

## Originality of Karol Wojtyła's Method of Philosophy

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### Abstract

This article analyzes the originality and specificity of Karol Wojtyła's method of philosophizing, as developed primarily in *Person and Act*, situating it against the background of twentieth-century Thomism and phenomenology. It reconstructs the methodological debates that followed the publication of *Person and Act*, highlighting the difficulties philosophers encountered in classifying Wojtyła's approach within established philosophical disciplines. The study shows that Wojtyła deliberately positions himself between the philosophy of consciousness and the philosophy of being, seeking neither a synthesis nor a compromise, but a methodological transcendence of both. By integrating subjective experience with metaphysical realism, Wojtyła develops a personalist method that discloses the human person simultaneously as a conscious subject and a real being. The article demonstrates how this method corrects and surpasses the limitations of phenomenological ethics—particularly Max Scheler's emotivism—as well as the shortcomings of certain Thomistic anthropological and ethical interpretations, notably in the domains of moral agency, conscience, sexuality, marriage, and personal action. Finally, the paper argues that Wojtyła's distinctive contribution lies in his insistence on the unity of metaphysical, anthropological, and ethical experience, articulated through a methodological “third way” that grounds philosophical analysis in the lived efficacy,<sup>2</sup> self-determination, and transcendence of the person. This approach remains a significant and underexplored resource for contemporary philosophical anthropology and personalist ethics.

### Key words

Karol Wojtyła, philosophical anthropology, Thomism, phenomenology, personalism, ethics, metaphysics

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<sup>2</sup> The English term ‘efficacy’ does not fully capture the meaning of the Polish term ‘sprawczość.’ ‘Sprawczość’ emphasizes the causal agency of the acting person—the fact that the agent is the one performing the action.

### Difficulties in understanding the manner of philosophizing in *Person and Act*

The direct discussion following the publication of *Person and Act* revealed the difficulties philosophers had in understanding the method of philosophizing employed by Wojtyła in that work.<sup>3</sup> Various Thomists, phenomenologists, existentialists, and scientific thinkers commented on this point. Most of them, speaking from the standpoint of the method of philosophizing they themselves used, expressed their dissatisfaction. Some formulated critical remarks from the point of view of methodology or theory of knowledge—disciplines which the Author did not directly develop.

Jerzy Kalinowski outright denied the study *Person and Act* the character of a philosophical work.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Kazimierz Kłósak inclined to the view that we are dealing with an empirical phenomenology of the person, not with a philosophy of the person.

Mieczysław Gogacz treated the presented study as linguistic research—as analyses of language, as the etymology and hermeneutics of meanings, as a philosophy of language. He maintained that “This description, by virtue of joining together several aspects or points of departure of the analysis, and not fitting into any of the traditionally accepted philosophical disciplines, must constitute a separate methodological area which one could provisionally call, for example, a theory of the cognition of the person.”<sup>5</sup>

Alongside the extremely critical voices, statements also appeared in the discussion that, for various reasons, accepted the method of the philosophy of the person that had been applied. Among these are the remarks of Fr. Marian Jaworski, Andrzej Półtawski, Fr. Tadeusz Styczeń, and others.<sup>6</sup>

I am very grateful to Fr. Prof. Jaworski – Wojtyła states in summing up the discussion – who, on the ground of the doctrine of St. Thomas, basing himself on the fundamental assumptions of his philosophy, undertook to demonstrate that the study *Person and Act* has a philosophical character, while at the same time showing its entire philosophical specificity: “[...] the Author

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<sup>3</sup> “Analecta Cracoviensia” 5–6(1973–74).

<sup>4</sup> J. Kalinowski, *Metafizyka i fenomenologia osoby ludzkiej*, „Analecta Cracoviensia” 5–6(1973–74), 63–71.

<sup>5</sup> Cited in: K. Wojtyła, “Słowo końcowe po dyskusji nad *Osobą i czynem*,” in: K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*, ed. T. Styczeń et al. (Lublin: TN KUL, 1994), 359.

