



THE POLISH
CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY
IN THE 20TH CENTURY



Mieczysław Gogacz

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Mieczysław
Gogacz

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THE POLISH CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

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Mieczysław Gogacz

Artur Andrzejuk
Dawid Lipski
Magdalena Płotka
Michał Zembrzuski

Ignatianum University Press

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- M. Gogacz, *Modlitwa i mistyka*, Kraków–Warszawa/Struga: Michalineum, 1987, Internet edition 215

PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTICS

- M. Gogacz, *Filozoficzne aspekty mistyki*, Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1985, Internet edition 219

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MIECZYŚLAW GOGACZ:
PERSON AND WORK

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Brdc** – *Okruszyńy* [Breadcrumbs]. Niepokalanów: Wydawnictwo Ojców Franciszkanów, 1993.
- BU** – *Podstawy wychowania* [Basics of Upbringing]. Niepokalanów: Wydawnictwo Ojców Franciszkanów, 1993.
- CT** – *W kierunku tomizmu konsekwentnego* [Towards a Consequent Thomism]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2013.
- DI** – *Obrona intelektu* [The Defense of Intellect]. Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1969.
- DNL** – *Ciemna noc miłości* [Dark Night of Love]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1985.
- DTA** – *Niepełnosprawność. Aspekty teologiczne* [Disability: Theological Aspects]. Warszawa: Pallottinum, 1991 [co-author A. Andrzejuk].
- EC** – *Istnieć i poznawać* [To Exist and to Cognize]. Warszawa: Pax, 1969, 1976².
- EPP** – *Ku etyce chronienia osób. Wokół podstaw etyki* [Towards the Ethics of Protecting People: On the Basics of Ethics]. Warszawa: Pallottinum, 1991.
- GL** – *Największa jest miłość* [The Greatest is Love]. Warszawa/Struga–Kraków: Michalineum, 1988.
- HMI** – *On ma wzrastać* [He Must Increase]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek-Benedyktynek, 1965, 1973², 1975³, 1990⁴.
- HP** – *Historia filozofii w poszukiwaniu realizmu* [The History of Philosophy in the Search for Realism]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2011.
- IE** – *Wprowadzenie do etyki chronienia osób* [Introduction to the Ethics of Defending a Person]. Warszawa: B.R.J. Navo, 1995, 1997².
- IM** – *Elementarz metafizyki* [Introduction to Metaphysics], second edition. Suwałki: Wyższa Szkoła Służby Społecznej im. ks. Franciszka Blachnickiego, 1996.
- MHR** – *Człowiek i jego relacje. Materiały do filozofii człowieka* [A Man and His Relations: Notes to the Philosophy of Man]. Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1985.
- OPP** – *Wokół problemu osoby* [On the Problem of the Person]. Warszawa: Pax, 1974.
- PA** – *Platonizm i arystotelizm. Dwie drogi do metafizyki* [Platonism and Aristotelism: Two Paths to Metaphysics]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa ATK, 1996.
- PAM** – *Filozoficzne aspekty mistyki* [Philosophical Aspects of Mystics]. Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1985.
- PM** – *Modlitwa i mistyka* [Prayer and Mystics]. Kraków–Warszawa/Struga: Michalineum, 1987.
- PSP** – *Osoba zadaniem pedagogiki. Wykłady bydgoskie* [Pedagogy in Service of the Person: Bydgoszcz Lectures]. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Navo, 1997.

- SC** – *Szkice o kulturze* [Sketches on Culture]. Kraków–Warszawa/Struga: Michalineum, 1985.
- SG** – *Poszukiwanie Boga. Wykłady z metafizyki Absolutnego Istnienia* [Searching for God: The Lectures on Metaphysics of Absolute Existence]. Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1976.
- SL** – *Życie społeczne w duchu Ewangelii* [Social Life in the Spirit of Gospel] (Episteme, vol. 59). Olecko: Wydawnictwo Wszechnicy Mazurskiej, 2006.
- WBS** – *Mądrość buduje państwo. Człowiek i polityka – Rozważania filozoficzne i religijne* [Wisdom Builds the State: A Man and Politics – Philosophical and Religious Reflection]. Niepokalanów: Wydawnictwo Ojców Franciszkanów, 1993.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

CURRICULUM VITAE

Mieczysław Gogacz was born on 17 November 1926¹ in Nadroże near Rypin in Dobrzyń Land, where his parents Szczepan and Marianna Gogacz, née Gołębiewska, ran a shop with colonial goods. He started his elementary education in Nadroże and completed it in Obory, where his parents had moved in 1934. During the occupation, Mieczysław worked at the post office in Rypin. He continued his interrupted education after the war ended.

He finished middle school with the so-called 'small matura' (exam after 9th grade) in Rypin where the Gogacz family had moved after the war. He received his matriculation examination (the so-called 'big matura') in an episcopal secondary school in Płock in 1949. He then chose to study philosophy at the philosophy faculty of the Catholic University of Lublin, the only Catholic university in Poland at that time. He attended the lectures of Stanisław Adamczyk on metaphysics, theodicy and cosmology, Antoni Korcik's on logic and the general methodology of sciences, and Wojciech Feliks Bednarski's on ethics. At the end of his studies he attended the newly introduced classes of Stanisław Kamiński on logic and Mieczysław Albert Krąpiec's on metaphysics. He received his MA degree in 1952 on the basis

¹ The Professor's mother, Marianna Gogacz née Gołębiewska (1905–2005), recalled that her son's date of birth was recorded incorrectly. She says that he was born on 11 November, i.e. 6 days earlier than stated on the birth certificate.

of his dissertation entitled *Definition of movement by Aristotle*, written under Adamczyk's supervision. He received his doctoral degree in 1954 on the basis of the public defense of his dissertation entitled *Philosophy of existence in 'Beniamin maior' of Richard of Saint Victor*, written under Swieżawski's supervision. The dissertation was reviewed by M.A. Krąpiec and Aleksander Usowicz. After the doctorate, he taught classes delegated to him by the Catholic University of Lublin (Polish: KUL). After the October '56 thaw he received a one-year scholarship from the French government which allowed him to study at the Sorbonne and do research in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris from March to September 1957. From France he went to the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto to undertake specialized studies with the most prominent historian of philosophy of those times, and a man who revealed the real face of Saint Thomas Aquinas' philosophy (existential Thomism)—Étienne Gilson (from September 1957 to May 1958). Upon his return he was first appointed to the position of teaching assistant and then assistant professor at the philosophy faculty of KUL. He submitted his habilitation colloquium at the philosophy faculty of KUL on 18 October 1960 on the basis of his dissertation entitled *The problem of God at Anselm of Canterbury and the problem of truth at Henry of Ghent*. The dissertation was reviewed by Stefan Swieżawski, Izydora Dąmbska and Lech Kalinowski. In 1962 the board of the faculty granted a docent's degree to Mieczysław Gogacz. From October 1966 he took a full-time position as a senior lecturer at the philosophy department of the Christian Academy of Catholic Theology (Polish: ATK) in Warsaw, to which he was invited by the former dean of KUL and, from 1956, the ATK's rector Józef Iwanicki. He was appointed a full-time docent² on 10 December that year. On 6 July 1973 he was appointed to the position of associate professor by the Polish Council of State and on 17 September 1982 to the position of ordinary professor. Gogacz worked at ATK, where he led the specialization of the History of Philosophy, until his retirement in 1997. After 1990, due to the changes in Poland, he began teaching philosophy classes, mainly realist philosophy and ethics at Warsaw University, Warsaw Medical Academy and the Military University of Technology.

² In pre-war Poland and during the communist era, 'docent' was an intermediary post between assistant professor and associate professor.

Mieczysław Gogacz is a member of many national and foreign scientific societies, including: the Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale, the International Society of Neoplatonic Studies, the International Society for Metaphysics, Società Tommaso d'Aquino, and the scientific society of KUL, and was also the co-founder (1981) of the Thomistic Scientific Society in Warsaw.

In 1996, Pope John Paul II awarded Gogacz with the rank of Commander with Star of the Order of St. Pope Sylvester. Cardinal Józef Glemp, Primate of Poland, was appointed as the decorator. An official presentation of the award took place in the Archcathedral Basilica in Warsaw during a pontificate mass on Easter Sunday in 1997. In November 2006, on his 80th birthday, he received congratulatory letters from the President of the Republic of Poland, professor Lech Kaczyński, and prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski. Since 2007, the Professor Mieczysław Gogacz award has been given to the best MA dissertation in philosophy referring to the widely understood Thomism. The award has a nation-wide scope and professor Gogacz is the honorary chairman of the Chapter. On 17 November 2012, on his 86th birthday, Gogacz was awarded a Gratae Memoriae Signum Universitatis of his *alma mater*—the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin—and in 2016, for his 90th birthday, he received special letters from the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, and the Minister of National Defence, Antoni Macierewicz.

THE INTELLECTUAL FORMATION OF MIECZYŚLAW GOGACZ

The intellectual formation of Mieczysław Gogacz is multifaceted and complex. He was born in a traditional Polish Catholic family in an area with a strong German minority. He read the Catholic press and learnt German as a small child. He lived next door to the Carmelite monastery in Obory—a place which influenced the whole area with its spirituality—and the young Gogacz became additionally involved with it by serving as an altar boy. He also found his first confessor and spiritual guide there. Carmelite spirituality, which he valued greatly all his life, constitutes chronologically the first layer of his spiritual formation. The second was philosophy, the so-called Roman Thomism, which he learnt about when he was in secondary school.

This was a common philosophical orientation in the Church and Gogacz distanced himself from it during his Lublin studies in favour of existential Thomism. Nevertheless, he devoted all his diploma theses to different topics: Aristotle's philosophy (MA degree), the School of St. Victor from the twelfth century (doctorate) and the philosophy of Anselm of Canterbury from the eleventh century as well as of Henry of Ghent from the thirteenth century (habilitation). Existential Thomism 'was born' first at KUL (Catholic University of Lublin) during private, academic meetings which were initiated by the dean of philosophy at that time—Lech Malinowski. The participants were, at first, Stefan Swieżawski, Mieczysław A. Krąpiec and (occasionally) Wojciech F. Bednarski. Over time, they were joined by Karol Wojtyła and Stanisław Kamiński. This version of Thomism soon became a subject of Swieżawski's and Krąpiec's lectures, and it gave rise to a disagreement with a representative of traditional Thomism and Gogacz's MA supervisor, Stanisław Adamczyk. However, existential Thomism won and Gogacz presented this version in his lectures on the philosophy of existence (they have been published in the book *Ważniejsze zagadnienia metafizyki*³). The history of philosophy and of existential Thomism are therefore two further layers of the intellectual formation of Gogacz. They were expanded during his studies under Étienne Gilson in Toronto. In addition, Gilson focused his Polish student's attention on medieval Arab philosophy, especially on the philosophy of Avicenna, which had a profound and until then unexamined influence on Thomas Aquinas himself and his followers—Thomists. During his studies abroad, Gogacz deepened his religious formation, in particular through his pilgrimage to the Holy Land (without the necessary documents) with a group of French students, supervised by their chaplain Jean-Marie Lustiger. After his return to Poland he cooperated closely with professor Swieżawski at KUL, co-creating what later came to be known as the Lublin Philosophical School. An important event in Catholic Church life was the Second Vatican Council. Swieżawski was its secular auditor and Wojtyła one of the fathers, just like other Polish bishops associated with KUL. Gogacz was keenly interested in the Council's work, reacted to its various decisions and popularized them in the Catholic press. His enthusiasm towards the

³ Lublin, 1973. The book had been written many years earlier but it took a long time to publish it.

aggiornamento of the Church faded a bit over time when it turned out that, within the so-called ‘spirit of the Council’, the philosophy and theology of Thomism was strongly negated in favour of various trends of contemporary thought. At that time he intensified his research on various philosophical topics in Thomas Aquinas’ texts, which he started after his doctorate thesis. This was connected with the rise of various propositions specifying the description of existential Thomism which led to the emergence of consistent Thomism. This source research on Aquinas’ texts constitutes another layer of the intellectual formation of Gogacz. In each of these layers one can identify several contexts. For example, in the history of philosophy it is Aristotelianism and Thomism, as well as various forms of Neoplatonism: from Proclus to Marsilio Ficino and a reflection on the methodology of the history of philosophy. It is worth mentioning that the young Gogacz was interested in literature (especially poetry) and music and he was fascinated by art and architecture. He even studied architecture for some time at the Art History faculty of KUL. In time, he focused more on his philosophical studies, but during his retirement he collected and published poems which he had written in his youth. He also made literary attempts to write prose in his religious books,⁴ and one of them was shaped into an autothematic novel.⁵

The teachers who had the biggest impact on Mieczysław Gogacz were the following:

1. Stanisław Adamczyk (1900–1971): A graduate of the Roman Gregorianum who, until the end of his life, remained under the influence of traditional Thomism in which epistemological problems prevailed; in metaphysics the main issue was the nature of existence. After the Second World War, Adamczyk became a metaphysics lecturer at KUL. In his didactic work he preferred the reading of original

⁴ E.g. *Ciemna strona miłości* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1985).

⁵ *Jak traci się miłość (Esej ascetyczny)* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1982). The cover for this book was designed by Janusz Kapusta, a Polish graphic artist, painter and set decorator, and an inventor of the geometric figure called a k-dron. Kapusta studied philosophy with Gogacz. In 1981 he went to the US, and he currently lives in New York. He cooperates with magazines such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *Graphis* and *Rzeczpospolita*.

texts which were thoroughly analyzed. It focused his attention on existential threads not only in Thomas Aquinas' philosophy but also in Aristotle's. He did not consider them, however, in accordance with his school's assumptions, as important for philosophy. Under his supervision Gogacz prepared an MA dissertation on the philosophy of Aristotle in 1952; however, Adamczyk did not allow Gogacz to prepare a doctorate on the philosophy of existence for his seminar, arguing that laymen should not deal with metaphysics. However, it is Adamczyk who can be given credit for Gogacz's impressive historical and philosophical erudition and the first thorough readings of Thomas Aquinas—he learnt from him to read into those texts and disregard other researchers' opinions on studied texts.

2. Stefan Swieżawski (1907–2004): Swieżawski was deeply attached to Catholicism, which was a formative religion for him in his family home (and which he never abandoned despite studying at the university in Lvov in a laicising community, which created the Lvov-Warsaw School). He attended the lectures of Kazimierz Twardowski, Roman Ingarden, Kazimierz Wais and prepared a doctorate under the supervision of Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz (1932). During and after his work on his doctorate topic on the philosophy of Duns Scotus, he spent time in Paris where he studied under Gilson and Maritain. It was due to their influence that he became interested in existential Thomism. During the Second World War he hid at an estate belonging to his father-in-law and Count Adam Stadnicki, where he prepared a habilitation and translation of the *Summa Theologia* of Thomas Aquinas. He did his habilitation in Thomism right after the war at the university in Poznań. Next he was hired by KUL. He worked there until he retired. He was a brilliant educationalist and a master of philosophical technique—he educated many Polish philosophers and historians of philosophy. Gogacz considered Swieżawski his most important teacher and felt very attached to him. They went their separate ways in a natural manner: while Gogacz concentrated more on Thomism, Swieżawski focused on his research on Renaissance philosophy.

3. Mieczysław A. Krąpiec (1921–2008): Krąpiec came from Podole, from a village where Ukrainian nationalists had killed all the Polish people; Krąpiec escaped death because, in 1939, he joined the Dominican

Order, and during the war he took part in a secret philosophy and theology course in Kraków. Under Jacek Woroniecki's supervision he prepared a doctorate in philosophy (1946) and at the same time started theological studies at KUL, where he also completed a doctorate (1948). He did his habilitation in Thomism at KUL in 1957 where he had been teaching metaphysics for some years. Krąpiec quickly became the main representative of Polish Thomism, putting aside its other versions (traditional, Louvain, transcendental). He wrote a whole series of monumental, academic course books concerning almost all the main philosophical disciplines. He was also a dean of philosophy at KUL twice and five times a rector of the same university (1970–1983). During his retirement he initiated the establishment of the Thomas Aquinas International Society (SITA), where he started an intensive publishing, journalistic and popularising activity. Krąpiec's last initiative was publishing a thirteen-volume encyclopedia of philosophy entitled *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii* (nine volumes + supplements), two volumes of an encyclopedia of Polish philosophy entitled *Encyklopedia Filozofii Polskiej*, and a one-volume dictionary and philosophy guidebook entitled *Słownik-przewodnik filozoficzny*. Six years after Krąpiec's death, the accusations that he had cooperated with the communist, political militia while he was a dean emerged. It triggered a heated discussion in which the specificities of the functioning of KUL during the communist years were brought back to light, together with the necessity of cooperating with the power which was totalitarian and controlled all areas of people's lives. Mieczysław Gogacz got to know Krąpiec's version of existential Thomism, and this is the version which he later distanced himself from while developing his lecture on Thomist philosophy. Krąpiec's thought was always the main reference point in his own philosophical search.

4. Étienne Gilson (1884–1978): A great philosopher and historian of philosophy, one of the co-founders of existential Thomism. He studied at the Jesuit College and Henry IV Lyceum (Lycée Henri-IV) where he learnt Greek and Latin thoroughly as well as became acquainted with both classical and modern literature. He studied at the Sorbonne College in France, listening to Durkheim, Bergson and Lévy-Bruhl, under whose supervision he prepared a doctorate thesis concerning the connections between Descartes' philosophy and theology in 1913 (*La doctrine cartésienne de la liberté et la théologie*).

While looking for solutions to certain problems which Descartes was considering, he became interested in scholastic thought, especially the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. In 1919 he published the book *Thomism. An Introduction to St Thomas Aquinas' Philosophy* in which he proved an existential character of St. Thomas' philosophy, which was a radical opposition to its existing, essentialist interpretations. This book gave him fame and drew a wave of criticism from left-wing circles as well as conservative ones. He lectured at the Sorbonne, at the Collège de France, at Harvard University, and co-founded the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto, where he worked from the end of the war until his retirement. He participated in the UN Charter conference in San Francisco and the founding conference of UNESCO in London. In Toronto he founded scholarships for students from Poland who were directed to him by professor Swieżawski. Gogacz benefited from such a scholarship in the 1957–58 academic year. He owed the deepening of his knowledge of St. Thomas Aquinas' texts and his interest in medieval Arab philosophy to Gilson. Being under the influence of the Lublin school of methodology (especially that of Stanisław Kamiński), he did not accept Gilson's concept of Christian philosophy, but at the same time respected him and expressed gratitude to him.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF MIECZYŚLAW GOGACZ

Most of Mieczysław Gogacz's life was spent in unfavourable social and political conditions—his childhood and education were brutally interrupted by the German occupation, which was extremely cruel towards Poles in that region because Germans annexed those areas into the Reich as so-called Ostpreußen (East Prussia) and treated Poles as undesirable immigrants. Many of Gogacz's teachers were murdered in the first days of September, just like many Polish priests and secular intellectuals (as part of *Intelligenzaktion*). During most of the occupation, parents were protecting their children against deportation to forced labour in Germany. Mieczysław was saved by working at the post office in Rypin, but his father was regularly taken to do some odd jobs for the occupiers. At the end of the war his sister Tekla, two years younger than him, was also taken to dig ditches. This is how he

described his interrupted education to young people who were interviewing him:

Before the Second World War I completed five grades of elementary school, and I was able to read *Rycerz Niepokalanej* [Knight of the Immaculate].⁶ Then there was a war. There were very few Polish books. One could end up in prison for owning Polish books in Bydgoszcz Voivodeship. We were not allowed to speak Polish. In my hometown Rypin we had to speak German. However, there were ... Psalms. Therefore, at the age of twelve I started to read Psalms. I learnt Catholic asceticism from them, the theory of religious life because it can be found mainly in Psalms. I learnt the theory of referring God to a man and a man to God. Until this day I read the Bible in this ascetical aspect, in the aspect of raising a man by God.⁷

After the entry of the Soviets and the advent of the so-called Polish People's Republic (Polish: PRL), on the one hand there ceased to be a direct threat to life, and children could continue their education, but on the other hand, the Gogacz family, as store owners, became "natural" enemies of the new communist authorities, as a result of which their store was quickly nationalized. It was one of the reasons for which Mieczysław Gogacz chose a Catholic (episcopal) secondary school in Płock as a place for his further studies. It is also possible that Gogacz thought about joining the priesthood later. He managed to complete the secondary school of his choice before its liquidation, but the right to conduct matriculation examinations there had been withdrawn from the school even earlier. Therefore, Gogacz and his schoolmates took their matriculation examinations as external students in a state-owned secondary school in Płock. During the examinations the interviewers focused on science, whereas the Catholic secondary school had a classical profile (with a great number of hours dedicated to Latin, Greek and philosophy). The purpose of it was to prove the low level of teaching in the Catholic secondary school. Nonetheless, Gogacz passed his matriculation examination (having also experienced "forced training" on the occasion aimed at changing the students' outlook on the world) and he did not have any problems

⁶ A religious monthly, published before the war by Maksymilian Maria Kolbe in Niepokalanow; it resumed after the war but was soon closed by communists (1952), before being resumed in exile (1971) and in Poland in 1981.

⁷ DTA, p. 37.

with choosing the path for his further studies—he opted to study at the sole Catholic university in Poland tolerated by the communists, that is, at the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL). The period of his studies fell in the era of the most severe Stalinist terror against the Catholic University of Lublin—a number of university professors were arrested and arrests were also carried out among the students. Paradoxically, however, the situation which the authorities created favoured the intellectual development of the students of the Catholic University of Lublin, because the most outstanding Polish philosophers who had been removed from state universities would go to teach exactly there, more or less regularly. Thus, the young Mieczysław Gogacz met Władysław Tatarkiewicz, Roman Ingarden, Izydora Dąmbska and others. At that time, he soon made friends with M.A. Krąpiec (a metaphysician and a long-term rector of the Catholic University of Lublin) and K. Wojtyła (a lecturer on ethics in that period), as well as with Antoni B. Stępień, who later became his brother-in-law, that is, the husband of his sister Tekla. This is how he recalls the conversations of that time:

So, in those private conversations several topics prevailed. Primarily, Christian asceticism, but such that should meet the requirements of today's medicine, the concept of a human being and of human health... The second topic was an important problem for asceticism: namely, whether any entry to the seminary is a vocation to the priesthood... Next—the ways to show people, in the ascetic perspective, the magnificence of human contacts with God. ... In addition to the ones I mentioned, we also reflected upon the reasons for people abandoning Christianity. I remember long conversations on those subjects which continued for weeks and weeks.⁸

Mieczysław Gogacz did not neglect his religious education, either: “during the time of my studies”—he recalls—“I read the *Epistles of St. Paul*. ... I had studied all his letters. It seems to me that I can feel and understand the theology contained in those letters. And I know the *Psalms*. ... These are my interests. Not typical, but simply Catholic.”⁹

⁸ M. Filipiak and A. Szostek, ed., *Obecność. Karol Wojtyła w Katolickim Uniwersytecie Lubelskim* (Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL, 1989), pp. 152–153.

⁹ DTA, pp. 37–38.

As a result of the October thaw, he was able to go away to study abroad in France and Canada and he made the most of it, but for prolonging his stay in Canada beyond the allowed time he was punished with a ten-year ban on leaving Poland.

The independent scientific and didactic activity of Gogacz was connected with the Warsaw Academy of Catholic Theology (Polish: ATK). It was the second Catholic university in Poland, after KUL, organized in 1954 by the communists themselves, representing theological faculties that had been removed from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków and from the University of Warsaw. This was accomplished during the internment of the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, when the position of the chairman of the episcopate was held by the bishop of Łódź, Michał Klepacz, who approved the new university canonically. After being released from the internment in 1956, Primate Wyszyński did not withdraw that approval, and, after the next few years, he renegotiated the conditions for the functioning of the university with the communists (he demanded it be opened to secular students, because the communists wanted it to be a university only for church personnel, like the tsarist Roman Catholic Theological Academy in St. Petersburg). Gogacz joined that university in 1966 as an independent research worker. That happened not without difficulties on the part of the communist officials—Gogacz was denied the recognition of his habilitation.¹⁰ It was explained to him that the habilitation had been recognized, but exclusively for KUL. For this reason, for many years Gogacz was treated at ATK as if he had no habilitation, which gave rise to certain difficulties in his functioning at the university. At that university he was active throughout the grim period of the Polish People's Republic—the rules of Gomułka (1966–1970), Gierek (1970–1980) and

¹⁰ Habilitation in the Polish system of academic degrees follows the doctoral degree and is the beginning of scientific independence—a “habilitated doctor” is a full member of the scientific council. He or she may chair a university department, conduct diploma theses, write reviews for academic degrees, and issue opinions on publications. Until the beginning of the 21st century, the habilitation awarded at the university required approval by a special central state office; it was used to block the careers of individual scientists, as well as the development of entire scientific institutions, such as the Catholic University of Lublin, where employees waited for years for the approval of their habilitations, which often became a bargaining chip in the negotiations of the Catholic Church with the communists.

Jaruzelski (1980–1990). In his scientific work, he focused on the study of Thomism and on the texts and philosophical orientations which seemed important to an understanding of Thomas Aquinas, e.g. *Liber de causis*, or medieval Arabic philosophy. In addition, he popularized philosophy through his attractive lectures and articles on religion, in which he dealt with the issue of a person's religious life. Thanks to these publications and speeches he became relatively well-known in Catholic environments. Then, his interest in mysticism attracted the attention of hippie circles for whom he conducted retreats and lectures in Warsaw churches.¹¹ Later, many students of ATK came from these milieus.

