

## Introduction to the Series of Articles in the Debate after the Publication of “Person and Act”

When Karol Wojtyła published his most famous book, *Person and Act* in 1969, it quickly became clear that it would be a text that the Polish philosophical community could not ignore. There were at least two reasons for this.

First, Cardinal Karol Wojtyła was an inspirer and active participant in intellectual and cultural life. He remained in active contact with the great minds of his time, including Roman Ingarden, Andrzej Półtawski, and the Thomist-oriented circle of thinkers associated with the Catholic University of Lublin (like Albert Mieczysław Krąpiec). In addition to his mere presence in the world of Polish intellectuals, he was also known for his uncompromising struggle for the truth about the human person, which Marxism, dominant in Poland at the time, wanted to destroy by introducing in its place a reductionist, materialist conception of man. This struggle was not Wojtyła’s individual crusade but was part of a broad social need to see the truth about man in all his fullness. This need was sensed in Poland at the time by, among others, the Thomists and the phenomenologists, which were two philosophical circles important to Wojtyła.

This brings us to the second reason. After the publication of *Love and Responsibility*, both groups noticed Wojtyła as both a supporter and as someone who tried to establish a connection with the other side of the philosophical debate. While it would be difficult to find a deeper dialogue between the two philosophical schools in Wojtyła’s works from the 1950s, since the publication of *Love and Responsibility*, it has become clear to many that Wojtyła was seeking such a conciliatory path. Whether he actually searched for it, and to what extent he was successful, is a matter that requires further research. There is no doubt, however, that this is how his thought was understood by many representatives of both philosophical circles. Moreover, some representatives of both circles considered attempts to reconcile Thomism with phenomenology desirable. It is therefore not surprising that *Person and Act* has become the focal point for a heated discussion on, among other things, the ways, possibilities, and effects of combining both philosophical traditions.

It was under these conditions that a conference on the book *Person and Act* was organized, which resulted in a collection of articles by the conference participants<sup>1</sup> that were published in the journal *Analecta Cracoviensia*.<sup>2</sup> The content of these articles sheds much light on the understanding of the issues raised in *Person and Act*, as well as on the historical-philosophical location of Wojtyła's reflections on the intellectual map of Poland at the time. It also provides an excellent basis for research into the influence of individual comments on the further development of Wojtyła's thought. This issue of *Analecta Cracoviensia* contains over twenty articles commenting on *Person and Act*. Thanks to the kindness of the editor of *Analecta Cracoviensia* – Krzysztof Porosło – who allowed us to translate all these articles, we will be able to present the entire discussion mentioned above to English speaking readers on the pages of *Wojtyła Studies*. In this issue, we present one article from this series. It is an article by Tadeusz Styczeń, a student of Wojtyła, who, due to Wojtyła's many responsibilities, actually directed the work of the Department of Ethics at the Catholic University of Lublin on his behalf, and after Wojtyła's election to the See of Peter, formally took over the chair. Many saw Styczeń as one of the leading interpreters and successors of Wojtyła's thought, which makes his voice on *Person and Act* all the more important.

Finally, let us note that three of Wojtyła's texts related to the conference and the discussion held in *Analecta Cracoviensia* have already been translated into English.<sup>3</sup> The text *The Afterword to the Discussion on Person and Act*<sup>4</sup> deserves special attention. This is Wojtyła's cumulative response to all the voices presented in the discussion on *Person and Act*, which is basically not understandable without knowledge of the particular articles (the voices in the discussion).

Noting this difficulty and wishing to make Wojtyła's response and the problems contained in *Person and Act* more understandable, we are opening a series of translations of articles that are

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<sup>1</sup> Here is a list of the authors: Andrzej Szostek, Albert Mieczysław Krapiec, Jerzy Kalinowski, Stanisław Kamiński, Kazimierz Klósak, Józef Tischner, Marian Jaworski, Tadeusz Styczeń, Roman Forycki, Mieczysław Gogacz, Stanisław Grygiel, Antonii Bazyli Stępień, Andrzej Póltawski, Wanda Póltawska, Jerzy Gałkowski, Leszek Kuc, Tadeusz Wojciechowski, Zofia Józefa Zdybicka, Jerzy Stroba, Teresa Kukołowicz,

<sup>2</sup> Cf *Analecta Cracoviensia* Vol. 5 (1973).

<sup>3</sup> K. Wojtyła, "Introductory Statement during the Discussion on *Person and Act* at the Catholic University of Lublin on December 16, 1970," in: K. Wojtyła, *Person and Act and Related Essays. The English Critical Translation of the Works of Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II*, Vol. 1, ed. A. Lopez, trans. G. Ignatik (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2021), 419-422

K. Wojtyła, "Symposium on *Person and Act* (Lublin – Catholic University of Lublin, 1971)," in: K. Wojtyła, *Person and Act and Related Essays*, 423-432.

K. Wojtyła, "The Afterword to the Discussion on *Person and Act*," in: K. Wojtyła, *Person and Act and Related Essays*, 433-456.

<sup>4</sup> K. Wojtyła, "The Afterword to the Discussion on *Person and Act*."

voices in the discussion on *Person and Act* presented shortly after its publication. We invite you to read and carefully follow further translations of archival materials presented in *Wojtyła Studies* that shed new light on Karol Wojtyła's thoughts.

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