<sup>6</sup> M. Jaworski, *Koncepcja antropologii filozoficznej w ujęciu Kard. Karola Wojtyły*, “Analecta Cracoviensia” 5–6(1973–74), 91-106.

situates his reflections on the human person within the perspective of the person's own human being; what he is concerned with are the categories proper to the human person.<sup>7</sup>

Likewise, Wojtyła recalls the remarks of Andrzej Póltawski, stating: “Docent Póltawski rendered a very fundamental service to the book *Person and Act*; namely, he showed how it stands at the point of encounter between modern post-Cartesian anthropology—seeking to overcome the subjectivism and idealism inherent in it—and the realistic tradition of classical philosophy.”<sup>8</sup>

One may say that the essential difficulties raised from the position of Thomistic philosophy concerned the distinct starting point, in the theory of the person, of the realistic and idealistic traditions, as well as the difference between the experience of being and the experience of the person. Jerzy Gałkowski clarified these differences in the discussion, noting that in Thomism the starting point—the basic concept—is the person understood as a substance, as the concrete rational nature of the human being, whereas in phenomenology the basic concept is the person as a certain center or the highest, deepest stratum of the human being. “Personally, I am of the view,” explains Wojtyła, “that in *Person and Act*, moving between the one and the other basic concept (which follows from the function of translation: the translator is always in the middle, between two languages), I endeavored—as far as possible—to disclose one of these concepts by means of the other, and not to obscure it, that is, not to exclude it.”<sup>9</sup>

The foregoing explanation well conveys Karol Wojtyła's manner of philosophizing. In the experience of man as a person, he unites both perspectives: inner and outer experience; subjective and objective experience; the experience that discloses the specificity of the human person with the metaphysical experience of the person as a being among other beings. It is known that the development of the philosophy of being as being treats anthropology as a special metaphysics. Within that perspective, the language of metaphysics predominates, employing objective terms concerning the person as a being among other beings. By contrast, in a subject-oriented approach the language of structural being proves insufficient; it does not express the richness of what happens within the person—in his experiences, in his choices, in his conduct.

In the face of partisans of either option, Wojtyła situates himself, as it were, in the middle; he strives to broaden or to transcend both the way phenomenologists philosophize and the way

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<sup>7</sup> K. Wojtyła, “Słowo końcowe po dyskusji nad *Osobą i czynem*,” 352.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 361

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 364

Thomists philosophize. Responding to Andrzej Póltawski's charge that the conception of consciousness in *Person and Act* is too realistic, and to Mieczysław Gogacz's opposite charge that the approach to the person through act is too idealistic, since it places the act before the existence of the personal being, Wojtyła answers: "It seems that the conception of the transcendence of the person in the act contained in *Person and Act*, together with the conception of integration which correlates with it, explains sufficiently the specificity of the efficacy of the person in its manifold richness—explains it, to be sure, in a different language, one closer to experience—and at the same time in this approach sufficiently safeguards the primacy of the subject of action, that is, the person, over its action, that is, the act. Simultaneously, on the basis of this primacy, one can see the foundation for the affirmation of the personal act of existence at the root of all the dynamisms of the person, and above all of the strictly personal dynamism which is precisely the act."<sup>10</sup>

Rocco Buttiglione described this new perspective of Wojtyła's philosophizing well, distinguishing it from the phenomenology of Hildebrand, Seifert, or Ingarden. He stated: "According to Wojtyła, the point is not to provide a phenomenological justification that man is a person, but with the help of phenomenology to see in what manner man is a person, how the metaphysical structures that characterize his personal existence are reflected in his conscious existence. Thus, Thomistic metaphysical anthropology is, as it were, constantly present here as a great fundamental hypothesis that is verified through phenomenological analysis and that—on the other hand—unceasingly pilots that analysis, allowing it to gain greater depth."<sup>11</sup>

### **The effects of the method under discussion with respect to phenomenology and Thomism**

The originality of Karol Wojtyła's method of philosophizing is best shown by way of what he obtained in his research relative to the achievements of the method employed by phenomenologists and by Thomists. The results of his analyses surpass the previous achievements of each of these currents of thought. They clearly surpass what phenomenologists, including those developing a realist phenomenology, attained in their descriptions and eidetic insights, and they also surpass what Thomists have presented thus far in anthropology and ethics.

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 363.

<sup>11</sup> R. Buttiglione, "Wstęp. Kilka uwag o sposobie czytania *Osoby i czynu*," in: Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*, 15.