Mieczysław Gogacz decided not to engage in politics. He consistently refused to join the organization of “secular Catholics” which constituted an “extension” of the ruling Communist Party. He suffered specific consequences for this—the refusal to print his books or to grant him scholarships, or his omission when various goods were divided. He did not engage in active anti-communist activities (apart from criticizing Marxism in lectures and in publications in which he was able to include such criticism, despite censorship). He also discouraged his students from taking part in active opposition activities, arguing that people studying normal classical philosophy are so few that they should not risk being imprisoned. However, when it was necessary, he defended the persecuted students. While still at KUL, he participated in secret studies with the seminarians who had been taken to the army from the seminary (this was a form of persecuting the Church in those days, because the communists hoped that many of the seminarians would not return to the seminary after two years

¹¹ As the Catholic Church was the only institution relatively independent from the communist authorities, all initiatives which were not undertaken or regulated by the authorities were carried out in church buildings. That is why so many initiatives, not necessarily of a religious nature, in the period of the Polish People's Republic took place in the Church. Gogacz's unofficial lectures were also usually held in churches or church halls. Only in 1981 (as part of the so-called “Carnival of Solidarity,” covering the time from the August strikes in 1980 to the imposition of martial law on 13 December 1981) was he invited to the famous Riviera-Remont student club for the first time (it was also a kind of discussion club). It is worth noting that the communist political militia (Security Service) used to monitor that kind of activity by Gogacz and made sure he was aware of that (the militia often approached him and checked his ID when he was leaving lectures or retreats), however, it did not actively disturb this activity.

of military service). In Warsaw, he courageously stood up for the students expelled from the university for participating in the events of June 1976 (anti-communist uprisings by the inhabitants of Radom and by the employees of the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw). He fell victim to moral harassment by ATK authorities of the time. In 1980, he was one of the founding members of the Solidarity movement at ATK. During the martial law, he was not particularly persecuted,¹² however, as a result, he lost a whole group of talented students and graduates who—taking advantage of the “Carnival of Solidarity” in 1980 and 1981—had gone to Western countries on scholarships, and it was during their sojourn abroad that martial law was declared. The overwhelming majority of them never returned to Poland. After 1990, i.e. after the collapse of communism and Poland’s regaining of its sovereignty, Gogacz obtained a better opportunity to influence people: he was regularly invited to give lectures at various universities. For a year he conducted an open series of lectures on realistic philosophy at the University of Warsaw, and for a few years he taught the version of Thomistic ethics elaborated by himself, which he called the “ethics of protecting people,” at the Medical Academy in Warsaw (with Kazimierz Szalata) and at the Military Technical Academy (with Artur Andrzejuk). He regularly visited the Pedagogical College in Bydgoszcz as a lecturer.¹³ However, along with the

¹² Clergymen and people associated with church institutions, such as Gogacz, were, in the Polish People’s Republic, considered citizens of a lower category, subject to the guardianship of the specially appointed Office for Religious Affairs (representing the level of the Ministry). All their private and professional matters were controlled and dealt with (often negatively) by that Office, which was a part of the state’s control and repression apparatus towards religion and which closely cooperated with the Security Service. Sometimes, people connected with the apparatus of repression undertook various “private” activities aimed at making life more difficult for people stigmatized by the authorities (these were the so-called “*Schweinchen*,” according to the well-known expression of Joachim Gauck). For example, in Gogacz’s block of flats, there lived an officer of the Polish army (with the rank of colonel!) who regarded tormenting Gogacz as his “class” duty. That led to the housing cooperative taking various negative decisions against Gogacz, and the said colonel even intimidated Gogacz’s neighbours for extending minor courtesies to him.

¹³ That activity is documented by the following books: *Wprowadzenie do etyki chronienia osób* (Warszawa: B.R.J. Navo, 1995), which at first was a course book for the students of the Military University of Technology, and the collection of texts on pedagogy entitled *Osoba zadaniem pedagogiki. Wykłady bydgoskie* (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Navo, 1997).

systemic changes, there were a number of turbulences in other areas, such as the liquidation of magazines and publishing houses, and the university publishing houses experienced a crisis related to the radical market transformation. In this new situation, it was harder to reach readers, especially since the crisis also engulfed the book market: many bookstores disappeared (in the majority of smaller towns—totally).¹⁴ Libraries also experienced a crisis. Small private publishing houses were set up by a group of Gogacz's students; one of them, the NAVO Publishing House, in its 10 years or so of activity, published several of Gogacz's recent books. In this new situation, he agreed to share all his work online (www.katedra.uksw.edu.pl) with completely free access. What is more, in other matters, thanks to a fairly good knowledge of the West and America, he became aware early on of the tendencies and directions of the changes in Poland. On the rising tide of the modernization of the country, which aimed at making Poland similar, as quickly as possible, to Western democracies, the accelerated process of secularization was introduced in Poland, along with a program, strongly supported by the media, for violating Christian moral values and for deforming the role of the family, mainly through the dissemination of an isolationist model of a man and a woman. Added to this was the promotion of abortion and euthanasia as the rights to “decent life” and “decent death.”

Mieczysław Gogacz made a special effort to respect the criterion of truth in political and social life, and opposed the promotion of relativism under the slogan of tolerance and democracy. He reminded his readers and listeners of the classic definition of tolerance as respect for other people's views or beliefs, expressed in allowing them to speak, which is a certain form of patience and understanding.

¹⁴ The representative bookshop in Warsaw—“Uniwersus”—was liquidated at the beginning of the 1990s. A bank was then established in the avant-garde building. It is worth mentioning that the history of this place can be a symbol of the Polish history of the last half-century: in the 1970s, one of the few surviving 19th-century tenement houses was demolished in order to build a modern exhibition pavilion of “Soviet technical know-how” there. After the construction of the building, following the “Solidarity Carnival” in 1980, the aforementioned bookstore was opened there. It survived the entire period of military rule (1981–1989) only to definitively cease to function after that time. Over the next quarter-century there were banks and offices there. Currently, the owner wants to demolish that modernist property (which has become disfigured by numerous advertisements and aeriels) and to build an office block of a dozen or so storeys.

He believed that not all views and actions were included in it. He used to joke that there could be no tolerance for spelling mistakes. He actively defended the right to live by supporting anti-abortion initiatives—he appeared in the media, in parliamentary commissions, and assisted the team of the Supreme Medical Council in the development of the Code of Medical Ethics (first version of 1991).¹⁵ With regard to the latter, and also in the broader context of the transformation of the Polish state, he addressed the subject of natural law and of its relation to the established law. He gave speeches on this subject in the media and in the bodies deciding on the new shape of the law.

To complete this picture, a few words should be dedicated to describing the financial situation of Gogacz. Like almost everyone in Poland, he did not have any property that would allow him to support himself (all such goods had been taken by the communists—even the modest shop belonging to the Gogacz family that sold imported foodstuffs and spices suffered the same fate). The basis for his maintenance was his salary as a lecturer and later a retirement pension, which gave Gogacz a tolerable existence; however, this was on the condition of many sacrifices: he did not start a family, he lived in a ten-storey tower block belonging to a housing cooperative, i.e. in the so-called “concrete-slab block of flats,” in a small apartment furnished modestly with mass-produced furniture, he had no car, he never went on holiday, he did not accumulate any property, and he did not have savings or even a private family library.

¹⁵ The Code was referred to the Constitutional Tribunal by Ewa Łętowska, the then Ombudsman, invoking, *inter alia*, the right to an abortion on demand, financed from public funds, the right for which had already been approved in the Polish People’s Republic (PRL). In response, the Tribunal invoked the fundamental distinction between the established law and moral principles and stated that it was not entitled to evaluate ethical proposals and that it could only evaluate legal provisions. The Constitutional Tribunal added also that the “establishing deontological standards did not belong to the nature of the state.” Therefore, the state was not entitled to recommend the establishment of such norms to anyone, including the authorities of the Medical Self-Government. The state can only recommend the creation of legal norms. The deontological standards as such do not have a legal nature. This is because they belong to the set of ethical norms “independent of the law” (Symbol art. U1/92, 7 October 1992).

STUDY AREAS OF MIECZYŚLAW GOGACZ

History of philosophy

Mieczysław Gogacz's works on the history of philosophy have already been mentioned. It is worth adding that he also dealt with the methodology of the history of philosophy, continuing and refining the approaches of Gilson and Swieżawski, who were supporters of the philosophical concept of the history of philosophy. Gogacz, as a historian of philosophy, began to purge Thomism of the elements of Arabic philosophy and created (as he himself called it) a consistent version of existential Thomism. Within this version of the philosophy of being, he relentlessly defends the theory of the act of existence and the principle of non-contradiction, the thesis about the distinctiveness and the internal unity of individual entities, as well as the realism and pluralism resulting from these assertions.

Philosophy of being (metaphysics)

The object of the metaphysics of consistent Thomism is the principles (*archai*) of being, that is, the elements constituting an existing being. We experience them when, at the same time, the reality of this composition affects us. Now, when the question is asked about the source of reality and about the unity construed in the knowledge of the essence, it should first be noted that their source is certainly not the essence itself, since, as the cause of the identity of being, the essence cannot be at the same time the cause of its reality. That source must be the act of existence, constituting, together with the essence which it makes real and actualizes, an individual being. That—unlike existential judgement—discovering of the act of existence in a being is a characteristic element in the metaphysics of Gogacz.

The inner causes of the individual being are, therefore, the following: (1) the act of existence, which determines that the being is; (2) an essence which constitutes in a being what the being is; (3) in essence, the form is the principle of its permanent identity; and (4) the potency is the basis for the subjectification of accidents—the material potency subjects the physical properties, while the spiritual potency subjects the immaterial properties (e.g. intellect). Therefore, it is the existence that is the act of being, and the essence acts on it in a being-like

potency, whereas what constitutes the act within the essence is the form actualizing the shape of the potency inherent in the being.

Gogacz also draws attention to the need to reformulate the theory of final causes (in existential Thomism they are defined as causes functioning in the intentional order) and to identify them as contingent beings affecting the shaping of the potency sphere of being, the sphere of which, together with its existence, constitutes one real being. He also postulates the need to clarify the problem of the relation of creation, the concept of maintaining contingent beings in existence (*conservatio esse*), and the theory of the personal relationships of faith, hope, and love.

Philosophy of God and religion

We detect the efficient cause by searching for the cause of the act of existence in a being. This act cannot be subsistent, because its relationship with the essence is permanent; however, it cannot come from the essence, because it would not differ from it, nor can it come from non-being, because non-being does not evoke anything. So, it must come from another being which is able to evoke (create) an act of existence. That being we call God. By analyzing the created existence, we can determine that God is one and also that God is a one-element being, because He Himself is the existence, thanks to which He is “capable” of existential relations. The issue of the essence of the Absolute is associated with the so-called God’s attributes. Gogacz, starting from the thesis that God is a Subsistent Act of Existence, assumes that the only real attributes of God are the manifestations of the act of existence (*transcendentalia*): reality, distinctiveness, unity, truth, good and beauty. The other properties attributed to God result from comparing Him with other beings (*axiological attributes*), e.g. infinity, omnipotence or eternity, and treating God as an object of human love (*eminent attributes*), e.g. the statement that for someone God is everything, his or her entire world, etc.

Theory of a person and personal relations

The starting point for formulating the definition of a person was for Gogacz the clarifications by Thomas Aquinas regarding the definition formulated by Boethius. Gogacz pointed out that Aquinas, by formulating several terms for the person and describing it from different

points of view, wanted to indicate the elements that determined being a person (*constitutiva personae*). They are the following: existence and intellectuality. In time, he added the subjectivity of personal relations to these constitutive elements, hence, he wrote, “a person is such an intelligent being who, at the same time, loves.”¹⁶ This was connected with the development of the issue of personal relations, the most primordial mutual references of people directly subjected to the manifestations of existence. Love subjected by the property of reality is the basic kindness and acceptance. Faith, built on the property of truth, is, first of all, trust and openness. Hope is an expectation that kindness and trust will last between people. On the basis of the theory of personal relations, understood in this manner, it is possible to better determine the most important communities for people: family and nation. Ethics also clearly seems to be the science of the principles of protecting people and their interrelationships. These relations, built on the manifestations in a being of its existence, are the original, initial and most natural references between persons, just as the most original and initial reference in beings is existence. Humanism, according to Gogacz, means the relations of love, faith and hope which connect a human being with other people; religion means relations with the Divine Persons. Ethics and the philosophy of the human being are connected with the theory of a person and personal relations.

Ethics

Gogacz describes ethics as a theory of the principles of protecting people and personal relations. He believes that these principles should be sought within a person and that, therefore, they are constituted by conscience together with contemplation and wisdom. In addition, ethics is the theory of values, which represent for him the duration of personal relations, and also the theory of culture and metanoia (a humanistic transformation of thinking and acting). The problem of obligation is shifted from ethics to law.

¹⁶ M. Gogacz, *Osoba zadaniem pedagogiki. Wykłady bydgoskie* (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Navo, 1997), p. 69 (Internet edition).

Philosophy of the human being (philosophical anthropology)

The Thomistic analysis of the structure of the human being indicates the act of existence as the first principle of every being, including a human being. The essence of a human being, that is, what a human being is, is composed of a form inherent in a human being, as a principle with a nature of an act which determines the permanent human identity. In addition to the form, in the essence of a human being, there is potency which individualizes the human being. It is the basis for acquiring accident, e.g. cognition, decisions. A “part” of this potency becomes matter by acquiring extent and by subjecting (inheriting) physical accidents. From the point of view of the aforesaid accidents, Gogacz distinguishes the spiritual potency and the material potency in a human being. They are the basis of what is traditionally referred to as the soul and the body.

Pedagogy

Mieczysław Gogacz proposes to take as a basis for ethics and pedagogy the understanding of a human being as a person, that is, as a rational and free being. This points to the anthropological and ethical foundations of pedagogy. Human philosophy determines the subject of educational activities. Ethics defines the purposes of education. Pedagogy itself, in this situation, is a theory of the principles of education. Hence:

- (1) The object of pedagogy is the methods of obtaining human improvements for protective actions, i.e. for ethical behaviour;
- (2) The methods which pedagogy develops independently, while remaining in continuous contact with anthropology and ethics, make up the theories of education and upbringing;
- (3) The purpose of pedagogy is to obtain metanoia in a human being—a change in thinking and acting. The main moments of this change are the turn from things to people, and, consequently, the transition from the connections with things to the connections with people. Gogacz divides pedagogy into general and specific areas, and formulates the principles of education in each of these areas of pedagogy.

Theory of politics

Gogacz differentiates here between the *raison d'état* and the political program. He considers the said *raison d'état* as a set of unchanging goals and tasks of the state, determined by the common good, which consists of the good of every human being and the good of all the people who constitute a nation. The individual good of a human being depends on its access to education and learning, which result in wisdom. The social good comes down to protecting relationships, above all, the personal relationships which bind communities of people. The *raison d'état* understood in this manner determines a political program as a specific way of implementing it.

Theology and mysticism

Gogacz is mainly interested in the theory of religious life, understood as a bond of love, faith and hope connecting a human being with God. A prayer explained in this perspective appears to be an ascetic means which reveals and simplifies our relationship with God. The religious life of a human being, which is a relationship with God, has a dynamic course, described by St. John of the Cross as active purifications (our initiatives) and passive purifications (God's actions in our religious lives). The period in which these purifications overlap is a dark night, as it is full of human feelings of anxiety in reconciling the proposals of the human being with God's plans, and God's plans are not always legible in the signs of time. Gogacz associates the topic of mystical experience with the theology of internal life. He based the explanation of the mystical experience on the Thomistic understanding of the potency intellect as spiritual potency, which is the end of the intellectual cognitive understanding of the principles. That experience consists of the fact that God allows Himself to be understood by the potency intellect of a human being as the Subsistent Act of Existence. Thus, a human being does not receive any additional knowledge about God, only the certainty that God exists. Such an explanation is consistent with the descriptions of the mystical experience provided by the great Catholic mystics: St. Teresa of Ávila and St. John of the Cross.

Theory of culture

For each period, Gogacz tries to find a set of initial and basic assertions in the structure of culture which define what reality is.

He believes that how we understand reality is dependent, in culture, on all the further layers of perspectives constituting that culture, such as the natural, sociological, artistic, pedagogical, ideological, or even theological, because theology is always the presentation and explanation of the Revelation in some understanding of reality. At the same time, Gogacz questions the placing of politics in the first position of importance among the areas constituting contemporary culture.

2.

UNDERSTANDING OF PHILOSOPHY

According to Mieczysław Gogacz, metaphysics is the most crucial part of philosophy, and actually all philosophical inquiries should be done on the grounds of metaphysics. In the book *Istnieć i poznawać*, there is the following explanation of what philosophy is, and at the same time provides the justification for metaphysically-oriented philosophy:

According to the classical approach, philosophy can be understood as that kind of apprehension which explains reality by discovering causes that make it non-contradictory and make this reality what it is.¹

In another publication, the following was confirmed in a similar way:

... philosophy is a recognition and understanding of internal causes which constitute reality and signify the identity and individuality of separate and unique areas of being, which, then, are the cause of its properties and relations. Philosophy is the mode of the expression of reality, its structure, all of which constitutes reality as its existence and essence, and that which links reality with other existing beings as external causes.²

¹ EC, p. 9.

² CT, p. 117.

Hence, philosophy is not a set of concepts produced by a philosopher in order to react towards a set of understandings which appear in culture, science, or everyday speech. Moreover, according to Gogacz, philosophy is not a synthesis of knowledge, nor a sole reflection on methods of cognition, nor is it a philosophy of language. It is reality itself and existing beings are the explanatory cause for notions introduced by a philosopher.

By the “classical aspect of philosophy”—an utterance we read in the aforementioned definition—Gogacz understands the fact that metaphysics is the primary subject of philosophy. We need to remember that other philosophical disciplines, which differ in their subject of research, constitute a kind of specified research of being in their varieties—accidents, existing features or properties. And although metaphysics is a primary and dominating field of philosophy, it is not however the only one for Gogacz.³

Since, for him, philosophy is always the result of cognition, it remains different from existing reality. Thus, Gogacz always stresses in his works that the mode of the existence of being and the mode of the cognition of being are always different. Philosophy is an apprehension, a result of the cognition of actual reality, and can never replace existence alone. Philosophical research cannot be determined by elements often perceived as key for a particular field of study—social, economic, cultural, or environmental. They can, to some extent, serve as a kind of background, but are insufficient as a basis for philosophical studies. Philosophy, as represented by Gogacz, can be described as follows, depending on where the emphasis is put: (1) metaphysics and existence, or (2) the mode of the cognition of reality within the theory of “speech of the heart.”

UNDERSTANDING OF METAPHYSICS AND UNDERSTANDING OF EXISTENCE

Metaphysics is a set of statements according to which individual beings are explained in the aspect of that which constitutes them (makes a being what it is).⁴ This means that metaphysics identifies

³ CT, pp. 179–180.

⁴ CT, pp. 133–134.

the principles of being, as it answers the fundamental questions: what a being is, why a being exists. By answering these questions, Gogacz claims, we can present the understanding of reality, which is experienced by potential intellect within the relation of cognition. The fact that man refers to cognitive acts while dealing with metaphysics does not mean that the theory of cognition could be prior to metaphysics and that metaphysics would be subordinate. The cause for metaphysics is always being: an individual existing in a reality in which its (being) constitutive elements, both internal and external (principles and causes), are identified.

Presenting Gogacz's analysis of the field of being, we need to show four areas in which a metaphysician works: (1) the differentiation between three modes of apprehension of the essence; (2) the identification of an act of existence; (3) the specification of transcendental properties; and (4) the detection of efficient cause—an act of self-existence and external final causes.

1. Three aspects of apprehension of the essence of being

The essence which determines the identity of being is to be understood as threefold: as *quidditas*, as nature, and as subsistence. In the first approach, there are two separate principles: form and matter, which are the causes of, respectively, identity and uniqueness, which are steady, along with mutable features and physical properties. To accent these elements of being is to lay fundamentals for creating notions of things, as it is form and matter that allow the recognition of a being within a particular genus. In the second approach—as nature—the influence of external factors which adopt being to its activities is grasped. Gogacz stresses that, in the context of understanding the nature of being, we should point out the creation of potential elements in being, the results of which are seen in accidents, for example in undertaken activities. In the nature of a human being, rationality and freedom are considered to be the key faculties as far as they imply the nature of man, however, they are not identical with the human being himself. Subsistence should be understood as such a way of apprehending the essence, in which the essence is presented along with the property of its existence, which is the result of actualizing the essence by the act of existence. The essence is not only form and matter or even an area of accidents, but something separate, real and the one. Gogacz, when he employs the above understanding

of subsistence, puts stress on the transcendental properties revealed in it. So, understanding the essence as subsistence seems to be the fullest mode of apprehension.⁵

2. Identification of the act of being

The identification and search for an act of existence can be accomplished in a twofold manner: as an act of reasoning, and as an encounter. In the first case, the act of existence appears as a result which indicates the cause of the reality of the essence; in the second one, it comes as the result of the encounter of two beings who, as persons, initiate existential relations (relations of love, hope and faith). The act of existence, in this latter case, is present as the one which evokes cognition and love.⁶ The act of existence makes us pay attention to the being acting on us, and we do not confuse that being with another one. According to Gogacz, the act of existence is not an activity, nor an action, nor making a being real, nor a relation with the existential efficient cause.⁷ Moreover, the act of existence is not identical for all beings, nor it is any stratum of reality read by metaphysicians, nor an accident.⁸ It is a real cause initiating a being, joining the essence of being and causing particular effects. The process of linking the act of existence with the essence is twofold: it lies in actualizing and making real the essence along with all potencies included in it, and secondly, in the fact that the act of existence, due to the essence, becomes the act of a particular being. This allows the specification of the types of acts of existence with regard to what kind of union is considered: (1) acts of existence of personal beings (e.g. human beings); (2) acts of existence of non-personal beings (e.g. animals, plants, etc.); (3) acts of existence of accidents; and (4) subsistent acts of existence (the structure of which is entirely different from the other beings—it is both non-personal and personal, it is a one-element, simple, pure act with no potentiality, pure existence).⁹

Consequential Thomism—that is the name given by Gogacz to his own version of Thomism—can be understood as deepening the

⁵ IM, pp. 19–20.

⁶ IM, p. 22.

⁷ IM, pp. 51–52.

⁸ IM, p. 52.

⁹ IM, pp. 54–55.

metaphysics of Aquinas in a way that especially turns attention to the act of existence in its primary role. In the various versions of Thomism, there can be different approaches according to the interpretation of the act of existence.¹⁰ In traditional Thomism, existence is understood as a relation to God, where the implication is that the existence, creation and maintenance in the existence are identical. In Louvain Thomism, and also in the transcendental one, existence is a necessary element of being, which explains the properties in being which are the first subject of cognition. Therefore, existence understood as the above is a sense, an *a priori* condition for the possibility of cognizing a being. In existential Thomism, existence holds the status of the primary act of a being, however, it is acquired as the result of consciousness coming to cognition. As Gogacz says: “according to that variety of Thomism, the act of existence is recognized by an epistemological proposition, not by a contact with the act of existence through existential relations on the level of the speech of the heart.”¹¹ Consequential Thomism, hence, makes the statements of existential Thomism more precise—we do not realize the necessity of that act in a being, but we rather assume that what (act of existence) is in a being already is, moreover, it initiates the being to be a real one.¹² As Gogacz points out, existence is a key metaphysical matter around which the overall problems of metaphysics should be focused. This is implied from the fact that the act of existence is the first act of being which determines the whole spectrum of issues. This, as we assume, is the distinctive feature we call “consequential” in that kind of Thomism. In any case, we do not claim that other Thomisms are less consequential.

¹⁰ Gogacz points out that different kinds of Thomism derive from particular approaches with regard to relations between existence and essence, and also by joining other philosophies to Thomism. IM, p. 108.

¹¹ IM, p. 111.

¹² We need to mention that Gogacz’s statements with regard to consequential Thomism are the result of his study of Avicenna and Aquinas. Gogacz had noticed that there are numerous traces of the Avicennian position in existential Thomism. Gogacz’s statements were aimed at putting an accent on the fact that the problem of existence appears in the theory of cognition and in logic, and even if it did appear in metaphysics then it would only be in the context of the issues of possibility and necessity. HP, pp. 148–166.

3. Transcendental properties: properties of existence

The issue of transcendental properties has been treated by Gogacz with particular attention, as a result of the fact that particular attention had been paid to the act of existence. Hence, there are the following properties: distinctiveness (*aliquid*), unity (*unum*), reality (*res*), truth (*verum*), goodness (*bonum*) and beauty (*pulchrum*). Distinctiveness is enumerated as the first, for it is distinctiveness that designates the grounds for a distinct, unique, individual being. Unity expresses the assignment of all elements of being to the first act, and at the same time, it ensures the dominance of the act of existence over principles whose character with regard to the act of existence is potential. Reality, as it is the expression of existence that excludes non-being, fully exposes the essential content of being. It is reality that makes all that is included in a being to be a being as such, which means that reality causes a being to exist. Truth is not only identical with being, but also causes its availability and cognoscibility. Gogacz explicitly says that truth is not an aftermath of the activity of the intellect, but truth's transcendental property makes a being open and cognizable. Similarly, goodness as a property of existence causes inclination and encourages the selection of a particular being. This property causes decisions and choices, but is not their derivative. Beauty, the last of the transcendentals specified by Thomists, expresses each of the aforementioned properties of existence. Gogacz points out that transcendentals all appear together and simultaneously. Such an approach towards beauty is the result of the distinguishing of the objective features such as unity (uniting internal forms of being), excellence (proportion and harmony of elements of being), and brilliance of form (clarity and purity of being).¹³

When Gogacz presents transcendental properties, he stresses their relations with the first principles of metaphysics, which for the most part are presented in the context of logical laws. Hence, the principle of contradiction is a proposition which grasps the transcendental distinctiveness of being. As this specific notion is closer to those proper to logic, Gogacz suggests adopting the name "the law of the non-contradiction of being and non-being," or "the law of the non-contradiction of two beings." Further, the law of identity grasps

¹³ IM, pp. 34–42.

the property of unity in being. Hence the name of this law supposes to reflect the subordination of all principles of being to the act of existence. As a result, it would be better to adopt the name of “the law of the inner content of being.” The law of the excluded middle expresses properties of unity and separateness. So, the non-transitory characteristic of being and separateness is grasped in the law, which in metaphysics should be named as “the law of non-contradiction,” “the law of separateness.” And the last one, the law of sufficient reason, grasps the reality of being, which in metaphysics signifies the law of reality.¹⁴

4. God: a subsistent act of being

According to Gogacz, the identification of the internal causes of being leads in a natural way to the discovery of external causes, both the efficient and final cause. Acts of existence (for their limiting role in the relation with essence) demand that their cause should be indicated; the cause would be self-sufficient and subsistent, independent from further causes. The statement that the primordial being exists belongs to metaphysics, and can be clearly shown in the essential order of the conducted analysis (essential order). This mode of proceeding is based on indicating the direct, unique and sufficient external causes for a particular being. The coming into existence as a composite of essence and existence and this particular being, different from any other one, is the result both of the efficient cause (it produces the act of existence) and also the final causes both of soul and body. Metaphysics describes God as the subsistent act of existence (*ipsum esse subsistens*).¹⁵ This name does not signify the essence of God but turns attention to the path leading to the process of cognition of God. According to Thomism, man is capable of recognizing that God exists. God as subsistence reveals himself through transcendental properties, which are God’s attributes and also modes of communicating with beings apart from God Himself. When God is understood as a subsistent act of being, we may assume that there is no potentiality in Him and His essence is identical with existence, as He is single-element.¹⁶

¹⁴ IM, pp. 37–39.

¹⁵ SG, pp. 80–82.

¹⁶ SG, pp. 80–81.

