

PREFACE

The texts published in the present issue were written in celebration of Søren Kierkegaard's 200th birthday for the conference *The Existential Interpretation of Being Human in Philosophy and Psychology: Validity and Topicality* (October 3–6, 2013, Vilnius) organized by *The Center for Philosophical Anthropology* at the European Humanities University (Vilnius), *The Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre* (Copenhagen), and the *Center for Religious Studies and Research* at Vilnius University.

As the intellectual history of the recent hundred years shows, Kierkegaard has proved to be such a remarkable – such a genius – thinker whose ideas have become requested and intensively discussed regardless of all the changes in the *Zeitgeist* and in the intellectual mode. That is why the interpretation of Kierkegaard's contribution to the European intellectual tradition is no longer framed in terms of his identification as “the forerunner of existentialism”. Rather we have to assume that the scope of the ideas and questions he was concerned with is relevant to the very core – a deeply problematic core – of the project called modernity (in all its historical/rhetorical variations: classical modernity, late modernity, post-modernity and so on).

The conference was focused on the programmatic concept of Kierkegaard's thinking – the concept of *existence*. It is undoubtedly the very remarkable concept since it has remained persistent after the long-term and profound criticism of concepts such as “the subject” and “humanism”. At the same time, it is not at all self-evident to what extent and for what reasons the existential interpretation of being human is valid and topical *today*. Rather, it could be said that various challenges of contemporary world require reconsideration and, probably, re-actualization of the existential approach. In this regard, it seems very important that the conference was conceived as a cooperation of philosophers and psychologists including (what is no less important) practicing psychologists.

In this issue, all contributions are divided into four rubrics: (1) *Kierkegaard's Authorship and Reconsideration of the Concept of Subject*, (2) *Existence and/as the Religious*, (3) *From Self to the Other(s)*, (4) *Single Individual and/in Therapy* – which reflect the general thematic priorities of the conference discussions. At the same time, there are many significant and theoretically inspiring correlations as well as intriguing tensions between the texts published in different rubrics. Hopefully, such a polyphony has something in common with the existential heuristics of Kierkegaard's thinking and communicates to some extent a vivid spirit of the conference.

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