The stages of this correcting, surpassing, and supplementing of both these streams—both in ethics and in anthropology—can be traced in three main works of Karol Wojtyła: *An Evaluation of the Possibility of Constructing a Christian Ethics on the Assumptions of the System of Max Scheler*, published in 1959; *Love and Responsibility. A Study in Ethics*, from 1960; *Person and Act*, ed. M. Jaworski, first edition, from 1969.<sup>12</sup>

The first work, in the spirit of the method applied by Wojtyła, is an explicit correction of Max Scheler's phenomenological ethics, that is, a surpassing of it toward what in that phenomenology was not at all noticed, was omitted, and thereby distorted both ethics and anthropology.

The second work is a correction of Thomism in the grasp of human nature and of natural inclinations, and specifically a correction of the understanding of human sexuality, of the sexual sphere, and of marital and parental love.

The third work is a completing correction of both ways of philosophizing—both phenomenology and Thomism—in the grasp of man as a person.

In the first of the works mentioned—that is, in his habilitation—Karol Wojtyła revealed that in Max Scheler's fundamental work we are dealing with an overly narrow grasp of the ethical experience. In the emotivist conception of that experience, important and indispensable elements that occur in ethical conduct were omitted because they lay outside of the emotional, passive undergoing of values. In that constricted grasp, the ethical value is not something primary—recognized, intended, and perfective of the person. The mere emotional experiencing of various values does not constitute the ethical value. For the realization of the moral good the efficacy of the person is indispensable: an encounter with a real good; the experience of the command of conscience, of moral ought; the teleological self-determination of the will for the attainment of that good; and its realization, which perfects the person.

In Scheler's emotivist and essentialist ethics, the efficacy of the person as such, and within it the self-determination of the will, were omitted. "The person [in Scheler's ethics]," states Wojtyła, "is not the efficient cause of his acts; they only 'appear' in him. All the more, then, he

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<sup>12</sup> Later citation: K. Wojtyła, "Ocena możliwości zbudowania etyki chrześcijańskiej przy założeniach systemu Maxa Schelera," in: K. Wojtyła, *Zagadnienie podmiotu moralności*, (Człowiek i Moralność, 2), ed. T. Styczeń et al. (Lublin: TN KUL, 1991), 7–128. Later citation: K. Wojtyła, "Miłość i odpowiedzialność," in: *Człowiek i moralność*, Vol. 1, ed. T. Styczeń, et al. (Lublin: Tn KUL, 1982). Later citation: K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*.

cannot appear as the efficient cause of the moral good and evil of those acts.”<sup>13</sup> “Ethical conduct is not so much the intentional experiencing of the diverse contents of values as the realization in act of personal values, of ethical values. The person is conscious that it is he who performs a given act, that he is the agent of the given ethical value. He is conscious of his responsibility for his act.”<sup>14</sup>

“The moral good that is discerned, commanded by conscience, and owed,” states Wojtyła, “is not only a content of consciousness, but is at the same time the perfection of a conscious being—and indeed, above all, it is that last thing. The perfection of being can be grasped only by way of an analysis of being.”<sup>15</sup>

Within his perspective narrowed to emotional experiences, Scheler wrongly grasped, among other things, conscience. By cutting himself off from I. Kant’s categorical imperatives, he removed moral obligation and ethical commands from ethics and attributed a repressive function to conscience. He identified “willing the good” with “willing the feeling that one is good.” “Meanwhile, according to Wojtyła, ‘to “will to be good” means the tendency of the will toward the objective value itself, and by no means does it mean “to will the good” as the objective content of a subjective feeling’.”<sup>16</sup> Conscience directs us immediately and directly to the recognized good, not to the emotional experience of pleasure derived from its realization. Pleasure—or, better, satisfaction—can be experienced only after the realization of the good commanded by conscience. We undertake the realization of the good commanded by conscience for the sake of that good, not for the sake of the pleasure it may evoke in us. That good may resonate within us as satisfaction, but its objectivity consists above all in this: that it perfects the person. Thus, the mere emotional experiencing of various values described by Scheler is not a presentation of ethical conduct, nor of the dynamism of the human intellect which, through conscience, seeks the truth about man and his good, nor of the dynamism of the will striving for the realization of that good.

In sum, one can say that—inspired by a realistic Thomistic understanding of the good—Wojtyła revealed the powerlessness of Max Scheler’s phenomenological ethics to disclose the ethical experience fully, the efficacy of the person in act, the role of conscience, the moral norm, and man’s purposive action which perfects him as a person. An ethics of emotional feelings of

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<sup>13</sup> Wojtyła, “Ocena możliwości zbudowania etyki chrześcijańskiej przy założeniach systemu Maxa Schelera,” 67.