Such an understanding of God and creation in theodicy attracted Gogacz to re-formulate the problem of creation and maintenance in existence (*creatio et conservatio esse*). He does not accept the Platonic view on creation, according to which God emanates from Himself or creates while thinking about the existence of created beings. Creation is, then, causing the act of existence, which initiates everything that constitutes individual being. When it comes to maintenance in existence, Gogacz links it with personal relations, which link man with God and, at the same time, protect human beings. In the order of the act of self-existence we might say that creation lasts as long as being exists. In the order of the result, however, not of the cause, we should rather say that existence ends at the very moment the act of existence is initiated. As Gogacz says, God does not create the act of existence, which He had already created, but He creates new existences continually in time.¹⁷

Apart from indicating the efficient cause as the external cause initiating the existence of being, we need to note the meaning of the external final causes. They represent the essential character of being, because they shape the essence according to a pattern and model. Gogacz says that these principles are also actual beings, which shape the potentiality of individual being within their power. In human being, for example, we can indicate both pure spiritual substances (intellectual)—angels, which are the final causes of the human soul—and parents, who are the final causes of the human body and the whole emotional sphere of human being.¹⁸

COGNIZING REALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE “SPEECH OF THE HEART”

The concept of the “speech of the heart” had been studied by Gogacz as the result of reading St. Thomas Aquinas and Gilson’s *Lingwistyka a filozofia*.¹⁹ Research on the problem of cognition at its very first stage of perception of the intellectual powers of the influence of reality had been placed by Gogacz in the area he called metaphysics of

¹⁷ IM, pp. 65–66.

¹⁸ MHR, pp. 23–46.

¹⁹ É. Gilson, *Lingwistyka a filozofia*, transl. H. Rosnerowa (Warszawa: Pax, 1975).

cognition. The formulated proposal was an attempt to revise the theories of cognition known to date, even those which were reality-oriented. The theory of the “speech of the heart” can be presented from two perspectives. The first can emphasize a mode of cognition of reality proper to human being, and the second can emphasize the meaning and consequences of the “speech of the heart” for metaphysics.

Man is equipped with cognitive faculties which enable, through an encounter between two beings, the grasping and reception of the information about being which operates on them. Each faculty has the ability to perceive things proportioned to it. The receptive input of the influence of the thing being cognized is described with the scholastic category of cognitive form (*species*). Chronologically, the first step takes place when information about being is perceived by sensitive cognitive faculties. These faculties are sensitive to material qualities, the character of which is accidental with regard to essential elements, and cognizable by intellect. We may say that the essential principles of being, even those remaining unnoticed, are perceived at the same moment. Common sense as one of the internal senses, while uniting impressions coming from all external senses, forms *species sensibilis*, which is one sensual shape of information regarding the cognized thing. Gogacz especially stresses that, at this stage of cognition, the principle of the unity of *species sensibilis* of all elements is the unity of all elements present in being. However, this unity is not grasped at this stage; it becomes the primary element for intellectual operations of cognizing the very existence in being.

Sensual cognitive form cannot influence the human intellect on its own. It is necessary, then, to distinguish two intellects, the first of which is responsible for revealing and exploring the similarity of principles of being, and the second is capable of receiving and grasping them. The first, according to the Aristotelian tradition, is called active intellect, and the second is called potential intellect. Potential intellect receives intellectual cognitive form (*species intelligibilis*), which reveals to the intellect the essences penetrated with reality, separateness, and, above all, unity. The result of receiving intellectual form generates (conception) the “word of the heart” (*verbum cordis*), which is the result of the cognitive contact of man as an intellectual being with existing individual beings.²⁰ As a consequence of putting

²⁰ CT, pp. 236–240.

a stress on the issue of species in this relation, we need to notice that “word of the heart” was conceived in the intellect as a representation of a cognized being. This means that being is its measure and source. Hence, by the “speech of the heart,” according to Gogacz, we should understand the set of reactions within the activities of intellect under the influence of the born “word of the heart.” These reactions represent the act of turning to the “environment of beings” and getting into relations as a result of cognizing the other beings as persons.²¹

The analysis of consequences of the “speech of the heart” for metaphysics needs to point out that the set of responses also includes astonishment of the fact that all information grasped in the intellect derives from actual being. Gogacz links these reactions to contemplation, pointing out that contemplation is a natural condition of intellect and will that is expressed in being received from and directed towards reality. This state additionally confirms the truthfulness of human cognition. It means that exposing the “speech of the heart” leads to the exposure of the contemplative character of metaphysics.

Due to the theory of the “speech of the heart,” metaphysics obtains the character of wisdom. Its character is related to the significant position of the potential intellect, which, while producing the “word of the heart,” gains efficiency in linking results with causes and grasping beings in their aspect of truth and goodness. Further, it results in searching for internal causes for results observed. It is also the search on the path of reasoning from external causes of individual beings to cognized ones. “The word of the heart” is, moreover, a significant impulse which indicates and drives human activities. With regard to other people, it starts personal relations, whose fundament is the act of existence and the transcendental properties of reality, truth and goodness revealing it.

The theory of the “speech of the heart” can be understood as a sort of correction with regard to existential Thomism. Gogacz says that the results of Thomists such as Maritain, Gilson, and Krąpiec were insufficient in terms of exploring the mode of cognition based on the understanding of the potential and active intellect they had adopted. Hence, Maritain, although he had agreed to separate the two intellects, was convinced that while the active intellect prepares the cognitive form of thing, the potential intellect grasps its existence

²¹ DI, pp. 60–140; CT, pp. 99–112.

at the same time. Gilson claimed that the passive intellect cognizes the essence and pronounces it in the existential proposition as an existing one. The concept of Krąpiec turned its attention to *vis cogitativa* as a proper place to cognize things by the passive intellect, while the active intellect prepared the essence of the thing for reception.²² It is worth mentioning that Gogacz also employs other notions for describing the “speech of the heart”—he speaks about indistinct cognition, which is contradicted with knowledge (distinct cognition), as well as about understanding (*intellectio*), which is contradicted with reasoning (*ratiocinatio*).

METHODOLOGY OF METAPHYSICS

According to Mieczysław Gogacz, the methodological approach in metaphysics is a method leading from effects grasped at the level of unclear cognition to statements about the unity of the principles of being, which are essence and existence. He argues that the best method of research for metaphysics is identification, which is to separate causes from results/effects, differentiating being from that which constitutes it, and searching for the external causes of internal ones.²³

To identify, analyze and present the principles of being, Gogacz refers to the difference between the structural and genetical approaches.

²² EPP, pp. 11–12.

²³ The identification of principles was introduced by Gogacz when traditional methods of classical metaphysics, abstraction and analogy were found to be insufficient. Abstraction is a method that differentiates between the subject of sciences (e.g. physics, mathematics, and metaphysics) and allows for the grasping of that which constitutes a being. Even if we take into consideration the fact that abstraction understands being in the widest manner, its content is the lowest. Being aware that contemporary metaphysicians take recourse to analogy, especially to the analogy of proper proportionality, Gogacz stresses that it could not serve as a reliable tool to avoid errors when the (grasped) notion is considered identical to existence. The method of analogy is responsible in some cases for errors in identifying the relation with the essence of being and also in intellectual recognition. Finally, it is the method of identification of being that is proper for metaphysics, and abstraction and analogy then would serve as methods of organizing the knowledge on being (we could then build the theory of knowledge about being), rather than being methods for the study and application of metaphysics, which is the process of the identification of being and that which constitutes them. IM, pp. 98–99; CT, pp. 183–184.

The first shows links between particular internal principles of being: existence and essence, form and matter, and substance and its accidents. At this point, the difference between the properties of being in the area of existence and essence is exposed. Transcendentals are the properties of existence, and accidents, actualized by form, are the properties of essence. These accidents can be of a physical character (features of body) or a non-physical character (faculties of soul). The second approach, the genetical one, then sets out the principles according to their order of primacy, which in metaphysics is proper to assigning a primary role to the act. So, the act of existence is the first act of the whole being. Essence is dependent on existence. Gogacz clearly indicates relations between act of existence and essence; they are realizing and actualizing. The former relation means initiating and making the essence real, while the latter stresses the ability/power to link all essential elements of being in such a way that it becomes a structural unity.

Considering the historico-philosophical background, especially information regarding the differences between the Platonic and Aristotelian approaches, Gogacz stresses that one needs to be aware of the difference between linear and essential schema of causes. The linear one, derived from the Platonic tradition, considers similar properties and appearances both in the result and in the cause as well. Following this pattern, one can only conclude with similarities and unity in various aspects between all beings. Hence, the essential set of causes, which derives from the Aristotelian school, abides by realism in its research. It allows the recognition of the set of causes of being, which in beings causes proportionate results.²⁴

Therefore, indicating the first principles of being allows the implication that their existence excludes non-being. Once the existence of being is cognized, it excludes any doubt whether the subject of our research exists or not, so our knowledge about being is therefore reconciled with a being itself and its elements. It follows that none of the agreed propositions of metaphysics can imply the non-existence of being.

²⁴ M. Gogacz, "Miejsce zagadnienia jedności w historii i strukturze metafizyki," in *Opera philosophorum medii aevi*, vol. 6, part 1: *Metafizyczne ujęcia jedności*, ed. M. Gogacz (Warszawa: ATK, 1985), pp. 9–20.

Hence, in his philosophy, Mieczysław Gogacz exposed the fundamental role of metaphysical reflection in order to make philosophy conform with reality. The methodology of metaphysics is assigned with an encountered, actually existing individual being. And it is not the method that causes results in the intellect. It is rather a being, consisting of existence and essence, that provokes the “speech of the heart” in the intellect. The “speech of the heart” is the set of understandings which, redirected by man to reality, allows one to grasp it more deeply. As long as the subject assigns the method of metaphysics, the proper relation of cognition called “the speech of the heart” is possible. And consequently, this enables the process of building adequate knowledge regarding the principles of being.

THE PARTICULAR THEORETICAL PROBLEMS

THEORY OF THE PERSON AND PERSONAL RELATIONS

(Michał Zembrzuski)

While presenting Gogacz's concept of the person, one needs to turn attention to its three specific features: (1) the amendment of the concept of the person with regard to the Boethian version and emphasizing that the person is seen as a personal being; (2) implications of the concept of the person, which point out the essence of the dignity of the person; and (3) the theory of personal relations worked out by Gogacz, which finally became the hallmark of Gogacz's philosophical thought.¹

1. Correction of the Boethian definition of the person and designation of a person as an individual being with an intellectual essence

In September 1982 (and again in the following year) at the scientific session at the University of Paris XII, a session on the Boethian concept of the person took place. During the session, Gogacz suggested a change to the Boethian formula. His amendments were the result of research on Aquinas' writings. Instead of the formula *persona*

¹ The concept that is very important to understand in the philosophy of Gogacz is to recognize the difference between the human being as a human being and a human being as a person. CT, pp. 171–125.

est rationalis naturae individua substantia, he proposed *persona est intellectualis subsistentiae individuum ens*, which means that the “person is an individual being of intellectual essence related through its reality with the act of existence.”² Hence, avoiding a mere repetition of Aquinas, but proceeding in accordance with his thought, Gogacz pointed out that there are two requirements for being a person: intellectuality included in the essence, and, even more importantly, the act of existence.

In this attempt to re-define the notion of a person, it is fundamental to replace the notion of nature with the notion of subsistence, key to Gogacz’s metaphysics. In his opinion, the description of nature in the definition of a person depends on the external principles of being. So, rationality would express the result of activities of external causes and, hence, would be closer to the Aristotelian solutions suggesting that rationality is of external origin. When in the definition of a person the emphasis is put on rationality and on relations, it lessens the importance of the first and the most fundamental principle of being, which is existence. Subsistence, according to Gogacz, is an essence understood as that which carries a sign of the actualizing existence, present as reality, and, moreover, it is ready to subject accidents. He also proposes reconsidering the matter of the individuation of being. While differing causes of particularity of being (material accidents) from the very process of individuation (immaterial potentiality), he stresses that it is the potential character of essence with regard to the existence which it causes, that the act of existence belongs to the essence in such a close way that, in result, the being we deal with is separate, individual, unique. Such a position justifies employing the notion of *individuum* in the definition of a person. A person is an individual being due to its internal principles, amongst which is the principle of existence, which is the cause of structural unity and separateness. It (the principle of existence) makes being intransitive being and existing *in se* and *per se*. Gogacz stresses that existence is the *constitutivum* of a person not for the fact that it can link with rationality in an accidental way, but for the fact that, according to Thomas Aquinas, existence is the first act of being, which actualizes, overwhelms, initiates and links in itself the essence, which individuates the existence.

² EPP, p. 28.

The above terminology can be, with no hesitation, applied to other beings which are persons.³ An angel is a personal being in whose essence there is a form and intellectual potentiality actualized by the act of existence. Thus, an angel is a complete and individual substance with regard to its existence and to its species. God is a subsistent being, which excludes any dependence on extrinsic principles. Existence fills God absolutely, hence He is also a separate and subsisting being and, as a consequence, He is the individual being and the person.⁴

2. The concept of the dignity of the person

The issue of the dignity of the person has been the subject of numerous studies. The most frequent solution with regard to this issue was to point out the significant position man holds in the world. Even when metaphysical attempts to precise that notion had been taken into consideration, they ended with the implication that the dignity of a person is some sort of property of the essence of being (emphasizing rationality) or categorial relations (emphasizing relations, for example to society or the world) or transcendental property (emphasizing the existence of the person). Gogacz refused to agree with these positions and pointed out that the dignity of a person is related to the axiological foundation of man among other beings. In his opinion, the category of the dignity of the person is supposed to be understood as an axiological property, and thus with the position of some being among others.⁵ If existence and intellectuality are foundational elements of a person, then we are in a position to grasp particular features of a person by sole comparison with another being. Dignity, however, is not only a notion, nor is it only our mode of thinking about it, but it is a position among other beings “indicated by excellence of existence actualizing intellectuality.”⁶ Following Thomas Aquinas, Gogacz stresses that dignity is always linked with some group of goodness accompanying those who possess dignity.⁷

³ EPP, pp. 17–18, 29–31.

⁴ CT, pp. 220–234.

⁵ M. Gogacz, “Filozoficzna identyfikacja godności osoby,” *Studia Philosophiae Christianae* 25, no. 1 (1989), p. 195.

⁶ EPP, p. 163.

⁷ EPP, pp. 163–164.

Persons are particularly well equipped with regard to other beings. Goods (*bonitates*) which accompany man are rooted in his nature and also in the main principle of his being, which is the act of existence. The cognitive path to identify the constitutive elements of a person is at the same time a path to distinguish the separateness of a person as being as well as its uniqueness. Human intellect and will recognize and accept a person, as these beings are exceptional among others. Persons recognized already are unique not only from our point of view—they are also exceptional in and of themselves for their own ontological structure.⁸

That stance on the issue of the dignity of the person has significant consequences for ethics. The dignity of persons cannot be a starting point for ethics. Placing a man among other beings as the exceptional being needs rules of approach prior to those which derive from the experience of the dignity of the person—these rules are contemplation and wisdom. Persons demand protection as well as the personal relationships that they make. Nevertheless, it is not solely dignity that is the reason for the protection of persons, but also contemplation and wisdom; these enable one to recognize dignity and choose proper methods for the protection of personal goods.⁹

3. Theory of personal relations

Gogacz's position on personal relations follows from his general position on a person as such. The issue of relations was important for Gogacz¹⁰ himself and, further, it was a subject of interest for his students. Personal relations belong to categorial relations, in which both existential and essential references are included.¹¹ In the case of essential relationships, their subjects are intellect and will (the relationship

⁸ EPP, p. 164.

⁹ M. Gogacz, "Filozoficzna identyfikacja godności osoby," pp. 186–190, 203–207.

¹⁰ IM, pp. 43–49; MHR, pp. 16–21, 152–153; EPP, pp. 36–46.

¹¹ Apart from categorial relations, the character of which is extrinsic with regard to being, Gogacz also distinguished transcendental relations of an intrinsic character, which means they are between structural elements of being (existence and essence). Moreover, metaphysics can distinguish between existential causative relations (between causative elements, self-existence and particular beings) and non-personal relations, which are about objects and living beings; these relations are only one way. IM, pp. 45–49.

of cognition and deciding), while in the case of existing relationships, their subjects are the appropriate transcendental properties. Gogacz considers personal relations as the existential ones. Essential relations can only support, protect or damage personal relations. For that reason, Gogacz writes:

... personal relations are prior to every other relation, as the whole content of being is prior to its act of existence. Similarly, personal relations of being are prior to other relations. They are the first and primary as it is existence present in transcendental properties that is first and primary.¹²

The preconscious character of personal relations had been justified by Gogacz in terms of the theory of the “speech of the heart” (*sermo cordis*). This theory describes the activities of potential intellect, which is the apprehension of information, which allows potential intellects to direct themselves to act upon us. Key for Gogacz’s stance is pointing out that the concept of the “speech of the heart” shows that human cognition, which also is a relation, is understood as receiving transcendental properties revealing the essence of being.¹³

Amongst the aforementioned personal relations is love, whose first place on the list is not accidental. Love is a relation based on a property of reality, which presents existence in its fullest way as the first principle of being. When people who meet interact with existence, the most important effects expressing love are realized: kindness/congeniality, openness, acceptance, and mutual suitability.¹⁴ What is typical for Gogacz’s approach is a strict differentiation between the essence of love and all that accompanies it, i.e. its symptoms and results. Emotions accompany love, joy can be its symptom, and fascination can empower it, however, the essence of love is not expressed by the above symptoms. Love is the relation of persons for the fact that they exist and have their own particular structure of being. The essence of love lies also in its gratuitous character as it realizes the encounter of two persons is sufficient, and this encounter leads to further symptoms and results. In the book *Człowiek i jego relacje* Gogacz writes:

¹² IM, p. 47.

¹³ PA, pp. 71–74.

¹⁴ MHR, pp. 17–18.

Love is a mutual adaptation which appears in two persons as the result of their interaction implied from the fact that they exist. ... It is a mutual joy from the fact that this person that I believe and trust is close to me, or in other words, that the person who is present and exists and is close to me I believe and trust. ... This bond is exactly the sufficiency of persons, as the person fits the person to its fullest. This same bond is the deepest personal relation, such an adaptation of persons, such a mutual transformation in them, that when they are alone without themselves, with no continuation of their presence, no existence of themselves, they almost die.¹⁵

Based on Thomas Aquinas' stance regarding kinds of love, Gogacz distinguishes the following three levels of love: (1) *connaturalitas* (*complacentia*); (2) *concupiscibilitas* (*concupiscentia*); and (3) *dilectio*.

The first of the three levels of love (*connaturalitas*) expresses itself in accordance and proportionality with the natures which act on each other. This kind of love means acceptance of the other person for the sole fact that the person exists and is a person. In the very nature of persons there is a reason for the smooth attraction towards the other person, an attraction which aims at benevolence and connaturality.

The second level of love (*concupiscibilitas*) is also related with the existence which stems from it, but the element of sensual perception, from which flows a variety of feelings, is exposed. At this level love is linked to desire, as in the subject of love, in the other person some good for us has been perceived.¹⁶ It is interesting that human desire is interpreted as the need to experience beauty. In this way, it seems, Gogacz defends this form of love, which is often accused of using persons. In his approach, this level of personal relations is natural, but demands to be deepened, so it can be considered a step for the development of love between persons.

The third level of love (*dilectio*) has the fullest relation to persons, as it derives from human cognitive and volitive powers. This level of love means the acceptance of persons as a whole and is expressed by sacrifice for them and for the sake of their goodness.

In *dilectio* love there are, according to Gogacz, several types that can be differentiated. Their character is described by the use of Aquinas' categories, showing love as *actus et actus* and *actus et potentia*. The first

¹⁵ MHR, p. 153.

¹⁶ GL, pp. 32, 34.

mode expresses the “self-sufficiency” of love—e.g. in friendship—and the second the need for “fulfilment”—e.g. in parental love or in the love of God.

The first form of love between persons as persons is friendship (*amicitia*). Its characteristics are full mutuality, faithfulness and trustfulness. In his understanding of friendship, Gogacz puts the emphasis on faithfulness which is perseverance, the lasting nature of this form of love, as it does not perish for mere reason. He also emphasizes that reciprocity is not something that is required or special, but something natural and somehow resulting from friendship. Friendship is not an activity, nor is it the maintenance of mutual interests, nor is it a choice of common goodness or a situation where persons are being kept together necessarily. Friendship is rather a result of all personal relations by which persons are surrounded—it is then a result of faith, hope and love.¹⁷

The second form of love differentiated on the level of *dilectio* is *caritas* love in which persons embrace themselves with care and protect mutual goodness. In *Elementarz metafizyki*, Gogacz generally characterizes *caritas* love as gratuitous, sacrificing, forgiving, protecting, and discreet. Obviously, we may notice that the best example is parental love, which is most visible in the love of a mother for her child.¹⁸

The third among the aforementioned forms of *dilectio* love is the love of God for man—*agape*. The absolute love of God for man is a selfless gift. It is a specific love, proper only to God. It is worth mentioning that, according to Gogacz, man turns to God with love (awakened by God) in the form of longing, hunger of the soul, desire for encounter and salvation.¹⁹

Truth as the property of existence is the fundament of the personal relation of faith. It links persons through mutual openness and trust. Speaking about this relation, Gogacz grasps its two aspects: the first is of the character of subject, the second of the object. From the aspect of a subject, faith is trust, an openness to truth brought by someone. From the aspect of an object, it is based on trustworthiness, passing truth, bestowing with truth. Gogacz adds that it should be talked about on the natural level when it connects people. The subject

¹⁷ MHR, pp. 153–154.

¹⁸ IM, p. 79.

¹⁹ EPP, pp. 41–42.

of a relation adapts his intellect and will to the cognition of truth and is directed to it as a good. If the relationship of faith is based on truth, it has a unique, contemplative character. In some way, everything that belongs to the other person is brought to the subject of the relation by faith. Faith is proportioned to the person we trust in, hence we cannot understand faith as an arbitrary decision to trust someone.²⁰ It is the truth of the person who is the end of the relationship, which affects with the property of truth, thus causing a confident reference to it. When, nevertheless, truth is what the relation between persons depends on, then the relation will be broken only by pride or vanity. With these attitudes, truth is rejected as a goal, as a value and as a foundation for action.

From the aspect of an object, the issue of faith could also be developed as a religious relation. Linking man with God who is a person means that God influences us through His property of truth. God is an active part of this relation due to the fact that He makes us turn to Him. In this relation God is present in the essence of human being and even He remains separate in His being. He contributes to a human's faculties such equipment that enables contact with Him. Theological graces received in this relation and gifts of the Holy Spirit enable contact with God and the reception of the entire Revelation. Gogacz is aware that this relation ascends from the natural to the supernatural level, and in consequence, from a philosophical to a theological explanation. Religion as a set of relations would not be understood as any kind of knowledge, and would not be limited only to experience, consciousness, or decision. Religious faith is, from God's part, the supernatural act of His self-giving to us.²¹ Religious faith also has a subjective aspect, and then all elements related to the experience of faith—anxieties, doubts, fears—could be stressed. Gogacz suggests that it is dangerous to pay too much attention to that element. It has, additionally, its philosophical presumptions which perceive human nature as conscience and freedom. Atheism, for Gogacz, is not the result of the intellectual negation of God, but rather, for the most part, of an inability to overcome the crisis of the person's relation with religious faith, as present on a particular stage of faith (dark night of the soul).²²

²⁰ MHR, p. 152.

²¹ IM, pp. 80–81.

²² WBS, p. 43; PAM, pp. 113–117.

Hope is a personal relation based on goodness as a property of existence. The relation with hope concerns the expectation of goodness from other people. It does not, however, have a demanding character, but is related to the availability, acceptance and choice of presence of persons. When expectation is initiated from goodness as a property of existence, then it is not about expected goodness, but rather about the mutual sharing of goodness, and about an ability to accept the goodness of other persons.²³ Gogacz stresses that hope is also a kind of adaptation of a person to the fact that other persons act on us with their goodness.²⁴ In his book *Człowiek i jego relacje*, he writes that

... hope is not about getting rid of distrust, a confrontation with someone, a decision to trust someone against reason. It is not a choice of something unstable. It is a need for our enduring amongst persons. It cannot be broken by distrust, disappointment, or even the fact of being deceived. It will eventually be destroyed by breaking goodness and turning to evil.²⁵

The concept of the person and Gogacz's theory of personal relations are original philosophical proposals, as they are the consequences of his understandings of being. They exemplify the practical application of the results of metaphysical research to describe human nature and to expose his functioning among other beings. Man, as a person, and thus as an individual being of intellective essence, exists amongst other persons. Personal relations create an environment of persons, which continues as long as it has protection and care.

PHILOSOPHY OF A MAN

(Magdalena Płotka)

The foundations of Mieczysław Gogacz's philosophy of a man include the following topics: (1) the theory of a man as a person; (2) the relational and substantial understanding of a man; (3) the inner causes

²³ MHR, p. 15.

²⁴ MHR, pp. 152–153.

²⁵ MHR, p. 20.

of a man (existence, essence, soul and body); (4) the external causes of a man (the cause of existence's reality and the final cause of a person's identity); and (5) the properties and relations of a man (cognition, action, personal relations). The whole of Gogacz's anthropological project is topped with the ideas of "metanoia" and "humanism"—the key concepts in Gogacz's philosophical anthropology.

Gogacz defines a man in the following way: a man is an individual being, which is initiated by a created act of existence. The act of existence actualizes the potential essence as its formal and material constitution. There are two elements of individual being: existence and essence. These are simultaneously the inner causes of the essence of a man. Such a view expresses Gogacz's most basic and fundamental perspective of a man and is the starting point for the more detailed descriptions of human being.

1. Theory of a man and theory of a person

Although from the philosophical point of view a man is mostly a person,²⁶ Gogacz distinguishes two disciplines: the metaphysics of a man and the metaphysics of a person. This issue has been discussed in detail in *Wokół problemu osoby* [On the problem of the person] (1974), whereas *Człowiek i jego relacje* [A man and his relations] (1985) is Gogacz's presentation of the Thomistic metaphysics of a man.

In *A man and his relations*, Gogacz outlines his idea of the metaphysics of a man. He explains that the metaphysics of a man differs from the metaphysics of a being: the latter takes the problem of the personal act of existence and identification of the essential constitution of a man into account, whereas the former does not.²⁷ Additionally, the metaphysics of a man understands man as an existing one, as a real being. It does not consider a man as an essence.²⁸ In consequence, Gogacz's philosophy of man is foremost the metaphysics of human being.

²⁶ Gogacz clarifies the initial metaphysical approach to human beings with the idea that beings obtain accidental constitution due to an essence (containing the potency factor). Among these accidents there are relations with other beings, which are the basis for enrichments with unity, truth and goodness. OPP, pp. 66–67.

²⁷ MHR, p. 61.

²⁸ MHR, p. 77.

2. Relational and substantial understanding of a man

Gogacz points out that metaphysics could be studied in a twofold manner: substantially (as one focuses on the identity, reality and unity of a man, being or substance) and relationally (as one focuses on the relations of a man which constitute himself). Gogacz criticizes the contemporary views of man, according to which man is ontologically constituted by his freedom or consciousness—i.e. relations. Gogacz claims that such views mistakenly identify relations as the elements which constitute the subject.²⁹ He argues that the same thing cannot be the action (or consciousness) and the subject of this action at the same time. If a man was merely the schema of relations or references which connect him to other beings, he would change permanently.³⁰ Such a view mistakenly takes cognition as being. This kind of approach misinterprets cognition as being, confuses relations with their subject, and external causes with internal content.³¹ This is the position—Gogacz emphasizes—presented by Platonic and Neoplatonic trends.

