backed up by long and constant tradition on this regard. On the contrary, in our efforts to deepen our understanding of Christ, we cannot just disregard the numerous studies done in the past. We might be surprised to find that many of the objections leveled today against the traditional doctrine have already been dealt with in the past. Therefore, one of the

principally left out and the author actually does not put forward any new solutions, nor does he introduce any new arguments to the discussion.

*

The analysis we have presented, brief as it has been, enables us to capture some tendencies. Firstly, it seems that the truly creative period of research about Jesus knowledge came to an end in the 1970s. The monographs published in the 1980s and 90s do not provide new and original hypotheses of solving the issue. Rather, we are dealing with either secondary studies or polemics, which seldom present new essential claims. What has to be stressed, however, is that siding with any of the hypotheses to a great degree does not necessarily depend on strictly Christological arguments, but on philosophical viewpoints assumed by the authors as the point of departure. Hence, a question arises, which in my opinion is of great importance: Will the progress of the discussion be possible without the appearance of a (new) shared philosophical paradigm? Obviously, we also ought to ask whether at the time of decadent post-modernity an outcome of this kind is even possible. Are we then not doomed to the pluralism of opinions (which hopefully correct one another) as far as Jesus's knowledge is concerned?

To conclude, it is worth mentioning, going beyond purely analytical framework of this study, that the contrast between the theses/conclusions of the book by Díaz Macabenta, just discussed, and the pluralism of opinions about Jesus knowledge that there has been since the beginning of the 20th century, illustrates – in my opinion quite well – the situation in which the issue of Jesus's knowledge found itself at the beginning of the 21st century. What I have in mind is the fact that the significant number, if not the majority, of Catholic theologians have moved away from the hypothesis of tri-perspectivalism, especially in the light of *the lack of reference* to it in the recent declarations of the Magisterium. At the same time, however, the circles that defend the Perennial philosophy and use it in theology stand by the classical solutions, of this issue as well. As far as I can assess this situation on the basis on the recently published texts⁵⁸, the discussion between the camps has become more and more dangerous, because the methodological

main roles of our present theological reflection should be to safeguard the precious and invaluable inheritance that the reflection of faith has transmitted to us.” Ibid., 272.

⁵⁸ Being as careful as I should be formulating this kind of evolution.

distance (related to the philosophical background, and especially to anthropology in our case) between the neo-Thomistic trend and not-necessarily-Thomistic “rest of the world” has kept growing, making mutual understanding ever so difficult.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bartnik, Czesław S. *Dogmatyka katolicka*, vol. 1. Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL, 1999.
- Bordoni, Marcello. *Gesù di Nazaret. Signore e Cristo*, vol. 3. Brescia: Herder, 1986.
- Brown, Raymond E. *Jesus, God and Man*. New York: Macmillan, 1967.
- D’Avenia, Marco. *La conoscenza per connaturalità in S. Tommaso d’Aquino*. Bologna: ESD, 1992.
- Diaz Macabenta, José G. „*Mystical Experience Theory*” on Jesus’ Human Knowledge and Consciousness: An Evaluation. Roma: Pontificia Universitas Sanctae Crucis. Facultas Theologiae, 2003.
- Galot, Jean. *La conscience de Jésus*. Paris: Lethielleux, 1971.
- Kaiser, Philipp. *Das Wissen Jesu Christi in der lateinischen (westlichen) Theologie*. Regensburg: Pustet, 1981.
- Maloney, Raymond. *The Knowledge of Christ*, London–New York: Continuum, 1999.
- Most, William G. *The Consciousness of Christ*, Front Royal: Christendom Publications, 1980.
- Mouroux, Jean. “Propositions sur la conscience du Christ et le temps.” In *Problèmes actuels de christologie. Travaux du symposium de l’Arbresle 1961*, edited by Humbert Bouëssé, Jean-Jacques Latour, 179-200. Paris: Desclée, De Brouwer, 1965. Discussion: 427-432.
- Rahner, Karl. “Dogmatische Erwägungen über das Wissen und Selbstbewußtsein Christi.” In *Schriften zur Theologie*, vol. 5, edited by Karl Rahner, 222-245. Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1962.
- Riedlinger, Helmut. *Geschichtlichkeit und Vollendung des Wissens Christi*. Freiburg–Basel–Wien: Herder, 1966.
- Riestra, José A. “Experiencia mística y visión beatífica en Cristo según Santo Tomás.” In *Atti del Congresso Tomistico Internazionale*, vol. 5: *Problemi teologici alla luce dell’Aquinata*, 318-325. Città del Vaticano: Libreria editrice vaticana, 1991.

The preparation of the English version of *Roczniki Teologiczne* (Annals of Theology) nos. 1 and 2 and its publication in electronic databases was financed under contract no. 723/P-DUN/2016 from the resources of the Minister of Science and Higher Education for the popularization of science.