<sup>14</sup> T. Biesaga, *Karola Wojtyły krytyka koncepcji osoby Maxa Schelera*, “Logos i Ethos” Vol 47, No. 1 (2018), 185.

<sup>15</sup> K. Wojtyła, “W poszukiwaniu podstaw perfekcjonizmu w etyce,” in: Wojtyła, *Zagadnienie podmiotu moralności*, 211.

<sup>16</sup> Wojtyła, “Ocena możliwości zbudowania etyki chrześcijańskiej przy założeniach systemu Maxa Schelera,” 69.

values—making use of what is passive in the person—has no possibility of discovering the full ethical dynamism of the person, manifested both on the terrain of the receptive intellect and conscience and on the terrain of efficacy, that is, intention, the self-determination of the will, and the realization of the real good of the person. It is therefore no surprise that the final thesis of the habilitation, in which Wojtyła directly states, reads: “The ethical system constructed by Max Scheler is fundamentally unfit for a scientific interpretation of Christian ethics.”<sup>17</sup>

By contrast, in *Love and Responsibility* we are dealing with a correction of the Thomistic grasp of marriage and parenthood. In the preface to the first edition of that work, Wojtyła directly indicates the proper starting point for the description of the person’s sexed nature and sexuality. He writes: “The object of the analysis is therefore first of all the person in relation to the sexual drive, then the love that grows upon its basis between a woman and a man, next the virtue of chastity as an unavoidable coefficient of that love, and finally the issue of marriage and vocation.”<sup>18</sup>

He discerns in Thomism the danger of a biological, naturalistic reduction of man’s sexed nature; hence, in order to overcome this, he immediately transposes that analysis to the level of the person. “The personal order,” he states, “is the only plane proper for all considerations in the field of sexual ethics. Physiology or medicine may only supplement those considerations. Of themselves they do not create full grounds for understanding love and responsibility, yet it is precisely that which is at stake in the mutual relation of persons of different sex. Therefore, the entire body of considerations contained in this book has a personalist character.”<sup>19</sup>

This personalist point of departure changes much in the previous Thomistic grasp of human sexuality, marriage, and the family. This change is initiated by the first chapter of the book in question, titled “The Person and Instinct,” and is completed by the next chapter, “The Person and Love.” From those analyses there follows only then what marriage and parenthood are. It is the interpersonal relation of love—betrothal love, conjugal love, and parental love—that is the essential interpretation of the natural tendencies that define the man and the woman. Thomistic thinkers presented the three ends of marriage as *procreatio*, *mutuum adiutorium*, and *remedium concupiscentiae*. What was lacking in that grasp was a reference to interpersonal love. Without the interpretation of those ends in the language of the interpersonal bond of love, their understanding was susceptible to a narrow, overly naturalistic construal. *Procreatio* could also be understood

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>18</sup> K. Wojtyła, “Miłość i odpowiedzialność,” 14.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

naturalistically as the biological multiplication of the species; *remedium concupiscentiae* could be grasped in a libidinous and pansexualist way, as determination by the sexual instinct; and *mutuum adiutorium* could be understood utilitarianly as an economic and business contract.

It was precisely Karol Wojtyła together with Dietrich von Hildebrand who, in their publications prior to the Second Vatican Council, carried out a reinterpretation of the previous Christian grasp of marriage. They did so by appealing to the fundamental principle of interpersonal love and of the bond between spouses and parents: a love of mutual self-gift, unity, and openness to parental love. Wojtyła states: “Procreation as the primary end is something different from ‘love’; on the other hand, the tertiary end, *remedium concupiscentiae*, is also something different from ‘love’. Meanwhile, both procreation and *remedium concupiscentiae* as ends of marriage ought to flow from love as a virtue and thereby fall within the bounds of the personalist norm. *Mutuum adiutorium* as an end of marriage is likewise only an effect of love—of the virtue. There is no basis for translating the expression *mutuum adiutorium* as ‘love’.”<sup>20</sup> The disputes thus far conducted within Thomism over the ontically conceived ends of marriage—over which of these ends is the most important—are too narrow because they lack the proper reference to the fundamental principle of the interpersonal love of spouses or parents. One may therefore recognize Karol Wojtyła and, for example, Dietrich von Hildebrand as precursors of a new grasp of marriage and the family, accepted and developed by the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent documents of the popes.