The counterbalance to the relational philosophy of a man is a substantial one, of which Gogacz is a strong supporter. He strongly emphasizes that man remains the same in terms of being; only man's mental equipment, his properties and his relationships change.³² Therefore, according to Gogacz, it is more accurate to identify a man as the subject of his actions, i.e. as an independent subject derived from his dependent relationship, as a spiritual and physical individual being who manifests his humanity in rational consciousness and freedom, who hence knows and makes free decisions on his own.³³ Such a position originates in the Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophies.

3. The inner causes of a man

According to Gogacz, a correct description of who a person is should begin by considering who a human being is in his inner content, in the framework of internal reasons that constitute man as a man.

²⁹ MHR, p. 10.

³⁰ MHR, p. 31.

³¹ MHR, p. 31.

³² MHR, p. 31.

³³ MHR, p. 11.

It is only then that the researcher avoids relational thinking and identifying perceptions with being or the theory of cognition with metaphysics.³⁴ In particular, Thomism—the philosophical trend which is Gogacz’s starting point and framework for his anthropological research—captures a man in his reality and identity.³⁵ In addition, Thomism indicates that beings—including man—inhere the internal causes of their reality and identity within themselves, regardless of cognition.³⁶ Existence and essence are the inner causes of an individual being.

3.1. Existence

Existence is the reason for the reality of being, whereas essence is the reason for a being’s identity. The existence of man is a fact, something real. It gives him existential factuality. Existence is the cause of this factuality, reality.³⁷ The reality of any being—a human being in this case—must have its source in existence; in other words, there must be a reason in man for him to be real. If the reason for reality was not in man, man could not be real—he would be an illusion, fiction, theory, explains Gogacz.³⁸ The reason for reality must therefore be an internal factor (and it cannot remain outside the human being).³⁹ The dependence and derivation of the inherent act of existence makes the whole thing contingent, that is, dependent and derivative. What is more, the act of existence is an ontically separate principium which embraces in being all the other principals of its unity.⁴⁰ The act of existence is also the reason, the basis and the source of actions and activities that inside of a being make it real and actual.⁴¹ According to Gogacz, the act of existence in a being has a dominant and unique role, because it is a real principium, which initiates a being as an individual.⁴²

³⁴ MHR, p. 32.

³⁵ MHR, p. 11.

³⁶ MHR, p. 11.

³⁷ MHR, p. 13.

³⁸ MHR, p. 32.

³⁹ OPP, pp. 155–156.

⁴⁰ IM, p. 50.

⁴¹ IM, p. 52.

⁴² IM, p. 51.

3.2. Essence

Man, however, is not just an existence. Not only does he exist, he also works, thinks, develops, grows up, changes. These human activities indicate that the potency which constitutes the essence of man is complex. The essence of man is therefore both spiritual potency, which subjects thinking and decision, and material potency, which subjects his material constitution (physical properties). Both these potencies are actualized by form as an act that constitutes them into one being, made real by the act of existence.⁴³ In addition to existence, the subject of human activity, which is called essence in metaphysics, constitutes a man internally.⁴⁴ Gogacz additionally argues that the fact of the multiplicity of people indicates that the existence of man is not absolute (a multiplicity of absolute beings is not possible), and therefore—he claims further—there is also a “de-absoluting” factor, which is an essence. Thus, an essence is the second inner cause of man. It is the reason for an identity of man, whereas existence is the reason for man’s reality.⁴⁵

The multiplicity of actions of a man leads to the conclusion that an essence is subject to actions, it can trigger actions and at the same time accept their effects, that is, to receive that which a being brings into the living area of man. What the essence receives is never “essential,” i.e. it is not a part of the being, because—Gogacz explains—if an essence exists, it is already “inside” a human being. The changes to which it is subjected are only accidental, not disturbing the structure of the existing being, which is already complete. Therefore, being able to accept accidental supplements, the essence is so built up that it can be the subject for accidents. Following Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, Gogacz calls such a capability of essence “potency,” a limiting factor.⁴⁶

The essence of a man is thus complex. It consists of the potential subject of intellectual cognition and the potential subject of physical properties. These two subjects are separate, because their distinctiveness is indicated by two “collections of the effects of relations”—it is in this way that Gogacz refers to understanding and physicality,

⁴³ MHR, p. 13.

⁴⁴ MHR, p. 32.

⁴⁵ MHR, p. 33.

⁴⁶ MHR, p. 33.

the spiritual and bodily nature of man.⁴⁷ Form and potency are therefore the internal causes “of” being, while essence and existence are the internal causes of man “as” being.⁴⁸

3.2.1. Soul

But what is form in essence? Gogacz concludes that form is the human soul. He captures the human soul as being equipped with potential rationality, the principle of the self-organization of the human being. The soul, considered in its content, is thus an act that is actualized by the act of existence, which as an act can compose with the act of existence only when it is in potency.⁴⁹ Considered in the genetic aspect, the soul owes its essential composition to the influence of external purposes, which are contingent spiritual substances. In turn, the existence makes this entire being real, it makes the human being constituted, he can exist and be real.⁵⁰

Form included with spiritual potency is also the basis of thinking and decisions,⁵¹ because reason is the potency of form. In this sense, the soul is the subject of the acquiring of knowledge.⁵² The soul is not independent in the “order of the species,” which means that without mediating the body, the soul cannot perform all of its functions, e.g. it cannot learn, because without the mediation of sensory cognitive powers its intellect is unable to know the external objects (an active intellect must transform the cognitive material received by man into an intellectual form, so that the soul, with its intellectual potential, can gain an understanding of the object of being⁵³).

3.2.2. Body

As long as an essence is the collection of content which indicates the form, it also contains matter—the “de-absoluting” element.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ MHR, p. 35.

⁴⁸ MHR, p. 33.

⁴⁹ MHR, p. 16.

⁵⁰ MHR, p. 33.

⁵¹ MHR, p. 14.

⁵² MHR, p. 33.

⁵³ MHR, p. 40.

⁵⁴ OPP, p. 156.

A body is matter, which includes physical accidents. Thus, Gogacz defines a body as a group of physical accidents, integrated into bodily organs, subjected in matter as potency. The body is both a collection of accidents as well as the matter that subjects them as potency.⁵⁵ On this ground Gogacz also presents the metaphysical description of the beginning of a man (as a biological fact): the body is a material potency actualized by the soul, it is a composition of properties and physical accidents that have been brought about by the conjunction of the genetic materials of its parents.⁵⁶ The human body is a co-creation of man and becomes real only when it is actualized by the existing soul as his form, or the principle of self-organization of the entire ontological equipment of the human being.⁵⁷ It is also a collection of physical accidents, including matter, their direct subject.

Gogacz also considers the causes of a body: although he takes the inalienable role of parents into account, he strongly emphasizes that parents are not the child's efficient causes. Parents do not cause a child's existence, only the first being can do that. Also, parents are not a child's formal or material causes, because form and matter are already internal causes of man; form and matter are elements which co-constitute the essence of being (whereas parents do not constitute internal parts of a child's essence). Parents can be only final causes—Gogacz claims—and they influence upon a child's body constitution as a human body. Parents, being human beings, interact with what they are.⁵⁸

The human being is therefore constituted by the soul and the body, which are specifically built-up, internal causes of man.⁵⁹ In other words,

[A] human is ontologically constituted by an act of existence ... and a set of human content, which is called an essence that makes an act of existence derivative, contingent ... Essence before the act of existence is therefore potency. However, as a set of contents that constitute a human being, essence contains some achievements which are what we call a form. Form is an act in the order of content

⁵⁵ MHR, p. 15.

⁵⁶ MHR, p. 15.

⁵⁷ MHR, p. 38.

⁵⁸ MHR, p. 39.

⁵⁹ MHR, p. 34.

which—in order to be not absolute—is permeated with matter as potency.⁶⁰

4. The external causes of a man

In addition to the internal causes of man (the act of existence and essence that includes spiritual and material potency), Gogacz points to external causes. He justifies this by analyzing the mutual relationship of being and existence in a man: essence owes its reality to existence. One can say that essence acquires its reality due to existence. In turn, the essence of being gives content, individuality, brings into existence what it is in a being, and therefore essence is the reason for the identity of a being. Existence, therefore, causes the reality of the being, whereas the essence causes distinctiveness in existence, the exclusive existence of this man. Existence is the cause of the reality of the being, essence is the cause of the individuality or identity of existence.⁶¹

4.1. The cause of the reality of a man's existence

However, one can still ask, what is the cause of existence and essence? Gogacz claims that the mutual dependence of essence and existence leads to the conclusion about the very dependence and non-subsistence of existence. The existence of a human being is not of itself, it is not self-sufficient.⁶² If so, it would depend on its external and efficient cause. As a consequence, it is possible to determine the dependence of existence on the factor that does not contain potency (and, hence, property), that has no causes, because it simply exists. Gogacz describes the cause for existence as follows: this being, being an independent existence and therefore not subject to causes, is therefore the first, because it is not overtaken by any being, and it is the only one because spontaneous existence, not related to any factor that causes it, is an existence that cannot occur in several numerically different repetitions. Subsistency, as total independence from anything, is the position of only one being.⁶³ In addition, the existence

⁶⁰ OPP, p. 156.

⁶¹ MHR, p. 34.

⁶² MHR, p. 35.

⁶³ MHR, p. 35.

of a man is the cause of the reality of a different essence as an effect, but belonging to the internal equipment of being would also be the reason for the reality of himself. To avoid this identification and the resulting paradox (that part is the cause of the whole, of which it is a part), Gogacz suggests that we accept the external cause of intrinsic existence.⁶⁴

The rationale for this is that self-existence, being, which is the reason for the reality of beings who are caused by it. It is not the cause of the factors that causes the identification of a being.⁶⁵ What is the reason for the elements that make up the essence?

4.2. The final cause of the identity of a man

Reflecting on the issue of human causes, Gogacz points to the final causes of the essence of the soul and the essence of the body. Since the non-subsistent existence of a dependent man is causally related to external self-existence, the essence also has its source in external causes. However, subsistent existence cannot become the cause of essence, because one cannot be the cause of what one is not. Existence cannot differentiate an essence and make it a form in which rationality and materiality appear.⁶⁶ Existence causes only acts of existence.⁶⁷ Gogacz further explains that neither the body nor the parents can be the causes of the essential composition of the soul, because the independence of the soul from the body requires a proportional dependence on the existence of an exclusively spiritual being.⁶⁸ The external causes of the human soul are, therefore, beings that have both non-subsistent existence and essence.⁶⁹ It must therefore be assumed that only angels, as purely spiritual creatures and beings composed of existence and essence, can determine the essential constitution of the human soul.⁷⁰ The angels—final causes—indicate the identity of essence.⁷¹ Emphasizing the importance of the role of

⁶⁴ MHR, p. 14.

⁶⁵ MHR, p. 24.

⁶⁶ MHR, p. 36.

⁶⁷ MHR, p. 24.

⁶⁸ MHR, p. 16.

⁶⁹ MHR, p. 25.

⁷⁰ MHR, p. 16.

⁷¹ MHR, p. 25.

angels in human metaphysics, Gogacz adds that without angels, as real existing contingent beings fulfilling the role of final causes for the essence of the human soul, it is not possible to demonstrate the constitution of a given being in the human persona.⁷²

5. Properties and relations of a man

Man, like every individual being, is endowed with transcendental and categorial properties. Transcendental relations combine principles (*principia*) of being, i.e. its existence and essence, and form and matter which are included in the essence. These principles are co-foundations of being.

In turn, categorial relations are divided into real and logical ones. The metaphysician examines only real relations that are always external to the being. These relations can be existential or essential. Existential relations are based on the transcendental properties that the being possesses because of its existence.⁷³ These are unity, separateness, reality, truth, goodness, and beauty. The being possesses categorial relations because of its essence, and in the case of the human being these are: intellect, will, experience and action, which create the spiritual potency,⁷⁴ as well as the extension, visibility, quality, and time-dependent development (growing up) that create material potency.⁷⁵ The whole person also makes accidental relationships with other persons. He also establishes relationships with things. These relations make up the concept of “work.”

Mieczysław Gogacz indicates here two kinds of relations. When a man uses his own existence and transcendental properties to contact another person (the other person’s existence and transcendental properties), he causes personal relations.⁷⁶ And when he uses his own essential spiritual potency to contact the world, he creates relations of knowledge and decision, which are connected with accidents generated by material potency.⁷⁷

⁷² MHR, p. 27.

⁷³ MHR, p. 58.

⁷⁴ MHR, p. 16.

⁷⁵ MHR, p. 17.

⁷⁶ Gogacz mentions three basic personal relations: love, faith and hope. MHR, p. 19.

⁷⁷ MHR, p. 17.

In the following parts of the text I will discuss the specificity of human relations: action and learning. And then I will briefly present the issues of personal relationships, metanoia and humanism—facts directly resulting from man’s personal relationships.

5.1. Relations of action

Although the category of “action” belongs to the scope of ethics, Gogacz emphasizes its dependence on metaphysical solutions and thus proposes considering them from a metaphysical point of view, i.e. from the point of view of the metaphysics of human being. Describing ethics, he explains that while moral values are understood as the duration of the effects of basic personal relationships, ethics becomes a separate discipline. Its subject is the persistence of basic personal relationships. The task of such ethics is therefore to formulate norms of action facilitating the persistence of personal relationships of faith, hope and love, which all define and constitute human morality. It is a discipline about the defense of basic relationships that connect people.⁷⁸

So, what are the standards? A lot of light on this problem is cast by the relevant fragments of *Elementarz metafizyki*. Gogacz here presents in detail his concept of ethical norms in connection with the corresponding principles of action: conscience, contemplation, and wisdom. The considerations start with the statement that the will is the subject of the relationship of action. Information about being (given by the intellect) activates the will to act. This information reveals the will inclines to good, and it makes it a reason to go and strive for that.⁷⁹ This is a tendency that requires informing the will about good and, at the same time, is the first principle of action, which is called a conscience.⁸⁰

According to the nature of the will, the conscience tends to seek in intellect a supporting principle. Discovering such a principle requires reflection that takes place in the course of contemplation. The conscience must use contemplation in accordance with the fact that the will is guided by information from the intellect.⁸¹ Contemplation

⁷⁸ MHR, p. 81.

⁷⁹ IM, p. 92.

⁸⁰ IM, p. 93.

⁸¹ IM, p. 93.

is the action of the potential intellect in the level of speech of the heart. It is a delight that permeates understanding, and is also the second principle of action.

Man must choose those beings that are good for him. For such a choice, taking only the conscience and contemplation into account is not enough, because conscience and contemplation work at the level of unclear cognition. There has to be a principle of clear cognition, a clear reflection which helps to distinguish good and evil. So, wisdom is the third principle of contemplation.⁸² Gogacz defines wisdom as the disposition of the intellect, which allows it to relate to being from the position of truth and good and recognize the consequences of being connected to a given entity.⁸³

The key to the relationship of action is “to want,” “to decide.” Gogacz defines “to want” or “to decide” as a relationship between being and the will of man as his essential property. The result of a decision is the efficiency of the choice. In order to choose the personal values, the will must improve itself in the choice of activities that support existence, i.e. truth, goodness, love, faith, and hope.⁸⁴

5.2. Relations of knowledge

Considerations concerning the relationship of cognition should begin with the question of the source of reality (understood by Gogacz as the availability of the essence, essence’s openness to human cognition). Gogacz mentions here two possibilities: idealistic and realistic. The former relies on recognition of the intellect as the reason or source of cognizing real beings. The latter relies on recognition that the cognized being is the reason of cognition.⁸⁵ So, realism expresses itself in the thesis that beings act upon intellect and initiate cognition—they force intellect to receive and collect information.⁸⁶ In consequence, the relation of cognition is to cause an understanding of being as something distinct and real as long as a being acts upon human sensitive powers. It happens in the speech of the heart,

⁸² IM, p. 94.

⁸³ IM, p. 94.

⁸⁴ MHR, p. 103.

⁸⁵ MHR, p. 124.

⁸⁶ MHR, p. 125.

which is unclear cognition, because it includes primal reactions (which are real relations as well).⁸⁷

Relations of cognition are the source of knowledge which a man acquires in the order of clear knowledge.⁸⁸ In clear knowledge, there is no longer experience, but the creation of compositions of understandings and signs. Knowledge, the result of which is cognition, consists of providing information to the active intellect by being. The active intellect chooses what the stimulus of understanding is.

This stimulus is a “mental figure” that can be captured by the intellect. The active intellect improves it in the proper creation of concepts, and the sense of joining acquires a habit of being subjected to the active intellect. In this way knowledge arises as the sum of products, stored in the sensitive memory. The inner speech is characterized by the creation of knowledge, the composing of names, the formation of sentences and their combination with reasoning, which are ways of finding the principles that are the causes of what we know directly.⁸⁹

5.3. Personal relations

The first basic relationship between people is the reference which has resulted from the meeting. People who meet each other do exist, and the existence of a man is nothing ahead. Since existence is the first and most basic relation, the relationship between people is the first relationship because of its existence. Kindness is such a relation, says Gogacz. If the first relationship was not kindness or mutual acceptance, there would be no meeting, there would be no reference due to the fact of existence. Such kindness is a disinterested reference and it becomes love. Love is therefore the first personal relationship.

The second basic relationship between people is the reference created as a result of the interaction of people. People bring in such relations from what they are, with all their honesty and truth. This relationship consists of mutual adaptation, a “getting together,” caused by the inherent property of truth. This reciprocal adaptation is a relationship of faith in a human being.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ IM, p. 84.

⁸⁸ IM, p. 85.

⁸⁹ IM, p. 87.

⁹⁰ MHR, p. 84.

The third basic personal relation is a reference arising from the expectation of what is real, from the need to take over the interacting person as a good for me. Meeting in the hope of gaining this good is a relationship of trust.⁹¹

5.4. Metanoia and humanism

Gogacz connects two further facts with personal relations: metanoia and humanism. These are the key concepts for Gogacz's philosophical anthropology, and are the culmination of his thoroughly humanistic project of human metaphysics. Metanoia, which is a change of thinking, consists of the readiness to accept what is right, true, noble and good. It is therefore a process of educating the intellect and educating the will. It is directed to the truth and to the good, and humanism is its effect. From such a metaphysical perspective of a man, based on the identification of their causes, practical postulates arise because humanism is already an action. Humanism is loyalty to truth and goodness, and thus it is a struggle for people to maintain relationships of faith, hope and love. Therefore, it is a defense of the existence and life of people.⁹² Therefore, Gogacz calls humanism such an attitude that, in the interests of the human environment, cares for the preservation of truth and good, and also cares for the faithfulness of love, faith and hope. For humanism, man is the purpose of action, man is not a means for other purposes. It is important for a man to live every day in that which is real, good, beautiful and right. So he must fill his home, his workplace and local communities with interesting thoughts, valuable themes, and art like sculpture or music. He must bring an order into his world of living. Then—Gogacz continues—kindness, goodness, integrity, friendship, kindness, and peace will increase.⁹³

⁹¹ MHR, p. 85.

⁹² MHR, p. 21.

⁹³ SC, p. 80.

ETHICS OF PROTECTING PERSONS

(Dawid Lipski)

1. The object of ethics: the definition of ethics

The direct object of ethics is the selection of specific actions which should protect persons. Ethics is interested in identifying the principles of actions of persons only, in contrast to anthropology and metaphysics that deal with determining the principles of a being. The principles of actions are defined by Mieczysław Gogacz as the choice of actions that protect the good of persons and their personal relations. This is how a particular object of research is distinguished, to which ethics owes its independence in relation to other sciences and autonomy in a systematized order of theorems.⁹⁴ Ethics is based mainly on the theses of philosophical anthropology. Practicing philosophical anthropology must—as Gogacz points out—necessarily lead to the issues of ethics as a structure of a person’s actions.⁹⁵ However, it should be emphasized that ethics is not an extension of anthropology or metaphysics. The object of ethics—as a principle of a methodologically consistent set of theorems—is limited to the aspect of those actions that truthfully protect the good of persons. Thus, there must be a distinction between the direct object of ethics (actions that protect the good of persons) and the basics of ethics (the philosophy of reality and of a human). Ethics, therefore, does not examine the structures of actions—that is the competence of philosophical anthropology—but only whether they serve to protect the good of persons, in accordance with truth. Truth in ethics is both the compliance of its claims with cognized beings, as well as differentiating between sentences about actions of humans and sentences about human structure and the entire reality.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ IM, p. 92; see also: IE, p. 24.

⁹⁵ IE, pp. 10, 17, 35–36.

⁹⁶ IE, pp. 35–36. “We can illustrate the case by this example: when principles such as wisdom and contemplation, as external causes, are referred to beings that constitute persons, we discover the dignity of a person, and thus its status among other substances, called the axiological property of a person. When these same external principles are referred to action, we are able to detect and select actions to protect persons and their dignity” (IM, p. 92).

The correct identification of a human is fundamental to build ethics that concerns a human being, because it is the direct basis of realistically formulated ethics. A person, whose act of existence makes the essence real, is available for cognition by the transcendentals. Through truth, as a transcendental property, a being reveals to the intellect the principles of existence and the essence that constitute its being. Owing to the truth of the existence of the cognized being, and as a result of the discovery of its internal principles, the intellect with the acquired knowledge of a real being wants to refer to it with respect. Communing with real beings, whose reality is identified by intellect, improves the intellect in taking right actions.⁹⁷

As Gogacz emphasizes, a proper identification of reality, that is, developing a set of sentences recording the intellectual perception of identified structural elements, protects against mistakes in ethics. The identification of God with the world, metaphysics with philosophical anthropology or anthropology with ethics leads to the error of compilation (e.g. New Age).⁹⁸ Prioritizing a thought, a process, or a whole over individual beings in the order of being, as well as blurring the difference between the subject and its feature, leads to the error of idealism. Equating ethics with law (Kant) reduces ethics to a legal regulation of duties that bind people.⁹⁹ On the other hand, personalist ethics (Mounier) equates ethics with the theory of a human as a person.¹⁰⁰

2. Ethics and personal relations

Mieczysław Gogacz acknowledges that existence is the first condition of all our perspectives and the condition of love.¹⁰¹ Therefore, personal relations—supported by the existence of beings—are a field in which actions protecting persons are also implemented. Personal

⁹⁷ IE, p. 42.

⁹⁸ IE, p. 40.

⁹⁹ IE, p. 39. “No one but Kant persuaded those who put intellect as the first principium of being that that relevant agreement called duty is the main problem or the nature of ethics. Yes, we do need duties and laws. They organize a daily life. However, they do not have the power to create real personal relations. Protecting such relations and the principles of the choice of protecting actions determine ethics” (IM, p. 97). “Ethics in this approach is only a legal regulation of references between people” (EPP, p. 189).

¹⁰⁰ IE, p. 40.

¹⁰¹ OPP, p. 34.

relations are the only ones that cause the co-presence of persons, not just their meeting.¹⁰² The relation of actions moves us from the level of a meeting to the level of attendance, and this fact indicates the object of ethics, which is the protection of personal relations and persons themselves.¹⁰³

The reality of persons entails the reality of relations between them. Kindness and trust are the basic bonds that connect persons. Gogacz calls these ties love, faith and hope. They rely on our choice of kindness and trust as well as on continuing our relations through love and faith.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, ethics should point to these norms of choices of actions that protect the existence of persons, manifestations of existence and personal relations caused by these manifestations, as well as life, health as a balance of actions, and also a culture of imaginations and feelings. Therefore, mainly persons and personal relations are protected.¹⁰⁵ It is therefore necessary to develop personal relations with all persons (humanism), including God (religion). Both of these types of personal relations ensure one obtains a full upbringing, meant as a bond of kindness with all persons.¹⁰⁶

3. Good

For Gogacz, good defined in metaphysical terms is such a manifestation of a being's existence which encourages a human to trust this being and to refer to it kindly. This encouragement precedes the act of our choice in the order of being.¹⁰⁷ The property of good is thus "a being manifesting itself as the object of choice."¹⁰⁸ Good, as a property of a being, causes beings to open themselves one to another and to consent to being together with other persons.¹⁰⁹ Good in the physical sense is the possession of all parts of a human (being's) structure that

¹⁰² IM, p. 133.

¹⁰³ IM, p. 92.

¹⁰⁴ PSP, p. 41.

¹⁰⁵ IE, p. 24.

¹⁰⁶ IE, p. 46.

¹⁰⁷ IM, p. 39. "The reason of the good of each and every being is the being itself causing and revealing its property. No other being may constitute this reason, not even God, because God is the cause of existence" (EPP, p. 63).

¹⁰⁸ EPP, p. 63.

¹⁰⁹ IM, pp. 47–48.

are naturally proper for this human. We speak of moral good when we assess this good in view of other beings. Therefore, good is an action that protects beings in accordance with rational human nature.¹¹⁰ Ethics inclines us to refer to another being in a way that protects it.¹¹¹

Most important in ethics—according to Mieczysław Gogacz—is the recognition of the good of persons which protects their existence, manifestations of this existence, personal relations, and also causes of actions that protect the “culture of imaginations and feelings.” The good of persons is: existence, life, improving the intellect with knowledge and wisdom, improving the will with freedom and righteousness as constant faithfulness to good, the health of the soul and the body, being in the community of persons, culture, humanism and religion.¹¹² These varieties of the good of persons are protected by improved actions of the intellect and the will. Therefore, for the sake of the protection of truth and good, a human will not step into a relation with what is wrong or false, even when he is enticed by “the attractiveness of behaviours that omit truth and good.” Human freedom stems from the fact that the human is faithful to truth and good, that is, to the manifestations of real beings.¹¹³

The classic division of the types of good is made in the view of the moral effects of good. The noble good is the good “worthy of itself,”¹¹⁴ “without being involved in additional features and motives.”¹¹⁵ The utility good is an appropriate means to achieve the goal, and the pleasant good is the one that brings pleasure and joy.¹¹⁶

The use of an axiological approach to good and evil only leads to many mistakes and misunderstandings, Gogacz warns. Identifying beings with the goals that were set for them leads to a belief that achieving a goal is something good and not achieving it is something evil. This leads to an error, because the value of evil is then attributed to a being or to a human who cannot accomplish an assumed goal.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰ IM, p. 40; PSP, p. 165.

¹¹¹ IM, p. 49.

¹¹² IE, pp. 12–13.

¹¹³ IE, pp. 27–28.

¹¹⁴ IM, p. 40.

¹¹⁵ PSP, p. 165.

¹¹⁶ IM, p. 40.

¹¹⁷ EPP, p. 66.

