

## SUMMARY

**Title: „Religion and morality. Philosophical dispute about *the Divine Command Theory of Ethics*”**

This doctoral dissertation is a part of a philosophical dispute concerning the relationship between the moral norm and the religious norm, more precisely around the Divine Command Theory of Ethics. The issue of the Divine Command Theory of Ethics is nowadays vividly discussed in the field of analytical philosophy, especially among philosophers and theologians of the analytical tradition. The literature of this circle of philosophical thought is therefore the source material and mainly determines the method of work. Generally speaking, this theory sees the source of moral duty in God’s authority. One of the arguments put forward in defense of the Divine Command Theory of Ethics is the reference to biblical examples of ‘patriarchal immorality’ in which God issued orders that violated accepted moral principles. Among them the case of Abraham occupies a prominent place. Since in such cases it is God’s command/prohibition that determines the moral goodness/evil of the deed, these examples would support the Divine Command Theory of Ethics, which, according to its defenders, emphasizes God’s volitional sovereignty over morality.

The problem raised in this work is expressed in the question: whether the Divine Command Theory of Ethics, which in the justification of moral norms ultimately refers to the authority of God’s legislator, can be defended as one of many ethical theories or is it closer to moral theology? The final solution to this issue seems to depend first on the identification of the correct model of the relationship between the moral norm and the religious norm that should be adopted by the defenders of Christian theism in ethics. I analyze the problem in my work in four chapters.

In the first chapter I present the case of Abraham, which for me is a kind of starting point in the discussion over the titled issue. By presenting the patriarch’s dilemma I would also like to initially outline possible positions in the dispute over the methodological status of the Divine Command Theory of Ethics. Abraham, in the difficult situation in which he found himself, must answer the question of what is more important: God’s commandment (a religious norm) or a moral norm. Thus, the various options for resolving the patriarch’s dilemma involve accepting or excluding a certain relationship between morality (ethics) and

religion (moral theology). In philosophical reflection on the relationship between religion and morality, three main positions can be noted (models of the relationship between the religious norm and the moral norm): the supremacy of the religious norm over the moral norm (religious subordinationism), the separateness of the religious norm and the moral norm (isolationism of religion and morality) and inferiority of the religious norm versus moral norm (interactionism of religion and morality).

The second chapter is devoted to typologizing and briefly discussing the more important versions of the Divine Command Theory, because this theory can ultimately be included in a subordinationist model of relations, assuming the supremacy of the religious norm over the moral norm. In this part, a basic question arises about the type of relationship between the moral norm and the religious norm, which is the main criterion for distinguishing different types of this theory.

In the third chapter, I refer to the arguments of those who programmatically separate the areas of morality and religion, proclaiming at the same time the metaphysical, logical – semantic and epistemological autonomy of ethics.

The last, fourth chapter of the dissertation shows the mutual creative relationship between the moral norm and the religious norm. This model of relations is the closest to the Christian philosophical reflection on morality. On this background I try to interpret the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac in such a way, as not to have to deal with a conflict of requirements or with the command of God abolishing moral norms. The conducted analyzes led me to adopt a position that I defined as the interactionism of morality and religion. According to it, morality based on the religious revelation does not conflict with morality based on rational reflection but rather complements it. And while moral theology necessarily depends on ethics on the methodological level and the latter is a methodologically distinct discipline, this does not mean that theological statements are of no importance for ethical reflection. The participation of moral theology in solving moral issues should be looked for in the area of justification and motivation.

The conclusion of the dissertation is as follows: the justification of the moral norms proposed in the modified and mixed varieties of the Divine Command Theory of Ethics turns out to be consistent only on the basis of a specific metaphysical system that accepts the existence of God not so much on the basis of statements contained in revelation but on the basis of rational philosophical reflection. With this assumption, the Divine Command Theory of Ethics can be treated as an example of Christian ethics. The classic highly voluntarist varieties of the Divine Command Theory of Ethics, which seem to be closer to positive moral

theology, make it much more difficult to interpret in this respect. Moreover, standing in the position of moderate supranaturalism, one can defend the Divine Command Theory as an ethical theory on another level – on the level of the ethics of authority.

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