Thus, the correction of Thomistic grasps in this matter followed from Wojtyła’s new method of philosophizing, in which the subjective, in relation to the objective, was explicated and thereby enriched the previous grasps of human sexuality and marriage.

The application of the new method in *Person and Act* surpassed what had previously been reported in Thomistic anthropology and in the anthropology of phenomenologists or existentialists. This can be traced by analyzing the manner of surpassing merely consciousness-based, subject-oriented grasps of man in the anthropology of phenomenologists, as well as object-oriented, substantialist grasps of man in the anthropology of Thomists.

The effects of this method are revealed, for instance, in the middle chapters of that work, in which the transcendence of the person is supplemented and linked with his integration. We are dealing here with a new way of linking the bodily dynamisms with the intellectual, volitional, and

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-66.

emotional dynamisms of man. This grasp is carried out differently than the Thomists did, who, on the basis of the metaphysical notion of the soul as substantial form, assigned unity to our bodily–spiritual being. Without negating that structure, Wojtyła discloses how that unity is realized in practice—in the encounter, within the act, of what happens in man with the fact that he himself acts in his intellectual, consciousness-related, and efficacious dynamisms. Such an appropriate inclusion of the different dynamisms of the person does not negate the existence of the soul, but, as it were, makes its operation present to view, revealing itself in inner experience objectified by reference to the truth about man, about oneself.

Accordingly, both the analysis of the transcendence of the person is open to integration, and the integration of the person is subordinated to transcendence. These are therefore not structures that combat one another in man, but rather a real human being with his nature, which manifests itself on these two levels—of the tendencies of nature and of the actions of the person.

In the direction of the cooperation of these two structures of the human being, Wojtyła finds appropriate terms that show the transcendence of the person. That which makes possible the real development of the person is self-mastery, self-possession, and self-determination. Horizontal transcendence demands vertical transcendence, that is, the unification of one’s complex subjectivity—the taking into one’s own hands of the dynamisms that occur in man, in his body and in his psyche, by means of self-mastery, which is not a repression of those tendencies, but their conscious, rational, purposive, axiological, and truth-oriented direction. In this way the subject possesses himself—that is, in practice he is the subject who has encompassed himself as a whole and can govern himself.

What takes place on the level of consciousness, self-knowledge, self-mastery, self-possession, self-determination, and autoteleology, as it were, phenomenologically manifests the wealth of the personal subject and supplements the previous Thomistic grasps of that subject. Wojtyła’s article “Subjectivity and the ‘Irreducible’ in Man” is the summit of the supplementation of Thomistic grasps by unveiling the individual unrepeatability of every human person.<sup>21</sup> “Wojtyła’s conception,” writes Rocco Buttiglione, “differs from some accounts of traditional Thomism because it is not concerned simply with the actualization of an individual substance of a rational nature, but with the living-through of oneself, with self-determination and the self-

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<sup>21</sup> K. Wojtyła, “Podmiotowość i ‘to co nieredukowalne’ w człowieku,” in: Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*, 433-444.

realization of a single and unrepeatable person who lives through his own ‘objectification’ as reflected in consciousness.”<sup>22</sup>

A similar surpassing or correction of the grasps of man in *Person and Act* concerns the philosophy of consciousness, the philosophy of the subject, or phenomenology. The subject in that work is a real subject, not the content of acts of reflection. He is not a stream of consciousness, and the efficacy (agency) of the personal subject manifests itself not only in the intentional willing of values, but in the self-determination of himself and the fulfillment of himself. It is not only the value that becomes the end of action, but I myself become the terminus of my acts. In this dynamic reality, our “I” appears simultaneously not only as the subject of action, but as the object of that conduct, for in action ultimately it is about me. Transcendence on the horizontal level—that is, the going-beyond oneself in the willing and realization of various values—links with vertical transcendence, in which what is at stake is self-determination and the fulfillment of oneself; and in that fulfillment of oneself the autoteleology of the person unites within itself the teleology of his nature, referring his action to the truth about man—about who I am and where I am going.<sup>23</sup>

In summary, one can say that with respect to the Thomists, Wojtyła brought out more fully the subjective wealth of the person, and with respect to the phenomenologists he supplemented their subjective, consciousness-based grasp of the person with the objective fulfillment of the person in act. In this way, the Thomistic, realist presentation of the person as an individual substance of a rational nature was expressed in the language of the subjective expression of that being, and the phenomenological descriptions of the subject were broadened by the real foundations of that subjectivity.