4. Evil

The category of evil—according to Mieczysław Gogacz—can be summarized in three ways. Firstly, in a metaphysical sense, evil is a deficiency of good. This evil does not really exist, because a deficiency is just a deficiency, not a real being or its property. Deficiency means the negation of being and its negation excludes any effect.¹¹⁸ Evil in this approach is “literally the deficiency of good in the order of existence, in the nature of beings and in the field of morality.”¹¹⁹

Secondly, we can recognize evil in a physical sense. Here, evil “marks its effects.” Evil in this approach is the result of a deficiency of a physical part or the result of an incorrect and false action.¹²⁰ Evil in this sense is a deficiency of inevitable features of a being, which comply with the being’s nature.¹²¹ However, the term “evil” should be distinguished from the term “deficiency.” Evil “always concerns real consequences,” whereas deficiency is “the absence of something real and has a position of designation,” obtained by comparing beings.¹²²

Thirdly, we can point to moral evil. We speak of moral evil when a human accomplishes his goal with actions contrary to the “values designated by his rational nature and ultimately by the existence of the First Being that gives him existence.”¹²³ In this approach, evil is a deficiency of the accordance of beings with their natures and the implementation of destructive actions. Destruction can refer to beings and their properties or relations, especially relations that protect existence and its manifestations.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ “If evil existed positively as a property of a being, then it would constitute the reason or the right to reject this being. A being with the property of good would be chosen and rejected at the same time because of having the property of evil. It would not be possible to establish any relation with it, because every relation would have to be rejected at the same time” (EPP, p. 62).

¹¹⁹ PSP, pp. 165–166.

¹²⁰ See for example IE, p. 103.

¹²¹ IM, p. 40.

¹²² PSP, p. 166.

¹²³ EPP, p. 64. Moral evil is “a goal devised by us which we order beings to perform. Therefore evil is the imposition of a task on a being. This task results from the exclusion of positive purposes that protect the existence of a being” (IM, p. 40).

¹²⁴ IM, p. 40.

Some form of existence is often attributed to evil. Such thinking comes from the conviction that there is an eternal struggle between good and evil. In this confrontation, evil is often more powerful than good. For Gogacz, this results from the fact that we consider good and evil in terms of relational metaphysics and from the axiological perspective.¹²⁵ The domination of evaluations and comparisons in thinking and decisions places us in the domain of axiology. Adding the component of feelings and imaginations to these evaluations and comparisons makes evil a real structure. Then, evil becomes a real dream, the opposite of what is actually real, whereas evil is only an axiological category. Anything that acts must be a manifestation of existence or be rooted in this existence. However, we often function in “damaged groups of beings’ characteristics.” By experiencing and evaluating these damages and disturbances, we can consider them as independent beings and thus recognize evil as something real.¹²⁶

Pain and suffering are the most common results of deficiency that affect us. Pain in this approach is “a reaction to the disruption of the harmony of physical actions and the inconvenience resulting from it,” while suffering is “realizing the limitations, and striving to overcome them.”¹²⁷ Unification with evil, which causes a feeling of pain, is simply a deprivation of some good.¹²⁸ Suffering in the physical sphere is the result of a deficiency, and in the psychic and spiritual sphere it is the awareness and the experience of this result.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ EPP, p. 64. “It is only Neoplatonism and the tradition of various dialectics that accustom us to binding good with evil and to seeing the world as a game of these two forces. The metaphysics of real beings liberates us from the anxiety about the prevalence of evil in the world, allows us to understand and determine the boundaries of evil, and shows us a fairly small area of evil’s occurrence and its threat to us” (EPP, p. 70).

¹²⁶ PSP, p. 168. “A human operates with goals in such a way and sets such relations that—as a result thereof—some beings or constructions cause negligence, negation, threats, suffering, destruction of other beings and products” (EPP, p. 72). “The method of comparing fullness with deficiency, a whole with a part, perfection with imperfection is neither suitable for determining what beings are, nor for solving the problem of evil. Beings are no better or worse, evil or good” (EPP, p. 74).

¹²⁷ PSP, p. 167.

¹²⁸ IE, p. 72. “Feelings also repel us from what they consider to be evil. And again, the evil that our feelings are opposed to is not a moral evil, because it can happen that feelings lead us to avoid something that results from a moral obligation” (IE, p. 71).

¹²⁹ EPP, p. 67.

On the other hand, “the states of human relations as the perfection and imperfection of persons” constitute—according to Gogacz—the theological approach to good and evil. In this sense, evil is just a sin.¹³⁰

5. Subdisciplines of ethics

Mieczysław Gogacz distinguishes four main subdisciplines of ethics. Their order results both from their importance to ethics, and from the ontic order. The first is the theory of principles of action, the second is the theory of values, the third is metanoia, and the last is humanism and culture.

5.1. Principles of action

There are three principles of choosing actions that protect the good of persons. They become the basic principles of the moral actions of a human. They are intellectual habits that regulate human behaviour. Gogacz writes that they are the basis of every rational and responsible action towards another human being, and thus should be considered as moral determinants and norms. They are: the conscience, contemplation and—the most important of them—wisdom.¹³¹

5.1.1. Conscience

The conscience is the constant ability (*habitus*) of the will to move to being as good for us. It is the ability to indicate good to the will. The conscience understood in this way affects the power of the will, that is, the decision-making power in a person. If the will is based on the data of sensitive powers, feelings or emotions, then it can direct itself to good that not only does not protect the good of persons but even destroys it. Moreover, omitting the data of the intellect in actions of the will, and thus in actions of the conscience, is—according to Gogacz—“a betrayal” of human ethical behaviour.¹³² The will should be informed about a particular being by the intellect, precisely speaking, by the intellect improved by the other two principles of action in the domain of the proper identification of beings. The will has to be stimulated by the word of the heart (*verbum cordis*) born in the potential

¹³⁰ PSP, p. 173.

¹³¹ PSP, p. 27.

¹³² IM, pp. 92–93.

intellect informing about truth.¹³³ Therefore, the conscience is the simultaneous (and unanimous) action of the will and the intellect. It is the judgement of the intellect to which the will reacts with its action.

The conscience—as Gogacz points out—can be mistaken when the will considers something that is good in itself (e.g. poisonous plants) to be good for us. The error can also occur when the conscience leans towards to the concept of good and not to the real good (the error of the Platonic tradition). The will as such will always guide itself towards good, and the conscience assumes every good to be good for us.¹³⁴ Therefore, the will must recourse to contemplation and wisdom. It is important that the judgement of the intellect that motivates the will stems from the level of wisdom. Hence, the conscience constitutes the basic moral norm, not the ultimate norm determining which actions are moral and which are not.¹³⁵

Both the proper motivation of the will by the intellect and the up-bringing of the will are inevitable for the conscience to operate correctly. The righteousness of the conscience depends on the connection of the will with the good presented by the intellect.¹³⁶ Mieczysław Gogacz emphasizes that the conscience may be shaped and educated, which—to a large extent—is a task of pedagogy.

5.1.2. Contemplation

Another principle of the choice of actions that protect persons—and thus another moral norm—is contemplation recognized as admiration and pervading understanding and, simultaneously, as understanding and admiration pervading this understanding. The potential intellect at the level of indistinct cognition (the speech of the heart)—thanks to the word of the heart—experiences the effects of meeting a real being. According to Gogacz, we realize this meeting in internal and external speech. Therefore, contemplation does not

¹³³ IM, p. 136. The conscience is recognized as “the decision of the will released by wisdom” (IE, p. 24).

¹³⁴ See for example IM, pp. 94–95.

¹³⁵ IE, p. 15. “It cannot be argued that, according to our conscience, we consider something to be true. Conscience is not the basis for real answers. It is only the basis of certainty, which may not be true. Confidence is more a decision than recognition” (IE, p. 16).

¹³⁶ IE, p. 55.

involve creating concepts. As a result of this cognition, the will is stimulated to guide us to the principle of this being. We feel joy when the chosen being appears to be good. We love this co-presence with the being we have met. The fact that the will directed us to the act of existence and essential principles identified as good for us causes delight and admiration. Therefore, contemplation is the action of the will and the intellect.¹³⁷ We enjoy learning truth and good.¹³⁸ Since the intellect, in cooperation with the will, reacts to being and perceives it as truth and good, contemplation is similar to wisdom and, in some ways, unleashes it. At the same time, contemplation supports the conscience in its choices.¹³⁹

For Gogacz, contemplation is therefore an interruption of abstraction and the stopping of the process of cognition, so that the intellect can focus and appreciate the existence of the relations that connect persons. The intellect recognizes transcendental properties of truth and good in persons based on the principle of cause and effect. Personal relations are built on those properties which are manifestations of the act of existence. When the intellect acknowledges those properties' meaning, then it inclines the will to protect these relations.¹⁴⁰ Contemplation is the reflection that assures us that it is worth maintaining personal relations,¹⁴¹ so it is "a specific testimony of the potential intellect and the will that our relation with being as truth and good continues."¹⁴² This is the cognition which sees a value of a human in the course of these relations.¹⁴³ We speak of contemplation when the intellect confirms and the will accepts that it is worth striving to situate us in kindness and trust, which is called "the hope of remaining in love and faith."¹⁴⁴ However, contemplation itself is not yet sufficient to always

¹³⁷ IM, pp. 88, 93.

¹³⁸ IM, p. 77. "Contemplation as knowledge permeated with love" (PSP, p. 82).

¹³⁹ IM, pp. 88, 93. "Contemplation, as the ability to focus, to properly recognize the nature of matters and things, is useful both in religious and professional life. It is connected with the abilities of attention, prediction, prudent decisions and others. They serve a mental effort when choosing God. They also support responsible work" (EPP, p. 132).

¹⁴⁰ IE, p. 15; EPP, p. 119.

¹⁴¹ See for example IE, p. 96.

¹⁴² EPP, p. 174.

¹⁴³ IE, p. 44; PSP, p. 171.

¹⁴⁴ IE, p. 55.

avoid confusing the truth and the good of beings (what beings themselves are) with the truth and the good of beings that are valuable to us.¹⁴⁵

5.1.3. Wisdom

The conscience and contemplation are the principles of choosing actions from the level of indistinct cognition. Therefore—according to Gogacz—they do not indicate clearly and explicitly how to distinguish good from evil, or good itself (every being) from good for us (good that does not destroy). Although the conscience may be righteous and certain, and contemplation may introduce the right thought, these are insufficient moral norms. Contemplation and the conscience operate on the level of knowledge. At this level, the intellect contemplates both substances that are poisonous and ones that are healthy for humans.¹⁴⁶ The will, using information from the area of knowledge, can choose any beings whose ontical manifestation is good. Contemplation recognizes the truth about good without distinguishing whether this good is right for a human being. Moreover, contemplation, which is a form of indistinct cognition, is accompanied by admiration and delight that often disturb clear view and understanding.¹⁴⁷

Wisdom is the inevitable basis for the choice of moral actions. Out of the three principles (ethical criteria) listed, Gogacz indicates wisdom as the decisive norm, because it is the most perfect way of cognition.¹⁴⁸ From the level of clear cognition, wisdom properly recognizes beings in their effects and causes. However, the being recognized as good is represented to the will only when it serves the good of a person and protects it.¹⁴⁹ To properly recognize the immediate cause of a given effect, wisdom points to the linking of causes and effects that are relevant to human behaviour.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, wisdom is the highest possible improvement of the intellect.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵ EPP, p. 175.

¹⁴⁶ As Gogacz points out: “Maybe the fact that we reach out without fear both for drugs and vitamins is caused by the fact that the will uses only wisdom of the intellect. We recognize both these substances as good in themselves” (IM, p. 94).

¹⁴⁷ IM, pp. 93–94.

¹⁴⁸ IE, p. 14.

¹⁴⁹ EPP, p. 176.

¹⁵⁰ IM, p. 94.

¹⁵¹ IE, p. 55.

Wisdom is the ability to recognize the truth about persons and to indicate the good of persons in accordance with this truth. So, it is such an ability to recognize the truth that results in good in a human being.¹⁵² Wisdom is the habit (virtue) of the intellect and the principle of noble human action.¹⁵³ It is the constant fidelity to truth and good.¹⁵⁴

The intellect is formed by continuously identifying causes and effects. Only such action is proper to the intellect and—in the long term—forms wisdom. Imaginations, feelings, or descriptions of physical or psychological characteristics as actions of sensitive powers should not motivate the intellect to moral actions. Furthermore—as Gogacz emphasizes—wisdom is the habit of the potential intellect.¹⁵⁵ The agent of intellect, which creates concepts in the process of abstraction, recognizes the truth about good only in the epistemological way (cognitive truth). Then it compares the concepts of truth and good with reality, and does not identify them as manifestations of real existence. We can, by comparison, point to noble, useful or pleasant good, but we do not say what it is.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, a human can only identify wisdom and good in a given culture and counteract falsehood and evil only through wisdom.

For Gogacz, wisdom is not the accumulation of knowledge and does not operate on the principle of the linear arrangement of causes. Wisdom is not directly connected with huge experience in cognition, because experience can be unreliable when a human experiences falsehood and evil.¹⁵⁷ Often wisdom must even distance itself from knowledge.

Although knowledge and wisdom are intellectual habits identified in philosophical anthropology, their functioning is basically considered in the view of ethics. Both these skills are caused by the effects of the influence of the essence and existence of real beings on

¹⁵² PSP, p. 18; EPP, p. 175; IM, p. 94; IE, p. 24.

¹⁵³ IE, p. 55.

¹⁵⁴ Such wisdom never fails (IE, p. 14).

¹⁵⁵ See for example PSP, p. 34.

¹⁵⁶ IE, p. 14.

¹⁵⁷ IE, p. 14. “Even a child can learn the connection between truth and good and thus he can learn wisdom, and at the same time it is possible that an adult will not acquire it. Therefore, wisdom is not always the same as experience” (IE, p. 14).

the potential intellect. Knowledge is a set of sentences about everything that constitutes a given being, identifying both its internal and external causes. On the other hand, wisdom is the ability to properly recognize good and evil effects that are caused by a given cause.¹⁵⁸ Wisdom is able to grasp if the recognized cause is the truth that will result in good for a human. If wisdom recognizes that choosing a given being will be harmful, it motivates the will to reject it. Knowledge alone does not provide this quality of information and is not enough to motivate our relations with a given being.¹⁵⁹ Wisdom—as Gogacz emphasizes—is “anticipating” the influence of the effect through proper identification of the cause (the transition from the cause to the effect). Knowledge, in accordance with the metaphysical method, proceeds from the effects to the identification of causes. Furthermore, knowledge is more about the essence of a being, and wisdom is more about its existence. As a result, wisdom avoids damage that affects human existence and at the same time seeks means to protect and develop it. Knowledge situates us in truth, while wisdom situates us in harmony between truth and good.¹⁶⁰ Wisdom is the result of a constant adherence in actions to the faithfulness of existence, truth and good. Wisdom is therefore a harmonious and common action of the intellect and the will that protects persons.¹⁶¹

5.2. Values

In terms of the theory of values, Mieczysław Gogacz stands in opposition to popular axiological concepts. He recognizes that values are not beings or attributes of beings. Values are also not relations

¹⁵⁸ “The path to wisdom is shaped by the analysis of *verbum cordis*, by the way in which the potential intellect perceives the principles of a being as the truth about being and by moving to this truth as to good for us” (EPP, p. 118).

¹⁵⁹ Gogacz gives the example of poisonous mushrooms to illustrate the relationship between knowledge and wisdom: “the intellect truthfully shows us the structure of poisonous mushrooms. It shows their internal and external causes. It comes from the effects to the cause. To protect us against poisoning, the intellect should use the reverse order of identification. We should find out if the beings have good effects for humans. In this case, it is necessary to read the cause in the effects. This sequence of identification (from cause to effect) is wisdom” (IE, pp. 30–31). See also: EPP, p. 108.

¹⁶⁰ IE, pp. 30–31.

¹⁶¹ EPP, pp. 169.

of persons to beings or to other persons. The value—according to him—consists of a lasting relation that protects the good of the persons. The intellect determines the length of this duration, because the value is actually a mental recognition of the significance of the duration of such a relation. Hence, it would be a mistake to attribute the status of something real to these value approaches (a metaphysical error).¹⁶²

The ethics of Max Scheler, derived from the Platonic tradition, attributes the objectivity of the existence to values. Such an objectivized value directly influences the will of a human and influences moral choices through feelings.¹⁶³ Likewise, Plato spread the belief that values are real aims that everyone should aspire to. In such an approach, ethics comes down to directing humans to values.¹⁶⁴ It is forgotten, according to Gogacz, that a value is the result of the process of evaluation by comparison, it is not recognizing or identifying what something is.¹⁶⁵

A value is a kind of cognition that results only in a motive to protect relations, not to constitute them by the intellect. A value is, therefore, the recognition of some good for a human. This good consists of maintaining a relation with a being that results in good inside us. The intellect and the will then strive for the maintenance and development of these relations.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, values are not the goals that determine ethics. Goals, as the effects of thinking, are the assignments of tasks. Tasks formulated in this way are the basis for law and pedagogy, but not for ethics. This is because ethics is not a goal, a task or a model to be realized for a human, it is solely proper communing with real beings.¹⁶⁷ The concept of values formulated in this way, on the one hand,

¹⁶² See for example IE, p. 44; IM, pp. 95–96. For a brief historical outline of this metaphysical error, see IM, pp. 56–57.

¹⁶³ IE, p. 32, 44, PSP, p. 45. “Nowadays, the popularization of Scheler’s ethics as the ethics of the values is an exclusion from the ethics of the intellect and establishing ethics solely in the domain of decisions of the will, stimulated by the values that consist of the identity of the concept and reality. It is the concept of the goal recognized as the real cause of the effects” (IE, p. 16).

¹⁶⁴ IE, p. 44.

¹⁶⁵ IE, p. 61.

¹⁶⁶ IM, p. 95.

¹⁶⁷ IE, p. 32. Gogacz openly rejects putting a human only “in the face of values”: see Section IV (Values as the opposite of the principle of wisdom) in *Osoba*

directly gives tasks the weakest ontic status, and on the other, it directly links them with real beings. It is based on real relations between persons. Thus, values are not pure effects of the intellect; they are not ideals, formulas, nor a set of goals to be achieved. Values consist of the lasting relation that makes presence and fosters the creation of the “home of persons.”¹⁶⁸

Gogacz clearly indicates that when there are personal relations between people, then we can talk about humanism. Lasting humanism is a precise example of a value, similarly to religion, of a lasting relation between a human person and God. Also, Christian values are not an indication of a self-standing set of norms, but refer to real beings such as God, Jesus Christ, and the Church as a community of persons.¹⁶⁹

5.3. Metanoia

Another branch of ethics, following the theory of principles and the theory of values, is metanoia. According to Mieczysław Gogacz, it is the opening of a human to thinking about real beings. This thinking leads to protecting personal relations and to protecting the persons themselves. It is trusting other persons, recognizing them as good for us and giving in to their influence. This opening is a derivative of transcendental truth and the relation of faith, followed by the good that binds us with persons through the relation of hope. Thus, metanoia is a transformation of thinking and acting, in which we distance ourselves from products and direct ourselves to real interacting persons. Often such a change is associated with the difficulty of distancing oneself from a culture which can distance persons from such relations, and even lead to alienation.¹⁷⁰ However, this is not a one-time purification of thinking. It is a constant effort to improve thinking in order to faithfully follow the truth about persons.

zadaniem pedagogiki (PSP, pp. 38–41). Gogacz postulates the primacy of the proper theory of the human in pedagogy over axiology as the education of values: see Section V (Not axiology, but the philosophy of the human) in *Osoba z zadaniem pedagogiki* (PSP, pp. 42–51).

¹⁶⁸ IM, p. 96.

¹⁶⁹ IE, p. 32.

¹⁷⁰ IM, p. 96. “The main moments of this change are a turn from things to persons, and thus the transition from connections with things to relations with persons” (PSP, p. 200).

A human still needs to adapt what he knows and does to the measure of truth.¹⁷¹

Metanoia, understood as a transformation of thinking and actions, is—according to Gogacz—a combination of “moving to truth” and “moving to good.” As a result of education and upbringing, it is a transformation of the intellect as well as the will. It often involves ending relations with objects that do not serve wisdom.¹⁷²

5.4. Humanism and culture

Humanism and culture are the direct effects of metanoia. The ultimate effect of metanoia is the transition from the culture of products and connections according to speech (logical relations) to a humanistic culture focused on existence, truth and the good of persons.¹⁷³ For Gogacz, humanism is an effort to maintain personal relations. The result of this attitude is works of culture that will protect the good of persons and secure personal relations. Such a culture is a humanistic culture. It evokes in a human the ability to connect and form existential relations with other beings.¹⁷⁴ The principle of humanism is therefore the protection of persons and all beings.¹⁷⁵ Such humanism “protects realistic culture” against giving the appearances of real existence to products as well as against the domination of axiology.¹⁷⁶

Humanism is therefore the inner life of a human expressed in the external works he creates to preserve the results of metanoia.¹⁷⁷ As Gogacz points out, we can also look at culture from two perspectives: internal (group of habits acquired) and external (group of products). The first is the subjective aspect expressed in the skills of the intellect and the will. The second is the objective aspect, which consists of consolidating these skills in works of culture. Gogacz observes that the relation between a human and culture is specifically bilateral:

¹⁷¹ PSP, p 111.

¹⁷² PM, p. 134.

¹⁷³ PSP, p. 217.

¹⁷⁴ IM, pp. 96–97.

¹⁷⁵ IM, p. 49. “Humanism is precisely the protection of the existence of persons, truth and good, love and faith, which are relations based on existence, truth and good” (PM, p. 134).

¹⁷⁶ PSP, p. 171.

¹⁷⁷ IM, p. 119.

a human as a personality creates culture and this personality is influenced by it. This is what is called education and upbringing.¹⁷⁸

Therefore, humanism is improving a human in wisdom through provoking faithfulness to truth and good.¹⁷⁹ For wisdom is in a sense a safeguard of the human, so that he connects in culture with what is good and true.¹⁸⁰ The norms of omitting evil and falseness in culture should be the domain of detailed ethics.¹⁸¹

Humanism is a form of friendship due to “the exchange of what persons live with.” It is a group of relations of persons in every area of life.¹⁸² Culture, in addition to the group of human products that foster lasting personal relations, is also a harmony of spiritual activities.

Without humanism on the one hand and religion on the other, the personality of a human becomes—according to Gogacz—crippled.¹⁸³ Humanism and religion are the natural contexts of the full development of a human.¹⁸⁴ Humanism elicits a longing for God, and eliminating this relation from human consciousness would limit the influence of His love. Then such humanism becomes dubious humanism.¹⁸⁵

6. The problem of freedom

Freedom is defined by Gogacz as “reasonably chosen faithfulness to truth and good.” This term indicates two aspects. First of all, a human selects all his activities (auto-determinism). Second, freedom determines faithfulness to truth and good, that is, communing with real beings determines the limits of such freedom. Humans become free by faithfulness to beings. When a human protects good and truth,

¹⁷⁸ IM, p. 122. “Culture is always a human’s improvement in thinking and decision-making, as well as a group of products (works) that express us and are an element of our upbringing” (PSP, p. 8).

¹⁷⁹ PSP, p. 108.

¹⁸⁰ PSP, p. 31.

¹⁸¹ IE, p. 33.

¹⁸² IE, pp. 13, 46. For example, “universities must always be humanistic universities, because the faithfulness of their program to truth and good situates people representing the university in humanism” (PSP, p. 125).

¹⁸³ IE, p. 84; PSP, p. 50.

¹⁸⁴ IE, p. 13; PSP, p. 134.

¹⁸⁵ PM, pp. 48–49, 51. Humanism “is a group of our references through love, faith and hope, to all persons, to people and to God” (PM, p. 50).

he does not undertake a relation with what is evil and false. This does not mean, however, that the measure of the freedom is the quantity or intensity of the established relations with beings. If we want to talk about true freedom, this opening up to good should be preceded by improving the intellect and the will.¹⁸⁶

Therefore, on the one hand, true freedom depends—according to Gogacz—on faithfulness to truth, which is a manifestation of the conscience,¹⁸⁷ and on the other, on defending oneself against fiction and nothingness, when it is associated with real beings.¹⁸⁸ Therefore, the manifestation of human freedom and rationality is turning to protecting persons. Reason and freedom are revealed in the desire to protect persons' life and health, and indirectly their intellect and will.¹⁸⁹

Freedom is always connected with both the intellect and the will in humans. It is a manifestation of their mutual operations that show how the conscience works, which is the intellectual recognition of truth and good in the light of wisdom, as well as the decision arising from the righteousness of the will to focus on good. Therefore, freedom should be considered as a manifestation of the conscience. Freedom also requires wisdom. The nature of this wisdom is faithfulness to truth and good. Then real freedom becomes a manifestation of such wisdom.¹⁹⁰

PEDAGOGY

(Dawid Lipski)

1. Identification of pedagogy

Mieczysław Gogacz clearly distinguishes ethics, which determines the norms of protecting persons, from pedagogy, which is the “principles of selection of improving actions” in applying these norms.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁶ IE, pp. 27–28.

¹⁸⁷ PSP, p. 12.

¹⁸⁸ PSP, p. 96. “Freedom is an action created by humans and directed to existence, truth and good. Without it, freedom would be a reference to emptiness and nothingness. It would not be there at all. Therefore, this is a way chosen by me to protect the existence of persons” (PSP, p. 10).

¹⁸⁹ IE, pp. 11, 43.

¹⁹⁰ PSP, pp. 12, 162. See also: IE, p. 29.

¹⁹¹ IE, p. 93.

Pedagogy deals with the selection of such actions that make it possible to protect persons and their relations. It must indicate actions that improve the human in connection with truth and good, and actions “facilitating the subordination of sensitive actions to the actions of the intellect.” Therefore, pedagogy is a science about how to achieve faithfulness to truth and good in the most appropriate way, i.e. how to implement ethical recommendations. A human, through education and upbringing, learns to control his impulses and feelings as well as to avoid falsehood and evil in culture. He becomes rational and free. On the other hand, connections with other persons build his unique personality and integrate all his actions.¹⁹² Pedagogy seeks to harmonize mental and spiritual actions with imaginations and feelings as a result of the action of sensitive powers. The pedagogy of the disabled often uses knowledge from the domain of medicine regarding the mechanisms of actions of sensitive powers.¹⁹³

The subject of pedagogy for Gogacz consists of specific rules of selecting actions that improve the intellect and the will.¹⁹⁴ Therefore, general pedagogy is a choice of those actions which improve the intellect in wisdom and the will in righteousness. Wisdom, as faithfulness to truth and good, should effect in us maintaining relations with persons through love, faith and hope, while detailed pedagogy includes such indications that would help a human in a given culture to recognize and avoid falsehood and evil in order to strengthen his links with truth and good.¹⁹⁵

Pedagogy identified in this way is founded on a broader perspective than contemporary psychologizing proposals of definitions of this domain. Pedagogy as science must be preceded by ethics and ethics must be preceded by proper philosophical anthropology. Pedagogy should be treated as philosophical science, because it deals with principles, in this case, “the principles of choosing upbringing activities.” However, it cannot be identified with any other domains of philosophy.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² BU, p. 22.