We may ask whether, on the innovative path to the grasp of man that was undertaken, Wojtyła committed errors, shortcomings, or omissions. It seems that critical remarks from both of the currents named—Thomists and phenomenologists—may contribute to penetrating further research into his way of philosophizing, as well as to the methodological or epistemological refinement of precisely this path. Nevertheless, the elaborated grasp of man—in which someone of genius, contrary to the duopoly of the philosophy of consciousness and the philosophy of being, broke through in showing the unity of the subjective–objective character of the human person—awaits similarly outstanding intellectual expeditions.

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<sup>22</sup> R. Buttiglione, *Myśl Karola Wojtyły*, trans. by J. Merecki (Lublin: TN KUL, 1996), 209.

<sup>23</sup> K. Wojtyła, “Transcendencja osoby, w czynie a autoteleologia osoby,” in: Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*, 484-485.

## The Specific Character of This Method

The method employed by Karol Wojtyła has been described both as a descent downward from the phenomenon to the metaphysical foundation, and conversely as an ascent upward from the metaphysical foundation toward the enrichment of the indicated structural contents of the human person. The first path was indicated by philosophers of consciousness; the second, by philosophers of being. Hence the method was called a *phenomenology that Thomizes* or a *phenomenological Thomism*.

Tadeusz Styczeń and Andrzej Póltawski supported the first manner of developing the philosophy of man or the philosophy of morality. For the former, the aim was to begin, for example, from the experience of morality, and then to ground those specific data in the experience of man, and next to ground them in the philosophy of being. Anthropological and metaphysical justifications, as rendering ethical theses non-contradictory, cause ethical statements to become grounded, necessary, and universal for such a being as man is. In this case, we may begin from the data of the specificity of an object such as it is and justify why it is such as it is by reaching to the real foundations of its coming-to-be. This last operation reaches to the ultimate explanations of a contingent being by asking about the ultimate causes of that which is.

By contrast, the path from metaphysics to the grasp of the specificity of particular beings on the basis of the experience and description of either morality or the human person is recommended, for example, by Thomists—among them Andrzej Maryniarczyk<sup>24</sup> and Piotr Jaroszyński<sup>25</sup>. It is treated as a safe path since it enriches the metaphysical structures directly within the framework of special metaphysics by means of the direct data of the experience of man or morality.

An example may be the anthropology proposed by M. A. Krąpiec, titled *I — Man (Ja — człowiek)*, a title borrowed from the philosophy of the subject, in which the description of my acts is a metaphysical–phenomenological description. Therein, the interior of man is disclosed otherwise than by holistically composing him out of the various properties previously discovered in consciousness. In this perspective, man from the very beginning reveals himself as the same

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<sup>24</sup> A. Maryniarczyk, “Spór o rozumienie człowieka,” in: *Wokół antropologii Karola Wojtyły*, Zadania współczesnej metafizyki Vol. 18, ed. A. Maryniarczyk, P. Sulenta, T. Duma (Lublin: PTTA, 2016), 89-106.

<sup>25</sup> P. Jaroszyński, “Wojtyła, tomista czy fenomenolog?,” in: *Wokół antropologii Karola Wojtyły*, 73-88.

being in his acts; thus, he is not a composite constructed from a bundle of various attributes, but a concrete being endowed with specific properties.

One can also point out a way of constructing the philosophy of man different from the two methods just mentioned—a kind of third way of philosophizing proper to Karol Wojtyła. It proceeds from the conviction of the unity of experiences, that is, the unity of metaphysical experience, anthropological experience, and ethical experience. This approach is expressed by a formula that appeared in the school of Karol Wojtyła: *Primum metaphysicum, primum anthropologicum et primum ethicum conventuntur*. It proclaims the unity of the experiences mentioned. Our cognition begins in the unity of experiences, *uno actu*. “The separation of experiences from one another is the work of reflection, determined by meta-theoretical interest, that is, by the cognitive goal, but it is not an account of what is directly given. The description of what is given consists in distinguishing and differentiating the moments of experience. The separation is the work of reflection. (...) What is directly given is the co-experience of experiences in the unity of the act of one and the same subject.”<sup>26</sup>

The broadest, in this proposal, is metaphysical experience, which cannot be lost in its investigation. It is for methodological purposes that, within the primordial, spontaneous, and natural experience of that-which-is, we distinguish various aspects and assign to them the appropriate disciplines so as to describe them better therein. Yet in distinguishing the experience of man or the experience of morality, we need not detach it from the metaphysical experience which concerns the widest aspect—the existence of a concrete being, a concrete man, or a concrete real act of the human person.