¹⁹³ IE, p. 21. “Pedagogy defines the actions of protecting and improving the intellect and the will, as well as practicing sensitive powers in attentive perceptions and responses to the physical good of beings” (BU, p. 19).

¹⁹⁴ IE, p. 91.

¹⁹⁵ BU, p. 20.

¹⁹⁶ BU, p. 21. Artur Andrzejuk thinks that pedagogy defined in this way refers back to the concept of the transcendental properties of beings: “A deeper analysis

2. Upbringing and education

Mieczysław Gogacz emphasizes that the upbringing and education of a human need to pay special attention to the role of the *vis cogitativa*, the sensitive power of combining cognitive content and the power of imagination. When the pupil's knowledge of the world and judgements about it are based solely on these powers, he builds a falsified vision of the world. The human then creates "an attractive synthesis of images," which deludes him with the impression that it is "a comprehensive notion of the world." Humans tend to think wishfully about the world in terms of dreams; present images are combined with past imaginations. Such compositions activate the emotional sphere and motivate some actions. The feelings of a pupil triggered in this way (e.g. by love) are identified with a personal relation of love. This erroneous identification results from the dominance of the *vis cogitativa* and the ideas in education, at the expense of the influence and control of the intellect in the sphere of cognition and feelings. Therefore, at the beginning of education should be the connection of the pupil with truth (the intellect) and good (the will), so that his powers can be improved in wisdom.¹⁹⁷

According to Gogacz, education concerns not only spiritual powers, but also sensitive and appetitive powers. In the sphere of sensitive powers, the habit of "faithfulness to the object of sensations" should be developed, and in the sphere of sensual desire—the habit of "faithfulness to physical good." It is important that sensitive reception should not include the operation of inner sensitive powers, i.e. the *vis cogitativa* and imagination. Imagination stored in memory should not be added to the object currently being perceived. Therefore, spiritual powers need to be improved in wisdom so that they can properly direct themselves to real beings and receive their influence.¹⁹⁸

of the problem indicates the necessity to begin pedagogical study from the metaphysics of being so that, through the theory of a person and philosophical anthropology, we come to ethics and its nearest 'neighbours': general pedagogy and detailed pedagogy" (PSP, pp. 183–184).

¹⁹⁷ BU, pp. 34–35. On the importance of the *vis cogitativa* in pedagogy, see also PSP, pp. 16, 31–32.

¹⁹⁸ BU, pp. 23–24. "It can be added that the *vis cogitativa* is the most difficult to educate, and so to train in proper action, of all powers. The *vis cogitativa* causes the incorrect connection of various impressions into a whole" (BU, p. 25).

The education of the intellect means improving in the recognition of principles of being. The education of the will means “teaching the will to choose the good indicated by the intellect,” while the education of feelings means developing their sensitivity to beauty.¹⁹⁹

Similarly, upbringing concerns both spiritual and sensitive powers. The intellect and the will are to be brought up to wisdom which is manifested in faithfulness to truth and good. Sensitive powers are to be under the control of the intellect and the will, so that feelings relate a human in wisdom to good and truth, causing the nobility of feelings.

Gogacz repeatedly emphasizes that upbringing and education are indispensable elements in pedagogy. One cannot bring up the will and the intellect without their proper education. Otherwise one falls into voluntary pedagogy. Through upbringing and education, a pupil must be led to the integration of the actions of sensitive and appetitive powers with the actions of the intellect and the will.²⁰⁰

Programs and institutions cannot teach wisdom; a wise human who has gained the confidence of his pupils²⁰¹ can. Gogacz emphasizes and distinguishes—according to some tradition—three principles of upbringing in general pedagogy. Firstly, wisdom as the ability to connect with persons by directing the intellect to truth and good. Secondly, faith as mutual openness to each other based on truth. Thirdly, patience understood as “the ability to experience good and the contribution of the will to upbringing.”²⁰²

The principles of upbringing in detailed pedagogy, meanwhile, are—for Gogacz—humility and asceticism. Humility is obedience to an educator based on trust and love. Without trust and love, education is based solely on a system of rewards and punishments. Ascetics is connected with poverty. It is about referring to persons rather than things and skipping what is evil and false in culture.²⁰³ The ascetic attitude precludes an excessive attachment to things.

¹⁹⁹ PSP, p. 15. “Reducing the actions of the *vis cogitativa*, which manifests itself in an uncontrolled need to connect everything that we learn with ourselves, is considered a sign of achieving the effects of education and upbringing” (BU, p. 26).

²⁰⁰ BU, pp. 26–28.

²⁰¹ PSP, pp. 16–17. “In pedagogy, obedience is accepting the indications of persons gifted with kindness and trust” (IE, p. 91).

²⁰² BU, p. 28. See also: PSP, pp. 17–18.

²⁰³ BU, p. 30.

Education in realistic pedagogy is a habit of accurately recognizing the manifestations of beings, i.e. what is real and good, while upbringing is the sum of the actions that encourage a pupil by persuasion to establish proper relations.²⁰⁴ The result of an upbringing is the lasting habit of connecting a human with truth and good.²⁰⁵

3. Religious education

“Religious education is the group of constantly undertaken actions that cause the deepening of the bonds linking a human with God and God with a human.”²⁰⁶ Unlike other types of education, religious education always has the nature of imperfect actions. The relation of a human with God, which is a real relation made by Christ, may always be deepened.²⁰⁷ According to Gogacz, in many contemporary proposals of religious educational programs, a “sociological perspective” often prevails. The problems of the real relation with God are lost in the view of linking asceticism with the theory of experiences.²⁰⁸

Religious education is the subject of ascetic theology, which is the science of the principles of religious education. However, it is always education which should be recognized from two perspectives: human and divine. Education from the human side is an active purification, that is, all that a human can contribute by his actions to a relation with God. Passive religious education consists of the results of educational actions induced in a human by God. In both cases, the pupil needs a spiritual guide who—as an educator of religious life—has the knowledge about the structure of such a life.²⁰⁹

Gogacz also distinguishes active and passive purification in humanistic education. Passive purification is humility to the educator and an openness to accepting truth. Active purification is the desire to improve the intellect and the will, and the exploration of issues

²⁰⁴ PSP, p. 14. “Pedagogy similarly defines specific tasks, but inclines humans to accept them through persuasion based on love, triggering obedience full of freedom, as a recognition of the wishes of a loved one, which liberates us from compulsion and fear” (IE, p. 84).

²⁰⁵ BU, p. 23; PSP, p. 30.

²⁰⁶ BU, p. 37.

²⁰⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁰⁸ PSP, p. 158.

²⁰⁹ BU, pp. 39–40.

and problems in the fields of philosophy, starting with metaphysics. In contrast to religious education, here they are equal. Religious education is dominated by passive purification, for which active purification plays only a preparatory role.²¹⁰

A human without real connections with other persons and God, who trust and love him, will not fully develop a proper personality. Religious education and humanistic formation together constitute a full educational context.²¹¹

POLITICS

(Dawid Lipski)

1. Definition of politics

According to Mieczysław Gogacz, politics is “a theory of everyday life, revealing the dominance [in this life and worldview] of some concrete values, the latter derived from relevant cultures and confronted with the actual common good.”²¹² Thus understood, politics is supported by economics and eschatology, and determined by metaphysics and dogmatic theology. ‘Politics’ is often understood as a set of statements serving to justify the changing reason of state, with the word primarily implying aims and tasks set for individual citizens and, by extension, for the entire nation or society. The domain of politics consists of seeking the best solutions for humans. Politics ought to be involved in finding indications and methods serving to effectuate the common good that is adequate for humans, and not imposing that good on humans in an arbitrary manner. Usually, politicians do not identify the reality, but create mental constructs. Hence, politicians consider humans as citizens, while qualifying them under a logical and functional class, since they tend to associate humans more with things than with persons.²¹³

²¹⁰ BU, pp. 84–85. “To learn to receive gifts you need to prepare your intellectual and voluntary powers for passive behaviour; these powers are direct subjects of the receiving that comes from outside. At the same time, it requires many so-called active purifications” (BU, p. 84).

²¹¹ PSE, p. 149.

²¹² EPP, p. 77.

²¹³ EPP, p. 55.

As emphasized by Gogacz, the Averroistic theory of the human, proposed by Marsilius of Padua, plays a dominant role in many conceptions of the state and politics. The theory has been shaped by over-stressing the problems of freedom and social awareness, the human being along with their dignity moved to the background. From this perspective, politics can be viewed as “a set of indications that encourage everyone to produce goods, which are then at the disposal of a sovereign.” The Averroistic theory proposes that a human be viewed as an animal that receives the soul, a soul which is shared by all humans. The sovereign can order that this common soul should manufacture goods, an activity performed in equal measure by all the people. As a consequence of this mode of thinking, the rulers only set requirements, while ignoring human rights. From this perspective, humans’ objectives have been reduced to implementing “economic tasks.” Such an understanding of politics creates a state that is based primarily on the concept of power and on disposing of the created good. In this view, state and economic structures become the most important thing.²¹⁴ It is for this reason that Gogacz is inclined to define contemporary politics chiefly as a theory of humans, elucidating specific tasks and acts of behaviour characteristic of everyday life.²¹⁵

Meanwhile, politics is primarily to serve humans. Reasons of state and political programs should be determined by culture. Culture and politics should serve the well-being of humans, that well-being that is identified in their structure.²¹⁶ This is extremely difficult. As Gogacz puts it, it was only in the culture of medieval Europe that politics was not dominant in every aspect of social life.²¹⁷ Politics and culture are interdependent. Politicians have a direct impact on the formation of culture. Therefore, a politician, like every human being, is obliged to gain wisdom so as to create a humanist culture through the tasks entrusted to them.²¹⁸

Politics should not be separated from protecting the freedom of persons, families and “auxiliary associations.” Its purpose is to defend justice and the common good regarded as “the aims and tasks

²¹⁴ WBS, pp. 19, 38, 56. See also: SC, pp. 127–130.

²¹⁵ SL, p. 20. “Such is politics as the theory of man written in it” (*ibidem*).

²¹⁶ IE, p. 75.

²¹⁷ WBS, p. 13.

²¹⁸ WBS, p. 158.

of [individual] persons.” This good results from an understanding of the structure of human beings. Thus, politics or political power can never ignore the truth and the good of persons. The ultimate reason for doing this kind of politics is because of the value of love and personal relations, understood in philosophical terms.²¹⁹

2. The theory of the common good

The common good ought to be understood as the presence and being together of persons through bonds such as love, faith and hope, the building blocks of humanism and religion. Gogacz continuously calls for a consideration of the common good in terms of personal relations. Personal relations as the direct effects of reality, truth and good, i.e. the possibility of experiencing someone’s love or trust, are what one should seek and protect. Therefore, the common good ought to be understood first of all as personal relations, as their protection and lasting character. Thus recognized, the common good will be able to abolish boundaries between an unchangeable reason of state and variable political programs.²²⁰

Politicians should establish general aims and tasks for the state for the real common good of the nation. The good of the nation is always understood as referring to the good of the persons who constitute that nation. The task of politicians is first to protect the recognized common good by their decisions.²²¹

If wisdom is seen as the reason for the lasting relation between the human and the truth and good, the former should also be recognized as a guiding principle in politics. For wisdom is the ability to “look at everything from the position of the truth and good in such a way that the intellect recognizes the good effects caused by being, as that being leaves upon us its imprint of truth, i.e. it makes itself available to the intellect.” Therefore, wisdom can be considered as the ability to understand persons and their needs.²²² Hence, it seems

²¹⁹ SL, p. 53.

²²⁰ IE, pp. 74–75. “The reason of state is always is constituted by the aims, tasks and values proposed to the state and thus to the nation. The political program is a set of indications that determines how to implement some aims, tasks and values in the state and in the nation. The reason of state may be, and often is, constituted by ideology” (WBS, p. 102).

²²¹ WBS, p. 155.

²²² IE, p. 75.

necessary to educate and raise people as politicians in academic institutions.²²³

For Gogacz, wisdom itself becomes the proper common good of each community. This principle applies even to a community based on a lie, a community which “for its creation must name the truth as false and assign the attribute of good to evil. It is only the positive accents which will bind persons into a community.”²²⁴

3. Real and logical communities (institutions)

According to Mieczysław Gogacz, each community is a group of persons who combine both real and logical (speech-based) relations.

Real relations can be based either on the manifestations of the existence of persons, in which case they constitute the base of personal relations, or on the spiritual powers of a human being, in which case they constitute the relation of cognition and decision. Logical (speech-based) relations are reliant on assigning functions and aims to mental constructs. Gogacz indicates that when one confuses logical (speech-based) relations (institutions, theories, decisions) with real beings, a false concept of community is created. Logical (speech-based) relations should always lead to the protection and durability of real relations, because it is the real persons who are ultimately the subjects of all communities. A circumstance in which the logical (speech-based) relations dominate the real relations leads to the highlighting of differences between communities. Associations, professional groups, (new) communities or ideological groups are created. Real personal relations never cause differences, because they are oriented to each and every person. Real subjects and relations create real communities, such as in a family, marriage, religion or nation. Mental subjects and relations form such communities as institutions, societies or states.²²⁵

When state institutions, offices, administration, technology or ideology take precedence over persons regarded as individual entities, an idealistic trend is created.²²⁶ The notion of the absolute dominance of the state and economic structures in state and national communities

²²³ WBS, p. 164.

²²⁴ PSP, p. 25.

²²⁵ IE, pp. 73–74.

²²⁶ BU, p. 9.

is, according to Gogacz, a legacy of the Renaissance, Averroistic concept of a state.²²⁷ Existential relations that connect persons should constitute the foundation of all communities. When these relations connect people by marriage or parenthood, families are born. When a community of persons is formed for the sake of the common good, nations are formed. When a community is shaped for the sake of the truth, universities come into existence. Linking persons with “a system of authority figures” creates state institutions.²²⁸

Society is a community of families that, along with the real relations based on love, faith and hope, take into consideration logical (speech-based) relations. For Gogacz, institutions, arts, technology, schools and associations are there ultimately to protect persons and families, i.e. to protect the common good.²²⁹ It should be remembered that the sum of the affairs of all the groups and communities does not yet constitute the common good of a given nation or state. The common good must be understood as referring to the whole nation, hence ultimately to each person. All communities are dependent and accidental beings. Ontic independence is specific only to individual beings, i.e. persons comprising these communities.²³⁰ A nation can be defined as a community of persons connected by referring to some common good. A homeland is a group of effects of personal relations, associated with the emotions and feelings that influenced our first understanding of persons and relations. Gogacz calls a homeland “a home of the nation,” a place where the first relations, such as those of love, faith and hope, have been realized.²³¹ When it comes to the state, it is primarily

²²⁷ WBS, p. 38. “We do not exist ‘for’: for an idea, an ideology, an institution; for societies, a nation, a state; we do not even exist for God. We simply exist. But thanks to the intellectual recognition of the good, we want to be in a relation with someone or something. This is secondary, recognized and selected. We want to be loved, we want to be trusted, we want to love, to believe, and to remain in relations through love and faith” (SC, p. 127).

²²⁸ PSP, p. 68.

²²⁹ PSP, p. 150. “Society is a group of persons, families, nations, first associated with personal relations, and then with institutional relations, adopted rights and authority figures; the group is formed in order to protect people’s mutual acceptance, mutual trust and their mutual expectation of the lasting in love and faith” (SL, p. 14).

²³⁰ IE, pp. 73–74. “And the good of the nation is the personal wisdom as obtained by all humans who constitute a nation” (BU, p. 36).

²³¹ IE, pp. 75–77.

a “mental composition.” As an institution, the state represents a society, since it is a system of authority figures “merging and ordering the nation’s affairs.” The state does not designate the common good, only the ways to achieve it and preserve it. The state can be described as “a community of persons’ awareness,” where ordered logical (speech-based) relations are to serve all persons. The principle of ordering these relations will always be reliant on wisdom in referring to persons.²³²

4. The natural and established law

For Mieczysław Gogacz, the law, just as in the cases of ethics and pedagogy, ought to be based on philosophical anthropology. One can characterize the law as “specific aims and their achievement” using established sanctions. In principle, the law is focused on indicating the specific aims that ultimately serve the common good. The law also aims at eliminating inequalities between people.²³³

The law can fulfil its mission when the culture is filled with humanism and religion, i.e. with lasting relations adequate for persons. With assistance provided on the part of justice, the law should create the best possible conditions for pursuing these personal relations. Therefore, the law should be defined as a set of positive recommendations rather than strict prohibitions. The law is “a group of intellect-based indications to protect humans and human communities in circumstances where the essential structure of persons and their relations remains unknown,”²³⁴ with these indications being expressed in recommendations. These groups of indications can be intellectually recognized due to the reoccurrence of certain phenomena.²³⁵

Gogacz’s theory of the types of law can be traced back to the texts of Thomas Aquinas, with the latter distinguishing as primordial the absolute law. Such a law can be understood as God’s work performed by the etching of an unchanging and eternal group of aims into the structure and nature of the human being. These aims include “existence,

²³² IE, pp. 80–81; WBS, pp. 123–124.

²³³ IE, pp. 21–22.

²³⁴ WBS, pp. 124–125. “The law functioning in societies and states appears to be written out in detailed recommendations on the application of justice, which directs people’s attention to the human and to God, and prepares one to be fully guided by love” (WBS, p. 125).

²³⁵ SL, p. 43.

life, rational thinking, integrity of decision-making, health, [and an] ability to connect with persons through love and faith.”²³⁶ Thus, the natural law is considered as a reading of the absolute law and participation in it. In other words, the natural law is understood as recommendations formed on the basis of the structure of the human being.²³⁷ Recognized and identified by metaphysics and anthropology, the elements intrinsic to humans are covered in the natural law by means of recommendations established with the aim of protecting these elements.²³⁸

The absolute law, and with it also the natural law, should constitute the starting point for the formation of the established law. Meanwhile, as Gogacz points out, it is a frequent mistake to absolutize the established law, with the latter concept additionally being reduced to morality. The established law means “defining and displaying specific aims, devised by people and constantly changing due to new situations and circumstances.” These specific aims should always be seen as referring to the natural law. Hence, if an established law “ignores the good of a person and the common good of persons,” it does not apply,²³⁹ since the established law may not rely on an arbitrary decision directed against the good of persons.²⁴⁰

THEORY OF CULTURE

(Magdalena Płotka)

Mieczysław Gogacz’s philosophical considerations on culture include both a general reflection on the essential characteristics of culture, its pedagogical function and the role it plays in people’s lives, and more particular reflections on various artistic and cultural disciplines, like music, literature or movies.

Gogacz wrote on his own conception of culture mostly in *Szkice o kulturze* [Sketches on culture] (1985). He distinguishes between subjective and objective descriptions of culture: culture is both the set

²³⁶ IE, p. 23.

²³⁷ PSP, p. 99.

²³⁸ For example IE, pp. 22, 53–54, 91.

²³⁹ IE, p. 22.

²⁴⁰ WBS, p. 167.

of material products of a man (like buildings, novels, cities, poems, etc.) and also—strictly speaking—spiritual products.²⁴¹ These two senses of culture are defined as follows: on the one hand, objectively, culture is the set of works and disciplines created by a man in his entire lifetime.²⁴² It includes pieces of art and techniques, which express thinking, decisions, emotions and artistic experiences. On the other hand, subjectively, culture is the spiritual life of people, which relies on the improvement of intellect and will and on harmonizing emotions and experiences.²⁴³

Gogacz distinguishes culture from “pre-cultural facts.” He includes among the latter plants, animals, particles of matter, and chemical compounds, and also elements of the human world: interpersonal relations, friendships, birth, life, death, truth, goodness, wisdom and God.²⁴⁴ He defines culture as a permanent layered and transformed set of attitudes, actions and decisions of people. This set consists of the whole of human spiritual life.²⁴⁵ In the field of products, he includes human understandings of beings (spiritual meaning of culture) and expressions of understandings on the artistic, philosophical or theological levels, etc. (in the form of material products). According to Gogacz, culture has a relational structure. It is a system of references that shapes the intellectual-volitional attitude of a human being.²⁴⁶ A man acquires an improvement to his intellectual-volitional attitude through the cognition of works and disciplines, in other words, by contacting with culture in a general sense. And being internally improved (as a result of communing with culture), man gains an ease in producing culture.²⁴⁷ Therefore, the relational construction of culture results directly from the educational function strongly emphasized by Gogacz: as long as a man assimilates understanding (i.e. understanding of beings expressed in artistic form), his personality is shaped by rationality and freedom. Such a personality expresses itself most fully in wisdom and love.²⁴⁸

²⁴¹ SC, p. 12.

²⁴² SC, p. 122.

²⁴³ SC, p. 123.

²⁴⁴ SC, p. 13.

²⁴⁵ SC, p. 6.

²⁴⁶ SC, p. 45.

²⁴⁷ SC, p. 123.

²⁴⁸ SC, p. 13.

Gogacz starts his description of the concept of culture by comparing the world of nature with the world of culture. He claims that the world of real beings precedes culture, i.e. the world of pre-cultural facts exists before culture and independently of it. The products are therefore secondary to nature. According to Gogacz, the relation between nature and products determines the model of what the products should be, and consequently what the whole of culture should look like. In other words, nature should be the measure of culture. If that is the case, culture—Gogacz argues—is beneficial to man. If, on the other hand, man creates culture without reckoning with the transcendent properties (existence, truth, goodness, unity or separateness) of real beings, he may be threatened by it—culture itself may pose a threat to man. Gogacz sees serious consequences to building culture in isolation from real beings: when culture in the objective sense—i.e. scientific, philosophical, or theological theories, or works of literature, architecture, art, technology, etc.—turns against man, it ceases to be humanistic and compatible with the world of nature. Moreover, culture understood as such stops being culture²⁴⁹ (it does not fulfil its tasks). So, what should culture be? Gogacz's answer is based on his assumption about the primacy of culture in the subjective sense: the world of man is not the world of ideas, theories, models, art or technology. The human world is people, i.e. human persons and persons of the Holy Trinity.²⁵⁰ Therefore, Gogacz proposes that broadly understood culture—scientific, philosophical, theological, or technical theories, or works of art—should read reality correctly. Such culture should protect reality and, above all, it should protect personal relationships based on existence.²⁵¹

Starting from these assumptions, Gogacz poses a diagnosis of contemporary culture. He explains that through a description of dominating works and disciplines, one can reveal the current structure of culture. Next, the author intends to assess the dominating culture and art in a confrontation with the criterion of truth.²⁵² He claims that in order for culture to fulfil its tasks, human interests should be at the centre of culture's interests. This task should be fulfilled by the

²⁴⁹ SC, p. 123.

²⁵⁰ SC, p. 126.

²⁵¹ SC, p. 126.

²⁵² SC, p. 17.

creators of culture, because it is with their culture-creating activity that their works become a measure of the current period of understanding, expressing existential facts and fulfilling various interpersonal relations.²⁵³

Gogacz based his concept of culture and the resulting diagnosis of contemporary culture on metaphysical foundations. In his opinion, metaphysics is the key to understanding culture, because the way we understand reality determines all further cultural models: natural, sociological, artistic, pedagogical, theological.²⁵⁴ A correct understanding of reality (provided by metaphysics) is important not only in the sphere of cultural products, but also in the everyday life of a man, family, community or nation. A man organizes his own affairs, social or political life according to how he understands himself, the people close to him, his tasks and duties, etc. Further, according to these understandings, a man creates a theory of education, a theory of action. In other words, he shapes all areas of his life depending on the accepted or developed concept of man and the concept of reality.²⁵⁵

Gogacz attributes a special culture-creating role to philosophy. Philosophy occupies a special place in culture because it becomes a way of thinking for people and has the power to contribute cultural facts.²⁵⁶ In addition, the shape of culture depends on philosophy, which is the basic understanding of reality.²⁵⁷ Its relationship with culture is based on the fact that philosophy, when capturing reality, defines and corrects all the concepts that express this reality, perpetuated in works of culture.²⁵⁸ Because of its position in culture, philosophy should be especially error-free. That is why Gogacz criticizes philosophical trends (which dominate in modern culture) from the criterion of recognizing reality and what is real. After analyzing such currents as the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer, structuralism, phenomenology, Kantianism and materialism, Gogacz states that they are all characterized by an incorrect identification of reality with cognition.²⁵⁹ Such identity

²⁵³ SC, p. 20.

²⁵⁴ SC, p. 6.

²⁵⁵ OPP, p. 11.

²⁵⁶ SC, p. 74.

²⁵⁷ SC, p. 290.

²⁵⁸ SC, p. 291.

²⁵⁹ SC, pp. 33–34.

is a specific element of Neoplatonic philosophy, which is why Gogacz sees in Neoplatonism the main reason for the distortion of contemporary culture. He lists the following consequences of the presence of Neoplatonism nowadays: (1) the treatment of natural beings as products—this happens, for example, in situations where the cognizing subject “produces” objects (natural beings), judging erroneously that they are products; (2) the recognition of cognizability as the essence of beings; (3) treating cognition in isolation from the cognizing object, when one examines the “cognition” itself in abstraction from a cognizing person; (4) the recognition of products as just as real as natural beings; (5) the inclusion of beings in their relationship to knowledge, and not to causes; and (6) the identification of beings as synonymous with setting them a useful purpose.²⁶⁰

In addition to general considerations on the essence and function of culture, Gogacz also dealt with particular disciplines of culture, i.e. music, film, and literature. He included his considerations on these topics primarily in the book *Okruszyny* (1993). These considerations, however, are not strictly theoretical, as Gogacz expressed his opinions about particular works of culture (art).

For example, he presented in *Okruszyny* his conception of music.²⁶¹ However, he does not consider music as such, but music in relation to religion, in particular to mystical experience. Gogacz asks if music could replace religion in the context of a historically conditioned (atheizing) education, in which religious education would be replaced by music education.²⁶² In order to answer this question, Gogacz proposes considering what music itself is, as only then can one compare music to the mystical experience. He presents four chronological definitions of music: firstly, music is information expressed in speech, which is characterized by rhythm (rhythm, on the other hand, is the harmonization of long and short syllables, and when words are emphasized, we get singing²⁶³); secondly, music is the movement of sounds²⁶⁴; thirdly, music is the change of sounds, which express social changes (this is the Marxist definition of music); and fourthly, music is a definite piece of

²⁶⁰ SC, pp. 45–46.

²⁶¹ Brdc, pp. 138–148.

²⁶² Brdc, p. 138.

²⁶³ Brdc, p. 139.

²⁶⁴ Brdc, p. 140.

music, which is built of the movement of sounds, manifested in time as a structure which is complete, constituting itself as a whole, with internal unity and harmony or the harmony of all elements.²⁶⁵ By defining music in this way, Gogacz finds a lack of agreement between music and mystical experience. Music does not express itself in the mystical experience, he concludes.²⁶⁶ Regardless of the historical epoch in which music was defined, it is always some form of movement, continuum, or change—it has a temporal form. Mystical experience, on the other hand, is not a movement or transformation; on the contrary, it is a calmness, a great inner silence, full of admiration and love.²⁶⁷

In the same work (*Okruszyny*), Gogacz reflects on the movie *Decalogue*, directed by Krzysztof Kieślowski. He writes that a movie has the structure of a dream. He also refers here to the words of Władysław Tatarkiewicz—that a dream is a series of images evoked by a fact and encapsulating this fact. The sequence of images is to lead the viewer to a certain content set by the director. The way of presenting this content through a series of images can be—and certainly is in the case of *Decalogue*—a poignant one, it evokes reflection. The thoughts and feelings of the recipients are also moved.²⁶⁸

While Gogacz assessed *Decalogue* positively both in terms of message and content, he had mixed feelings towards the novel *Master and Margaret* by Mikhail Bulgakov. With regard to the formal and artistic aspects of the novel, Gogacz has nothing to complain about.²⁶⁹ However, the content of the novel might raise one's doubts. Gogacz criticizes, among other things, the image of Christ, as it is incompatible with historical documents. This reveals that the author of the novel is ignorant when it comes to historical research, freely interprets historical documents, and does not count on the achievements of biblical studies.²⁷⁰ Similar accusations are laid against Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov* and the poem *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. The vision of "blessing with God" presented by both books differs in content from the Book of Job.

²⁶⁵ Brdc, p. 141.

²⁶⁶ Brdc, p. 144.

²⁶⁷ Brdc, p. 144.

²⁶⁸ Brdc, p. 145.

²⁶⁹ Brdc, p. 146.

²⁷⁰ Brdc, p. 148.

The criticism of these works by Gogacz suggests that he expected from literature (and art in general) compliance with historical facts, sciences (for example biblical literature) or Revelation. Formally, he also attributed the functions of evoking emotions and stimulating reflection to art.

Finally, it should be mentioned that Gogacz himself was the author of a novel on religious and moral topics, *Jak traci się miłość* [How love is lost] (1982), and a collection of poetry, *Skrzydła aniołów* [The wings of angels] (2001).

THEORY OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

(Magdalena Płotka)

Mieczysław Gogacz defines religious life as a bond of love, faith and hope that grows out of the grace of God who is present in us, developed and strengthened by our efforts in active purification, and mainly by God's efforts in passive purification, which develops the ability to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.²⁷¹ The author developed his theory in the following works: *Idę śpiewając Ciebie* (1977), *Modlitwa i mistyka* (1987), *Błędy brata Ryszarda* (1975), *Jak traci się miłość* (1982), *Największa jest miłość* (1988) and *Ciemna noc miłości* (1985). However, Gogacz's most important book on the religious topic is *On ma wzrastać* (the first edition of which was published in 1965), because he recommended that the content of this book be acquired by beginners on the path of spiritual life, and in the very title he included the essence of the religious life of man: the whole of our religious life consists of our pursuit of "what is above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God."²⁷²

In addition to the philosophical explanation of religious life as a relation, Gogacz's theory of religion also includes strictly theological considerations (in the field of Catholic theology). These considerations relate, for example, to the role of Christ in religious life. Gogacz claims that this role cannot be omitted. He explains it as follows: religious life consists of the participation of man in the inner life of God (which

²⁷¹ PM, p. 7.

²⁷² HMI, p. 12.

is a grace). The inner life of God, however, is so immense and infinite that man would not be able to accept it. That is why Christ, who is God and man at the same time, has adapted in himself as man this infinite, inner life of God to the measure of man. Christ as God and man made God present in man. Only then can Christ give man the inner life of God as adapted to the capacity of man. One cannot, therefore, come into contact with God outside of Christ, Gogacz concludes.²⁷³

What happens when a person approaches God? This is the starting question that Gogacz poses in his reflections on the theory of man's religious life. The starting point of religious life is the statement of one's own sinfulness, Gogacz claims. At the beginning, a man sees God's holiness and his own misery.²⁷⁴ Gogacz explains that the love between God and man develops in proportion to the extent to which man considers himself as sinful. The next stage is love (understood as a result of the love of the perfect God by an imperfect man). Love evokes the need for man's constant conversations with God. The effect is learning, or the transformation of thinking. In consequence, a man learns from God new thinking and new valuing.²⁷⁵ Before this happens, however, human life stretches between longing for God and longing for oneself, between turning to God and turning to oneself, between God's love and abandoning that love, Gogacz writes. In other words, the history of man's religious life is the history of love: God's love and self-love,²⁷⁶ or in other words, giving up oneself and one's own selfishness.

What is the sign of the awakening of a religious life in man? According to Gogacz, the forerunner of religious thinking is, among other things, the habit of viewing all matters of one's life in connection with God. The fruit of the awakening of religious thinking is mortification, understood by Gogacz as one of the ways of showing love to God, that is, abandoning everything that separates man from God.²⁷⁷ There is no one recommendation for everyone, because mortification is something individual. Every man realizes mortification according to his own difficulties in his relations with God, because he is mortifying

²⁷³ PAM, p. 26.

²⁷⁴ HMI, p. 11.

²⁷⁵ HMI, p. 11.

²⁷⁶ HMI, p. 15.

²⁷⁷ HMI, pp. 16–17.

himself by breaking his own manifesting selfishness (selfishness can manifest itself in various ways in different people). The decision about what to give up must be confirmed by God himself through the advice of the confessor, Gogacz suggests. Otherwise, a man might succumb to mistakes and his own whims.²⁷⁸ According to Gogacz, the best sign of the authentic life and religious development that lasts in man is such a sorrow for sins, which consists not so much of remembering about sins, but of experiencing the pain of the knowledge that the infinitely loving God has been offended.²⁷⁹

Gogacz distinguishes two aspects of religious life (more precisely: the resurrection, the revival of man in Christ): moral-practical and theological-philosophical. In the moral-practical sense, resurrection is the improvement of life, grace and return to God. Religious life requires putting God in first place. The consequences of adopting such an attitude are specific life choices, whose common denominator is resignation from the realization of one's own desires and needs to help other people (Gogacz gives the example of giving up a walk to help a tired man). Continuously making choices whose motivation is to place God in first place ultimately consists of giving birth to a spiritual life, a life in grace. In the theological and philosophical sense, the resurrection is expressed in a (theologically) correct way, i.e. as the resurrection of the body and of man. For the sake of explanation, Gogacz uses philosophical tools: from a philosophical point of view, a soul without a body is in an "artificial" situation. One can therefore suppose that the unnatural disconnection of the soul with the body is the reason for their reunion. As a result, the soul after the death of the body awaits the connection, the resurrection of the body, and the return of man.²⁸⁰

Next, Gogacz invokes spiritual poverty as an inalienable element of religious life. This consists of adopting an attitude according to which "tactful" behaviour—as it is defined—is only such behaviour as that which consists of not appropriating anything "from the world" without the consent of God. In other words, poverty requires the acceptance that man is not on his own, that he has no things or thoughts; in short, that everything he possesses is given to him "in advance." Consent to

²⁷⁸ HMI, p. 17.

²⁷⁹ HMI, p. 19.

²⁸⁰ HMI, p. 23.

this is tantamount to identifying oneself as a creature dependent on God. Hence, humility flows from spiritual poverty.²⁸¹

Thus, the attitude of poverty is the discovery of the truth about oneself (as a creature dependent on God, being “not at home”). Acceptance of this truth is synonymous with the situation of prayer. Prayer is “giving the world back” to God, as Gogacz puts it. It always consists of telling God about matters that come to the human soul and giving them back. It is also about dealing with the same issues and solving them together. Prayer is being together with God in all matters. It is therefore something natural and flows from the state of poverty.²⁸² However, you must never take care of yourself while praying. When praying, man should think only about God and turn his love only to God.²⁸³ Gogacz thus defines prayer as “a linear consequence of the varieties of expressing God’s love and improving oneself in an ever more perfect pursuit of the development of religious life.”²⁸⁴ He distinguishes several types of prayer: oral prayer, mental prayer, affective prayer, and prayer of acquired concentration—also called prayer of simple sight or acquired contemplation.²⁸⁵

Religious life consists of two processes: active cleansing, or a set of human activities, which are ways of expressing love to God (this is, for example, prayer), and passive cleansing (e.g. “desert,” “dark night of love”).²⁸⁶ According to Gogacz, the prayer—active purification²⁸⁷—is a tool of the development of love and religious life at the same time. Gogacz calls prayer the life which is constantly directed towards Christ and it tends to imitate Christ. Man is to transform himself, following the example of Christ. Life, which consists of a constant being with God, is love. When this love evokes prayer, prayer deepens love, which is being with God and in God.²⁸⁸ Purity comes from poverty and prayer. Purity is only possible when man chooses God. God’s choice is always done out of love. In love infused with

²⁸¹ HMI, p. 24.

²⁸² HMI, p. 25.

²⁸³ HMI, p. 39.

²⁸⁴ PM, p. 8.

²⁸⁵ PM, p. 12.

²⁸⁶ DNL, p. 122; PM, p. 12.

²⁸⁷ PM, p. 12.

²⁸⁸ HMI, p. 33.

purity, God is the only object that man desires not for his own sake, but because of Himself.²⁸⁹

The sense of a lack of sufficient love for God causes sorrow and inner loneliness in man. Gogacz characterizes this loneliness as an ascetic and internal abandonment of everything by the fact of choosing only God as the object of love. Such loneliness, active and all-embracing, is not easily achieved. A man comes to it through a very difficult period, called the “desert” (the term of Charles de Foucauld).²⁹⁰ It is the process of man’s being stripped of everything that he has in order to allow only God to be in a person. Another term for this stage of religious life is the “dark night of love.” Similar to the “desert,” it consists of removing the human vision of the relationship with God through passive purification. The removal of man’s own vision of his connection to God will make him think that his religious life is breaking down and dying. Meanwhile, God only transforms it so that it is the actual bond of man with God.²⁹¹

The stage of religious life called the “desert” or the “dark night of love” is described by Gogacz as a discouragement of religious life, as an inability to think about God. It is a process of passive purification, during which God Himself has a supernatural influence on our soul,²⁹² but at the same time there is a living longing for God, the centralization of all love in God. They are signs that God looks with love at the human soul, that He purifies it. They are the same signs as when God calls a man to prayer, during which he transcends a certain stage and enters another one. When “in the desert,” man abandons cognizing God in meditation, he abandons the period of emotional emotions, comfort, joy of prayer, satisfaction with it and the search for prayer. God simply releases man from this state, in which man takes some emotional and cognitive benefits from prayer.²⁹³

When a man is “in the desert,” he asks himself questions about the real foundations of his religious life. By losing the emotional basis of spiritual life, one may have the impression that he is losing God Himself. Man is experiencing emptiness, discouragement, loneliness—he

²⁸⁹ HMI, p. 26.

²⁹⁰ HMI, pp. 34–35.

²⁹¹ PM, p. 9.

²⁹² DNL, p. 122.

²⁹³ HMI, p. 35.

does not understand what is happening to him. Discouragement is, in this case, a means of improvement, because during the “dark night of love” a man is in contact with God as He is, not with the one whose image was shaped by man’s knowledge and his desires.²⁹⁴ God, leading to the temptation to discouragement, draws a man out of his mistakes, detaches him from the erroneous goal, from the ambition of gaining perfection, from the need for mental order and spiritual satiety. God, in this way, demands that man’s attention be directed to Himself.²⁹⁵ From what point is God real in man? Or does a man shape his soul only with the situation he invented? Man calms down thanks to the belief that the sacraments bring grace, that love infallibly attains what one loves. Peace returns, trust is born. Prayer and love are deepened, based on faith.²⁹⁶

The most characteristic feature of the period of religious life called the “desert” is the temptation to discouragement. Gogacz explains that this temptation can have three sources: (1) impatience caused by the lack of satisfactory spiritual progress; (2) constancy of violent temptations; or (3) the feeling of comfort which is the effect of a properly and well-lived life; such comfort might change into boredom.²⁹⁷ The sources of the temptation to discouragement are impatience and boredom, but they are caused by the fact that man, in religious life, cares more about his perfection, about his goals (internal order and harmony) than about God Himself.²⁹⁸ For the survival of temptation, Gogacz recommends two helpful tools: to think about God and to trust in God, that is, firstly to prepare the intellect, then to prepare the will.²⁹⁹

In addition to the temptation to discouragement, Gogacz mentions two more temptations: the temptation of beauty and the temptation of love.³⁰⁰ First, the persistence of beauty as the only value can become a hindrance to religious life, because the beauty of the world or of art is not the beauty of God. Second, if God is the only

²⁹⁴ DNL, p. 123.

²⁹⁵ HMI, p. 52.

²⁹⁶ HMI, p. 37.

²⁹⁷ HMI, pp. 50–51.

²⁹⁸ HMI, p. 51.

²⁹⁹ HMI, p. 53.

³⁰⁰ HMI, p. 59.

and the highest goal of human endeavours and love, all that can keep man away from God is temptation.³⁰¹

In conclusion, Gogacz mentions three basic stages of religious life: (1) the first conversion (the way of active purification), during which a man who is inclined to love for Christ keeps himself in grace, prayer, faith and body control. The special sign of the first stage is a growing indifference towards material things³⁰²; (2) the second conversion (the way of enlightenment), which is the stage of perfecting the gifts of the Holy Spirit in man. At the same time, moral life and wisdom are shaped. During this stage a “dark night of love” may occur. Standing in prayer heralds the end of the “dark night”³⁰³; and (3) the third conversion (the way of unification), which is the mature stage of religious life. It is characterized by love for God, heroic faith, full hope, understanding of the cross, participation in the suffering of Christ at Gethsemane, constant prayer, perseverance in suffering, and surrendering to the Holy Spirit.³⁰⁴

THEORY OF MYSTICS

(Magdalena Płotka)

Mieczysław Gogacz’s most important work on the theory of mystics is *Filozoficzne aspekty mistyki* [*Philosophical aspects of mystics*] (1985). Here Gogacz presents his account of the systematic and holistic philosophical explanation of the cognition of God experienced by man in a mystical experience.³⁰⁵ It is definitely Gogacz’s most crucial assumption of the philosophy of mystics, that mystical experience is some sort of cognition and that it should be examined as a cognition.

As long as cognition is a relation between the cognizer and a thing cognized, mystics include objects of research which are proper to philosophy, that is, the relations between God and human intellect. In other words, as long as mystical experience is understood as a cognitive

³⁰¹ HMI, p. 63.

³⁰² DNL, p. 124.

³⁰³ DNL, pp. 125–129.

³⁰⁴ DNL, p. 129.

³⁰⁵ PAM, p. 48. The method of the so-called “philosophy of mysticism” is to describe the ontological structure of the revealed. See PAM, p. 5.

relation between man and God, the philosopher who identifies man as a being and God as a being is justified in analyzing mystical experience as an object of philosophical consideration.³⁰⁶ The cognitive approach (between God and the intellect) is accompanied by presence. Therefore, Gogacz proposes that mystical experience should be considered in two philosophical contexts: cognition and co-presence.³⁰⁷

In order to organize knowledge about mystical experience from various fields and disciplines, Gogacz introduces definitions and distinctions between such concepts as “theology,” “Revelation,” “mental cognition,” “contemplation” (philosophical and mystical), “holiness,” “grace,” “mysticism” and “mystics.”³⁰⁸

And so, Gogacz calls the theological knowledge on a conscious and immediate experience of God’s presence in man “mystical.”³⁰⁹ Considerations over the philosophical foundations of mystical experience should therefore begin with the fact that a mystical experience, if it is an inward and immediate experience of God’s presence in us, can only be caused by God. It cannot be caused by external means (like psychoactive substances or reading poetry), nor does it have its source in “naturalistic theologies” (like religions of the Far East).³¹⁰ The mystical experience is the personal contact of man with God, during which God gives his presence to man.³¹¹ In the mystical experience, God can be directly experienced by the cognitive human powers really present in a man. This is an unexpected experience; it is an intellectual experience not of essence, but of the presence of God, and this awareness of the presence of God is the hallmark of this experience.³¹² Within the human person, God can be experienced by human cognitive powers.³¹³

³⁰⁶ PAM, p. 5.

³⁰⁷ PAM, p. 51.

³⁰⁸ PAM, p. 35.

³⁰⁹ PAM, p. 12.

³¹⁰ Gogacz criticizes the “Eastern” concept of mystical experience and those interpretations in Christianity according to which mystical experience happens outside of human consciousness. In both cases, man does not actually experience God, because he does not know about it. He just does not know what he is experiencing. And then it is all the same, whether he experiences the cosmos, the forces of nature or God. See PAM, p. 23.

³¹¹ PAM, p. 7.

³¹² OPP, p. 88

³¹³ PAM, p. 27.

It should also be added that the mystical experience is never a mood, an emotion, or a mental disintegration. It is an act of a sudden awareness in the human being that the intellect directly experiences the presence of God.³¹⁴ From the experience of God's presence in a man, neither knowledge, concepts, judgements nor reasoning flow out, only joy and love.³¹⁵ As Gogacz writes:

The mystical experience is a calming, great inner silence, full of delight and love, when God as an Existence can be directly experienced by the intellect of man, thanks to which man in his crisis of faith acquires the certainty that God exists.³¹⁶

Thus, the mystical experience is a sudden, not human-induced, conscious and direct experience of God, which can be directly experienced by the spiritual cognitive powers of man.³¹⁷ Gogacz mentions three basic characteristics of the mystical experience: (1) it is the experience of God; (2) it is a direct experience; and (3) it is a conscious experience.³¹⁸ For further analysis of the "mystical experience," Gogacz relies on the descriptions of the mystics themselves: Saint Teresa the Great and Saint John of the Cross. He draws attention to the non-conceptual approach to God present in their writings.³¹⁹ Therefore, man does not obtain the concept of God, but rather experiences his presence. Mystical experience is not an extension of understanding; man does not acquire knowledge about God.³²⁰ Recognizing the described mystical experience in Thomistic categories, Gogacz claims that God, who is a structurally simple being (i.e. He is existence itself), does not compromise on essence and actions. This means that if in a mystical experience He contacts a man with His own person, He is present in such a man as a whole person, as a whole being. Therefore, in a mystical experience, man experiences God as a being, and not through his attributes, e.g. kindness.³²¹

³¹⁴ PAM, p. 16.

³¹⁵ PAM, p. 26.

³¹⁶ Brdc, p. 144.

³¹⁷ PAM, p. 12.

³¹⁸ PAM, p. 10.

³¹⁹ PAM, p. 13.

³²⁰ PAM, p. 24.

³²¹ PAM, p. 13.

Descriptions of mystics confirm the findings of Gogacz (regarding the philosophical explanation of experience), according to which mystical experience is above all a relationship, and not an independent being, the internal content of which could be analyzed by isolating this being from other beings. Thus, the explanation of what mystical experience is as a relationship depends on determining what the *termina* of such relations are: who is a human persona and who is God.³²²

The concept of a man, which is assumed in an examination of the mystical experience, most often projects on itself. Gogacz explains this as follows: if a man is considered primarily as a body (and his mental activity is considered as a body function), then the mystical experience will be considered as an emotional-physical experience. When, in turn, one accepts a human being as a soul (the soul would be the subject of decisions), mystical experience becomes about reaching God with an increased love, i.e. it is assumed that man, by the power of his spiritual powers (intellect or will), will reach God through his own effort.³²³

Gogacz strongly emphasizes the importance of distinguishing in the act of cognition the two activities of the intellect, i.e. the perception of an existence and the perception of an essence.³²⁴ The distinction is particularly significant in mysticism (philosophy of mysticism), because it allows—on the basis of Gogacz’s theory of mysticism—one to indicate that the intellect experiences the existence of God in the mystical existence, but does not create the concept of God (because he does not recognize his essence).³²⁵ There are epistemological reasons to think that. The potency of the intellect simply receives existence, but existence cannot be closed in the concept. Conceptual speech requires activities of active intellect, and thus, mediation of the senses. Such mediation is not possible in the case of the cognition of God. In the mystical experience, the human intellect captures only existence, and existence can only be found (the intellect states in the existential judgement that “something is”). In the mystical experience, the intellect states that “God exists.”³²⁶ One can even talk about

³²² PAM, p. 19.

³²³ PAM, pp. 26–27.

³²⁴ PAM, pp. 37–38.

³²⁵ PAM, p. 28.

³²⁶ PAM, p. 37.

“expanding cognition” in a situation where the intellect meets its object of cognition without analogy and without the help of the imagination.³²⁷

³²⁷ PAM, p. 38.

DISCUSSIONS AND POLEMICS OF MIECZYŚŁAW GOGACZ

In his academic and publishing work, Mieczysław Gogacz has never avoided the polemics ongoing in the Polish academic environment. We can distinguish three areas in which discussions have been conducted. The first was connected with disputes within Thomist thought—in principle, it concerned clarifying the understanding of Thomism and expressed the desire to read and present the texts of Thomas Aquinas as faithfully as possible. The second was to answer to the critics of Thomistic thought. The most distinguished opponent, or rather the one who declared his negative attitude, was Józef Tischner. Gogacz discussed with him not only the meaning of Thomism, but also the understanding of philosophy and its meaning for Christianity; he also discussed with him the issue of existence. The third area regarded Marxist thought—especially in the debate on Catholic mediocentrism, but also on the essential topic of freedom.¹

¹ It is also worth mentioning that apart from the aforementioned areas, Gogacz also took part in a debate on K. Wojtyła's book *Person and Act*. The effects of the philosophical debate and Gogacz's review ("Hermeneutyka 'Osoby i czynu'") were published in *Analecta Cracoviensia* 5–6 (1973–1974), pp. 125–138. The publication initiated a further book on the topic of person in which Gogacz discussed the issue of the person with others: M. Jaworski, L. Kuc, and M.A. Krąpiec. OPP, pp. 40–43, 70–80, 94–101, 107–125.

PRECISING THOMISTIC THOUGHT

Let us first pay attention to discussions within Thomistic thought which influenced the development of the conception of consequential Thomism. The exemplary discussions were those which were conducted with Antoni B. Stępień and Józef M. Bocheński.

In discussions between Gogacz and Stępień (as Stępień is Gogacz's brother-in-law, many polemics, as has been noted in publications, took place during family meetings), the key issue seems to have been the understanding of existence in Thomistic metaphysics. This was a crucial moment in the shaping of Gogacz's thought. There, in his thought, the characteristics of existence as an act appeared, and a differentiation between the "nature" of existence and its "activity" was also formulated. This differentiation has since become one of the most crucial points in the process of developing consequential Thomism. We can find the effects of their polemics in the book *Istnieć i poznawać*.²

Gogacz had two objections to the concept of existence presented in Stępień's book *Wprowadzenie do metafizyki*.³ The first was about the lack of differentiation between the very act of existence from its activities and the results of its activities. The second was about the character of linking the act of existence with the mode of existence. Gogacz accused Stępień of an essentialistic understanding of existence and stressed that, in his approach, existence as a modification introduced into essence becomes its behaviour or activity. In Stępień's opinion, it is the content (*thema*) whose act is that particular essence that is decisive for the character of the mode of being (substantial or accidental). This way, the essence is equipped with a power to designate a proper mode of existence. But for Gogacz, the mode of existence is rather "a manifestation, revealing an act of existence, and

² EC, pp. 88–95. These polemics were commented on by interlocutors in interviews published in later years. Both interviews were conducted by B. Listkowska. See "Tomizm fenomenologizujący czy fenomenologia tomizująca? Rozmowa z profesorem Antonim B. Stępnem o metafizyce, teorii poznania i zachodzącej między nimi relacji," in A.B. Stępień, *Studia i szkice filozoficzne*, vol. 3 (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2015), pp. 123–135; and "Kilka słów o tomizmie konsekwentnym, jego historii i głównych założeniach. Z prof. Mieczysławem Gogaczem rozmawia Bożena Listkowska," *Rocznik Tomistyczny* 5 (2016), pp. 441–446.

³ A.B. Stępień, *Wprowadzenie do metafizyki* (Kraków: Znak, 1964), pp. 92–99.

what follows is an activity of real being which is already a substance or an accident. This is implied from the fact that the constitutive act of existence for this being from the very beginning is linked to substantial or accidental content which causes structural separateness in this act of existence.”⁴ Next, Gogacz accused Stępień’s statements of a monistic treatment of existence, because if one distinguishes the act of existence from the mode of existence, then the modification of the mode of existence will be related to a number of various beings, but the act of existence will remain structurally the same for all beings. If the act of existence were different from the mode of existence, then two existential factors that make a being a real one would be in it itself. According to Gogacz, this problem can be reduced to describing intra-being relations as being between the act of existence and the potency of the being. In order to mark the position of the act of existence in a being more consistently, it should be emphasized that this act of existence, associating with potency, not only causes a set of effects in the form of different modes of existence, whether accidental or substantial, but also causes the numerical distinctiveness of each being.⁵

After the interview with Józef M. Bocheński had been published in *Tygodnik Powszechny*,⁶ Gogacz decided to start a polemic with one of the greatest Polish logicians of the twentieth century. Gogacz’s response⁷ to this publication is supposed to be read as an attempt to precise how Thomistic thought, often referred to as “baptized Aristotelianism,” should be understood. The first statement that Gogacz did not agree with was the idea that “there is only nonsense beyond logic.” Gogacz suggested that the aim of philosophy had always been to understand reality, which is itself “beyond logic.” He agreed with the sense of the phrase, which was an appeal to a responsible way of thinking. However, this suggestion could also be read as an encouragement to the negation of metaphysics, and in consequence, to adopt logic as the first science. Further, it could lead to making reality subordinate to the laws of logic and to a conception of philosophy based on the analysis of thinking and knowledge.

⁴ EC, p. 93.

⁵ EC, p. 94.

⁶ J.M. Bocheński, “Poza logiką jest tylko nonsens,” *Tygodnik Powszechny* 35, no. 49 (1981), pp. 4 and 6.

⁷ PA, pp. 58–62.

Bocheński presupposed that there are only two shapes of philosophical thinking: Aristotelian and Hegelian. The first was more convincing for him because of its formal logic, which can be applied in contemporary science and in mathematical logic. Applying Aristotelian logic and also the metaphysical categories of Aristotle—according to Bocheński—allows the formulation of analytical theology, which nowadays is supposed to be the method of studying Thomism. Gogacz did not agree with that approach, as he could not agree to limit Thomism to logic in theology only. He agreed with Bocheński that “being a Thomist does not mean repeating everything that St. Thomas said, but proceeding as he would have proceeded were he in our position.”⁸ However, he objected that Thomas would never abandon metaphysics in favour of logic as “it was his sensitivity to real existence rather than to a logical description of possibilities that made him turn to the reality of beings.”⁹ According to Gogacz, theology should be specified with metaphysical thought, because logic is similarly the nature of metaphysics as well as logic. In the situation of two alternative approaches to philosophy—Aristotelian and Hegelian—Gogacz postulated following Thomas, as he guarantees entirely new perspectives of research. Gogacz did not agree with the identification of Thomism with Aristotelianism, as Bocheński did. Thomas, Gogacz says, worked out a new metaphysics in which the act of existence indicated the understanding of form and matter as elements of essence, elements which, when unseparated, were considered as potentiality with regard to the first act of being.