If we accept Mieczysław Krąpiec’s thesis that the existence of a given being imposes itself upon us originally—without splitting into object and subject—in the affirmation that something is, and that essential judgments (what it is, what this is) are formulated secondarily to existential judgments and cannot be detached from that original affirmation, then in investigation we join both perspectives.<sup>27</sup> In this way, the unity of experience and of knowledge goes hand in hand with the realism of cognition.

It seems that this realistic perspective and conviction of the unity of experiences accompanied Karol Wojtyła in all his research. He did not agree with the splitting between the

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<sup>26</sup> K. Krajewski, *Etyka jako filozofia pierwsza. Doświadczenie normatywnej mocy prawdy jako źródło i podstawa etyki*, (Lublin: WN KUL, 2006), 133.

<sup>27</sup> M.A. Krąpiec, *Metafizyka. Zarys teorii bytu* (Lublin: TN KUL, 1978), 105f.

philosophy of consciousness and the philosophy of being, with the splitting between *a priori* and *a posteriori* in philosophy; he did not agree with anthropological dualism—with the division of man into *res cogitans* and *res extensa*. Among other things, in his *Lublin Lectures* he did not find the possibility of overcoming that division within the sphere of idealistic thought; hence, he sought it within the sphere of realistic thought.

He did this not so much by speculatively analyzing the previously known ontic structures of man, but rather by a kind of “rendering present to view,” by showing how the metaphysical structures of man reveal themselves in our experiences, in efficacy, in transcendence and integration—in the act as the act of the person. This “rendering present to view” introduced a new terminology, different from that of the Thomists or the phenomenologists, for the description of the subjectivity and objectivity of the human person. In those descriptions one can discover similarities to the language of the philosophy of the subject, but it is nonetheless a *trans-phenomenological* language, one that goes beyond phenomena by unveiling the ontic grounds of the realization of the person in self-possession and self-fulfillment—that is, in the fulfillment of the real human being, in whom the autoteleology of efficacy is bound up with the teleology of his nature, and the transcendence of “I act” is linked with the integration of “what happens” within the nature of the person, which develops a realistic grasp of man.

Despite this novelty in the content of the experience of man, these contents from the outset are correlated with the ontic experience of man, which continually accompanies the analyses being carried out. This perspective of developing the phenomenology of man while continually taking account of the philosophy of being is already visible in the first edition of *Person and Act*, where, in the very preface, Wojtyła emphasizes: “Remaining on the ground of the philosophy of being, we would like to make use of the enrichment which [the philosophy of consciousness] offers.”<sup>28</sup>

In the second edition of *Person and Act*, the editors adopted as fundamental the first manner of philosophizing—from phenomenon to foundation—and thereby, as it were, “modernized” that edition in the spirit of the philosophy of the subject by re-editing the preface to the work, by introducing, in the language of the philosophy of the subject, numerous sub-headings, by removing Thomistic terms or sentences, and by adding new terms and linguistic precisions.

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<sup>28</sup> K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 1st edition (Kraków: PTT, 1969), 23.

This phenomenon was revealed in an article by Dr. Małgorzata Jałoch-Palicka<sup>29</sup> and was theoretically rejected as unjustified in her doctoral dissertation.<sup>30</sup>

In connection with the foregoing, the proper solution would be that in a critical edition of *Person and Act* within the *Collected Works of Karol Wojtyła*, one should return to the original, that is, to the first edition of that work, and append the second edition in the form of endnotes. In this way, those conducting further research would be able to reach back to the original and assess whether the later changes were justified. In this manner, one would also clarify which of the three methods of philosophizing mentioned was closest to Wojtyła's own thinking, and which were supported and propagated only by some of his followers.

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<sup>29</sup> M. Jałoch-Palicka, "Osoba i czyn, *The Acting Person* – ingerencje redakcyjne i problemy przekładu. Przyczynek do analizy," in: *Wokół antropologii Karola Wojtyły*, 155–188.

<sup>30</sup> M. Jałoch-Palicka, *Istota człowieka w świetle dociekań Karola Wojtyły*, doctoral thesis (Lublin, KUL, Faculty of Philosophy, 2022), 1–322.

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