DISCUSSION WITH JÓZEF TISCHNER

The discussion between Mieczysław Gogacz and Józef Tischner on the character of philosophy and the meaning of Thomism for Christianity was one of the most interesting discussions that took place in Poland in the second half of the twentieth century. The reason was that Tischner was considered to be one of the greatest critics of Thomism in Poland.¹⁰ They continued exchanging arguments over twenty years

⁸ J.M. Bocheński, “Poza logiką jest tylko nonsens,” p. 6.

⁹ PA, pp. 61–62.

¹⁰ We need to point out that Tischner’s publications had been the subject of debate by those who, to some extent, were involved with Thomistic thought:

in many periodicals: *Znak*, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, *Życie i Myśl*, *Res Publica*, and *Słowo Powszechnie*.¹¹ Their conflict has had extremely different interpretations and various studies have been conducted on it, in which Tischner's point of view is most often pushed, and hence individual Thomists do not appear in it.¹² Nevertheless, Gogacz remains the author who wrote the most polemical articles, and is also among the Thomists to whom Tischner most often referred. Their publications show clearly enough that the intention behind the texts was not only mutual criticism, but also an explanation of misunderstandings and over-interpretations they had committed. Nevertheless, this polemic cannot be put aside when we write about the history of philosophy in Poland.¹³

Their discussion was focused on three clusters of problems: the inspiration and the subject of philosophy; the understanding of Thomism and its role in Christian thought; and the issue of understanding the world and the role of philosophy for theology (especially contemporary philosophy).

In his text *Filozofia i inspiracje*,¹⁴ Gogacz indicated that the question of choosing a philosopher, or a philosophical position, according to which the philosophy is then practiced, cannot be reduced to the issue of usefulness and effectiveness. The choice of philosopher cannot be dictated by the need to apply some remedy to contemporary problems, resulting from the nurturing issue of technology or crisis of culture.

M.A. Krąpiec, S. Swieżawski, S. Kamiński, T. Ślipko, W. Chudy, P. Bromski, and V. Possenti.

¹¹ M. Zembrzuski, "‘Cienie bez jaskini’ – spór M. Gogacza i J. Tischnera o charakter filozofii," in *Filozofia i mistyka*, ed. I. Andrzejuk and T. Klimski (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2012), pp. 99–114.

¹² A. Wilczek, "W poszukiwaniu prawdy o człowieku. Spór księdza Józefa Tischnera z tomizmem," *Czasopismo Filozoficzne* 4/5 (2009), p. 53; W.P. Glinkowski, "Ks. Józef Tischner," in *Polska filozofia powojenna*, vol. 2, ed. W. Mackiewicz (Warszawa: Witmark, 2001) pp. 383–384.

¹³ S. Szary, when he characterizes Tischner's philosophical thought, even points out that Tischner's dispute with Thomism was not only a significant moment in the history of Polish philosophy of the twentieth century but also "it cast a light to a deeper understanding of the philosophy of drama, along with motives behind the necessity for abandoning the language of ontology in Tischner's philosophy of drama." See S. Szary, *Człowiek – podmiot dramatu. Antropologiczne aspekty filozofii dramatu Józefa Tischnera* (Kęty: Wydawnictwo Antyk, 2005), p. 48.

¹⁴ M. Gogacz, "Filozofia i inspiracje," *Tygodnik Powszechny* 28, no. 9 (1974), p. 2.

On the contrary, Tischner, putting his views metaphorically, said that it is philosophy that makes the choice, not man. A philosopher, he claimed, is not supposed to establish his position, nor mention supporting any stance.¹⁵

This issue initiated a debate on a more complicated problem, which was how to describe the object of philosophy and the assessment of the role of philosophies, both classical and contemporary. Both authors had noticed a discrepancy between classical philosophy and the contemporary school, however, they differed in their assumptions with regard to their explanations of the problems of contemporary culture and reality. In Gogacz's view, metaphysics is the fundamental domain for classical philosophy, which means that it explains reality more deeply and at the same responds positively to the contemporary needs of man. For Tischner, it is phenomenology, the philosophy of consciousness and hermeneutics that are the leading domains in contemporary philosophy, that best serve the purposes of the man living in the twentieth century.

Classical philosophy, according to Gogacz, explains reality by exposing that which makes it reality. It conducts research into only those things which are able to manifest their reality to other beings. Contemporary philosophy, for which Tischner was an open proponent, turns its attention to the aspects of the theory of the cognition of experience only, the issue of emotions in human beings, the meaning of language, the role of values. The contemporary situation of philosophy, in which only some trends are treated as legitimate styles of philosophizing, must meet with the reaction and admonition of a more comprehensive approach to reality by classical philosophers. Gogacz points out that we need to focus on explaining reality from the aspect of that which constitutes it. He differentiates between the "philosophy of reality" and the "philosophy of grasping reality," and as he says, "one cannot conduct the philosophy of consciousness while neglecting the problem of being at the same time."¹⁶

An important point in considering the understanding of the nature of philosophy by both authors is the objection made by Gogacz that you cannot mix questions and information with the methods

¹⁵ J. Tischner, "Sporu o inspirację ciąg dalszy," *Znak* 26, no. 245 (1974), pp. 1471–1472.

¹⁶ M. Gogacz, "Czym zajmuje się filozofia," *Znak* 26, no. 243 (1974), p. 1151.

of obtaining answers. One cannot say, for example, that, using phenomenology, which studies the nature of correlates between being and consciousness and consciousness and being, the content of real beings can be found. Functionalism, which is Gogacz's accusation against contemporary philosophers, is a stance which agrees that knowledge about the relation of things in regard to each other becomes knowledge about the very beings as such. This shift that takes place in the recognition of information about relationships, for information about things, is unacceptable for the metaphysician and is a misunderstanding.¹⁷

A distinct topic in the discussion between Gogacz and Tischner was the meaning of Thomistic thought in philosophy and Christianity. Tischner wrote his answer (*Tomizm bez mitologii*¹⁸) in response to the text by S. Swieżawski, *Filozofia, teologia i duszpasterstwo*, in which the author pointed out the role of Thomism in defence of the absolute value of truth but—according to Tischner—he mistakenly interpreted the tendencies of contemporary philosophy. In his response to Tischner's text, Gogacz stood in defence of Swieżawski, focusing more on the "misunderstanding" the text caused.¹⁹ In his publication, Gogacz stressed that it was Tischner's arguments that were not based on merit as they accented that Thomist thinkers do not care for the suffering of workers and they do not influence ministry much, but instead what they care about is their continuing opposition to everything that is not Thomism.

The most significant controversies were caused by Tischner's article *Schyłek chrześcijaństwa tomistycznego*,²⁰ in which the following accusations against Thomism were made: Thomism is a speculative philosophical and theological system, it is not a philosophy of hope, it does not concern that which is subjective, it does not offer someone the cognition of oneself, "it does not understand" the mechanisms which rule the societal world, being interlocked in its notions and

¹⁷ M. Gogacz, "Nieporozumienia w wystąpieniu Tischnera przeciw Swieżawskiemu," *Życie i Myśl* 27, no. 9 (1977), pp. 106–108.

¹⁸ J. Tischner, "Tomizm bez mitologii," *Tygodnik Powszechny* 31, no. 17 (1977), pp. 1–2.

¹⁹ M. Gogacz, "Nieporozumienia w wystąpieniu Tischnera przeciw Swieżawskiemu," pp. 103–104.

²⁰ J. Tischner, "Schyłek chrześcijaństwa tomistycznego," *Znak* 22, no. 187 (1970), pp. 1–20.

categories, and it is unable to manage the criticism and development of science. The most important accusations were twofold: Thomism is of an isolationistic character (it cannot criticize) and it is a burden for understanding the essence of Christianity, for Church teaching had been rooted in one philosophical tradition. In his publications, Gogacz responded to each of the accusations. He clearly stressed that philosophy as such teaches how to understand reality, and Thomism in particular offers the concept of being in full agreement with reality. In general, the arguments for rejecting Thomism were justified by aims, not causes. Tischner's way of thinking expressed an axiological and not a metaphysical analysis of the structure of beings. Hence, value and its object do not need metaphysics, but axiology. The object of value does not need an identification of what the object is or even what its value is, but rather it needs a specific path to overcome the "crisis of hope." Thinking aimed at goals and evaluating has its fundamental, supreme causes, which are practice, utility and functionality. But these cannot, as Gogacz says, be an ultimate argument in philosophy.

Both authors, apart from differing in their aforementioned positions on philosophy and Thomism, had a different approach towards existence. This problem, however, appeared in the following texts respectively: Gogacz's *Ku prawdzie o człowieku* and Tischner's *Ku prawdzie o istnieniu*, published in one of the issues of *Znak*.²¹

In the text *Ku prawdzie o człowieku*, Gogacz presented a presumption of Tischner's philosophy as visible in the context of the issue of existence. He pointed out the main idea that suggests the primacy of essence prior to existence: "only that which is allowed by the constitutive features of the essence can start to exist."²² This primacy does not have a time dimension. But it is of a metaphysical character—the essence is the condition and the cause for a particular being to exist. However, according to Gogacz, it is quite the contrary, because we cannot agree to adopt "the primacy of an ideal order over a sheer factual one."²³ This disagreement results not only from a different understanding of the essence, but also of philosophy as such and its

²¹ M. Gogacz, "Ku prawdzie o człowieku," *Znak* 28, no. 259 (1976), pp. 108–113; J. Tischner, "Ku prawdzie o istnieniu," *Znak* 28, no. 259 (1976), pp. 114–115.

²² J. Tischner, "Sporu o inspirację ciąg dalszy," *Znak* 26, no. 245 (1974), p. 1471.

²³ *Ibidem*.

object. As Gogacz says in the aforementioned article, “Tischner’s version of philosophy is supposed to be an analysis of the structure of the essences, and the cluster of these essences of an ideal or cognitive order is a condition for the existence of being.”²⁴

Their discussion on the understanding of existence had one more significant trace, which was the “ambiguity of existence’s functioning.” Tischner accused existential Thomism, or rather Gogacz himself, that the existence is, on the one hand, the necessary but not sufficient condition which makes the essence possible, while on the other hand it is a sufficient, necessary, positive cause of that which is.²⁵ The apparent objection to the vicious circle is related to the fact that, according to Tischner, existence is the condition that a thing is (without existence there would be no consciousness), but it is also what explains what a given thing is (existence is, for example, a condition that awareness is consciousness). Gogacz says that the accusation against existential Thomism was the result of mistaking existence with being, i.e. existence with the mode of existence. Tischner claimed that “existence would ‘explain’ everything to us and it alone would not need any ‘explanation’. We would explain from the act ‘of existence’ whatever we need.”²⁶

Gogacz’s response regards the issue, crucial for metaphysics, of a distinction between the existence which establishes the whole being and the existence related to the essence. By this, we mean the differentiation of self-existence and the existence of contingent beings. Being, whose whole essence is existence, is the external cause of the existence for contingent beings. Contingent existence is the internal cause which actualizes the essence and co-formulates a particular being.²⁷ Hence, what we are dealing with here is not ambiguity in the understanding of existence but an awareness that there are at least two kinds of acts of existence.

For Tischner, the fact that existence received the status of an act and was considered to be the fullness and perfection of being had no

²⁴ M. Gogacz, “Ku prawdzie o człowieku,” p. 111.

²⁵ J. Tischner, “Sporu o inspirację ciąg dalszy,” p. 1477.

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ J. Tischner, in his article “Ku prawdzie o istnieniu,” does not respond to this, and only states that Gogacz did not understand his doubts. See J. Tischner, “Ku prawdzie o istnieniu,” *Znak* 28, no. 259 (1976), p. 114.

explanatory value. In his opinion, we can signify all properties to existence, however this will not explain why a being has just that existence, why the being is just what it is. Moreover, such an understanding of existence would explain nothing and would be included “in everything.”²⁸

Gogacz’s response to these accusations began with an indication that philosophy essentially aims to free itself from mixing concepts with things. Realistic philosophy in which the primacy of the real being as the object of study is accented is directed to grasping veritable reality. “Existential is not that which makes a particular man feel pain or joy, but that which really exists as the thing or the man.”²⁹ Notions, ideal structures and consciousness are not prior to existence, they are secondary with regard to what really exists. What is striking is that in his text *Ku prawdzie o człowieku*, Gogacz analyzed Tischner’s philosophy from the perspective of the act of existence. In the understanding of existence represented by the Cracovian philosopher, the theory of cognition had a primary role, which was supposed to “analyze the content of the notions, senses or essences of what is found in consciousness.”³⁰ At this point of their argument, however, Gogacz demanded priority be given to metaphysics, which studies the real being and takes the philosophical reflection of existence into consideration. This meaning that studies on the theory of the first act of being are not contradictory to studies on consciousness.

The last feature of the polemic between Gogacz and Tischner which drew a great deal of attention at that time was in the text *Nie można dłużej milczeć*, where Gogacz responded to Tischner’s attempt to describe the relation between God, man and world on the basis of Hegel’s philosophy. He turned attention to the fact that, for the Christian thought, and also for Christians themselves, it is not a trivial matter what kind of philosophy they adopt. Gogacz warned against idealism in philosophy, as its influence diminishes people’s intellectual immunity and their sensitivity to realistic explanations. He stressed that many theologians came to believe that it is contemporary philosophers (Hegel, Heidegger, Levinas, von Hildebrand and

²⁸ J. Tischner, “Sporu o inspirację ciąg dalszy,” p. 278.

²⁹ M. Gogacz, “Filozofia i inspiracje,” p. 2.

³⁰ M. Gogacz, “Ku prawdzie o człowieku,” p. 112.

Kołodkowski) who are able to explain reality better, and their voluntaristic stance on human nature show the truth on human being.³¹

DISCUSSION ON MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

With regard to the discussion on Marxist philosophy, we should note that Gogacz had been invited to take part in a debate on the article of Andrzej Kasia entitled *Mediocentryzm katolicki*.³² The discussion took place on 9 December 1971 in the Institute of Philosophy at Warsaw University. Conference lectures were gathered and published in one of the following issues of *Studia Filozoficzne*.³³ Generally, Gogacz's position, entirely critical of the text mentioned above, inspired further polemics. Kasia himself and the other participants, who, for the most part, were Marxists, rejected Gogacz's stance. They treated him as a proponent and a defender of mediocentrism. The very term "mediocentrism" had been coined as an accusation against Catholic thinkers who used to consider the Middle Ages as the best of the epochs, and some medieval theories (e.g. Thomism) were considered as timeless and universal. The accusation also regards the fact that the tendency of the whole Catholic culture of the contemporary world (especially in papal statements, and publications of intellectuals—philosophers, theologians, historians) is to recourse to medieval patterns. This accusation was also formulated in the historiosophical aspect as, according to Kasia, in no way can the medieval period be treated as the "norm," only as "a seed" for the coming ages.

As the problem undertaken in this polemic (the problem of the value of medieval culture for the Catholic tradition) is present even nowadays, it is worth turning attention to Gogacz's stance on the issue.³⁴ He suggests first that the erudition that Kasia shows entirely applies to the understanding of the Middle Ages itself and opinions about it, taken mainly from the works of Renaissance and modern

³¹ M. Gogacz, *Nie można dłużej milczeć*. Available at http://katedra.uksw.edu.pl/gogacz/artykuly/029_nie_mozna_dluzej.pdf (accessed: 09.12.2017).

³² A. Kasia, "Mediocentryzm katolicki," *Studia Filozoficzne* 5 (1971), pp. 3–43.

³³ See *Studia Filozoficzne* 7–8 (1972), pp. 141–202.

³⁴ M. Gogacz, "Średniowiecze i mediewiści," *Studia Filozoficzne* 7–8 (1972), pp. 141–152.

writers, as well as medievalists who speak unfavourably about this epoch. Moreover, Gogacz proved that, in his article, Kasia did not show the value of the Middle Ages even though he declared to do so. As a result, opinions regarding fanaticism, indolence, savagery, social stagnation, ignorance, and the tyranny of the churchmen of the ages are generalized and imposed on the entire epoch. Based on the negative narration (with some exceptions), he managed to influence the reader's approach and, in summary, he stated that there is no possibility for Catholic medievalists to have grounds for considering the Middle Ages as the normative age any longer.

In his response to the specific objections with regard to mediocentrism, Gogacz, a medievalist and a Thomist, formulated a few interesting opinions on the matter. Specialists in the field of the Middle Ages are not blind to the negative aspects of the epoch, however they appreciate the positive ones, which does not make them "mediocentrists." Contemporary Thomists do not repeat the notions of Thomas Aquinas verbatim, but appreciate in his philosophy that which enables an adequate recognition and understanding of reality. Gogacz himself in this book suggests straightforwardly his own understanding of Thomistic thought. It does not serve as a solution for all problems and is not an absolute truth in philosophy. It is a mode of research, a possibility to cognize the essence in beings. For that reason, Gogacz's Thomism is not mediocentric in the sense of confining philosophy to the level of medieval methods. Gogacz also declared that one cannot interpret the development of philosophy using historical categories only.

Gogacz critically responded to the categories of progress and conservatism used by Kasia. This pair of notions cannot be a criterion for judging views and opinions. Reasoning which relates mediocentrism to conservatism, especially by a historiosopher who adopts the idea of progress as the proper criterion for judging epochs, would result in applying a negative assessment to the entire epoch and to those who recourse to the epoch. Gogacz pointed out that categories of progress and conservatism demand a superior criterion, which can only be truth itself. Truth as recognition of the structure of being, its good and aims, can alone provide a rule for the development of a particular thing, a fundament for appraisal for what is pro development and what is against it. Gogacz also critically referred to the idea of Christian philosophy which, as he said, offers a positivistic approach

further adopted by Marxists. This understanding of Thomistic philosophy is, according to them, a synthesis of the results of two methodologically separate domains: philosophy and theology.³⁵

Gogacz was twice involved in polemics with Marxist thought on the issue of freedom.³⁶ To present a critical analysis of Marxist thought, Gogacz tried to read carefully both “classical” sources (Engels, Marx, Lenin) and Polish interpretations (M. Fritzhand, W. Krajewski, A. Schaff, H. Jankowski, S. Amsterdamski, H. Eilstein, T.M. Jaroszewski). Then he attempted to criticize them by formulating doubts and posing questions. The Marxist understanding of freedom is grounded in two presumptions: (1) man is a part of material nature; and (2) freedom is human power over ourselves and over nature, which is achieved by knowing the necessary laws of nature, and which takes place in history. Gogacz, who was a historian of philosophy and a metaphysician, was more nurtured by the issue of the ontological indicators of freedom in Marxism. There are two of them in Marxism: internal and external. The first group consists of getting cognition of the laws of nature and the deterministic dependence of will from natural and social factors, and also historical development. In the second group, there are self-consciousness and nature which man is able to control and determine for his cognition. These structural factors enabled the sense in which will is free to be explained. Freedom of will in Marxism was only a postulate, as it remained a sort of determination. It was treated as a form of knowledge about science, as an attempt to understand necessities proper to man.

The critical and outspoken position of Gogacz in the context of the understanding of freedom was concerned, at first, with the task of undermining the Marxist conviction of the solely material nature of the world; further, it was also about the rejection of the illusion that a Marxist is in some way able to explain the matter of freedom. Marxism, by assuming the materiality of the world, bases its philosophical claims on the results of specific sciences. Hence, when it formulates philosophical theses, it does not consult reality but opinions and pictures presented by, for example, physics and physicists.

³⁵ M. Gogacz, “Średniowiecze i mediewiści,” pp. 151–152.

³⁶ M. Gogacz, “Zagadnienie wolności w marksizmie,” *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 12, no. 1 (1964), pp. 65–75; “Ontyczne wyznaczniki wolności woli ludzkiej według marksizmu,” *Studia Philosophiae Christianae* 4, no. 2 (1968), pp. 5–20.

The veracity of judgements on the matter which had been analyzed and cognized would be based on the veracity of the witness in which they are rooted. Marxist philosophy would formulate true propositions as far as the laws of physics are true. Gogacz, defending the uniqueness of philosophical sciences, does not agree that philosophy should be a generalization of particular sciences or that the results of one of the sciences should be the basis for adjudging the whole of reality.

Freedom, as understood by Marxism, can actually be identified with the knowledge attained by man and the possibility to operate on it. Because freedom in Marxism depends on our power over ourselves, as well as on our power over the natural world, then there is no philosophical difference between “being something” and “doing something.” Freedom is not explained in Marxism, because the accent has been put on the amount of knowledge, the mode of its operation and its sources. According to Gogacz, there is no explanation of what the source for free human acts is. Similarly, when it comes to the issue of responsibility, we notice how strongly it attaches humans to nature and to the social class man comes from. Responsibility for actions cannot be explained.

Discussions, disputes and polemics in the specific area of philosophy have always been subjects of interest for listeners and readers. This is so for numerous reasons: philosophy is a living and creative discipline, philosophers struggle in presenting and specifying their views, theorems themselves lose their systemic abstraction when they are measured and evaluated by the eyes of another philosopher, and finally the listeners and readers of *volens nolens* take a stand in the dispute. Exchanges of views between adversaries also result, albeit not first of all (as the history of philosophy confirms), in the development of philosophy as such and of philosophical concepts. Philosophical disputes do not just lapse into silence after being finished, but develop independently. They live through their long lasting consequences, and they bear—sometimes even unexpectedly for those involved—fruit. For Gogacz, these were among the reasons to join the disputes in Poland at that time; such were the motivations of his involvement, and these were the functions it served. He could not remain silent on the matter of the truth of reality in a situation where truth could have been in any way undermined or found to be unattainable on philosophical grounds.

THE IMPACT ON THE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

CARE FOR CHRISTIAN CULTURE IN POLAND

In total, under the direction of Mieczysław Gogacz, 98 graduates obtained a Master's degree¹ and 24 were awarded the title of Doctor of Philosophy. He reviewed 53 doctoral theses at various universities, participated in 24 habilitations and prepared 17 reviews for professional titles.²

The group of disciples and followers of professor Gogacz's ideas includes: Tadeusz Klimski Ph.D., the first disciple and his successor at the Warsaw Theological Academy (history of modern and contemporary philosophy); Stanisław Krajski Ph.D. (the ideas of Thomas Aquinas in relation to ethics and social sciences); Rev. Tomasz Stepień Ph.D., lecturer at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (Neoplatonism); Paweł Milcarek Ph.D. (metaphysics, medieval philosophy); Jakub Wójcik Ph.D. (ethics and pedagogy); Krzysztof Kalka Ph.D. (philosophical basis of pedagogy); Adam Górniak Ph.D. (metaphysics and its consequences in social sciences); Col. Jerzy Niepsuj Ph.D. (modern and contemporary philosophy); Marek Prokop Ph.D. (medieval

¹ Cf. A. Andrzejuk, "Mieczysław Gogacz," in *Polska filozofia powojenna*, vol. 1, ed. W. Mackiewicz (Warszawa: Witmark, 2001), p. 313.

² Compilation based on M. Gogacz, *Życie społeczne w duchu Ewangelii* (Episteme, vol. 59) (Olecko: Wydawnictwo Wszechnicy Mazurskiej, 2006), pp. 191–196. A list of the names and titles of the works written under the direction of Mieczysław Gogacz can be found therein.

Arabic philosophy); Krzysztof Wojcieszek Ph.D. (philosophical anthropology); and Prof. Artur Andrzejuk Ph.D., his successor as the Chair at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (history of ancient and medieval philosophy, philosophical anthropology).³

At the beginning of the 1990s, due to political changes in Poland, Gogacz—in addition to his lectures at the Warsaw Theological Academy—also led classes in philosophy (mainly in the field of realistic philosophy and ethics) at the University of Warsaw, the Medical University of Warsaw and the Military University of Technology in Warsaw.

In 1991–1992, Gogacz delivered guest lectures on the basics of the metaphysics of a real being at the Medical University of Warsaw as a part of Kazimierz Szałata Ph.D.'s classes. In 1992, the professor entered the scientific committee of the “Human medicine” Intercollegiate Ethics Seminar. This committee, created on the basis of the classes in philosophy and ethics at the Medical University of Warsaw, has become an important place for interdisciplinary reflection upon the most difficult problems of the modern world, with a particular emphasis on issues related to the development of medicine.⁴

Apart from his *alma mater*, the Institute of Humanities at the Military University of Technology was the one that Gogacz was associated with for the longest (1992–1995). For this cooperation, he was awarded the Silver Medal of Merit for National Defence⁵ and the Commemorative Medal of the Military University of Technology in Warsaw. For the needs of didactic classes for students related to the military, Gogacz developed an innovative educational program. It was initially a script from 1993, and was then published as the book *Wprowadzenie do etyki*

³ List of persons (subjects of their published articles and scientific books refer to Mieczysław Gogacz's ideas and concepts) based on A. Andrzejuk, “Mieczysław Gogacz,” pp. 313–315 (scientific degrees and titles have been updated).

⁴ This period includes interviews, such as “Etyka warunkiem zaufania do lekarza,” in *Gazeta Lekarska* 2, no. 9 (1991), and articles, such as “Naczelną troską lekarzy – chronić dobro człowieka,” in *Słowo Powszechne* 45, no. 5 (1991) and “Ciało ludzkie jako zadanie dla medycyny,” in *Gazeta Niedzielną* 46, no. 21 (1994). In addition, there are materials from scientific sessions organized from 1993–1995 on the occasion of John Paul II proclaiming the World Day of the Sick (ed. K. Szałata, Warszawa, 1995). Later also came the book *Etyka i Medycyna* (1998).

⁵ Mieczysław Gogacz also received the Gold Medal for Merits to Defence in 2010.

chronienia osób [Introduction to the Ethics of Protecting Persons].⁶ Wojciech Przetakiewicz, the Vice-Rector of the Military University of Technology at the time, wrote the following about professor Gogacz:

The introduction and implementation of an innovative program of ethics, combined with the richness of the professor's ideas and his personal influence—especially kindness towards people—contributed in a significant way to the proper formation of personality and, at the same time, improving the intellect of our students, cadets, and future military engineers.⁷

Social activity was another aspect of Gogacz's scientific work. The book entitled *Breadcrumbs* represents the effects of such activity in the 1990s (interviews, comments, participation in parliamentary committees). It touches upon a number of philosophical, theological, political, and cultural problems: abortion, family, protection of life, politics, and tolerance. It also includes comments on films and books.⁸

After the publication of the book *Podstawy wychowania* [Basics of upbringing] in 1993, Gogacz became an awaited guest at meetings of educators. Most such invitations came from the Higher Pedagogical School in Bydgoszcz (now Kazimierz Wielki University). These contacts resulted in another book on the philosophical basis of education: *Osoba zadaniem pedagogiki. Wykłady bydgoskie z roku 1997* [Pedagogy in Service of the Person. Lectures in Bydgoszcz, 1997].⁹

A separate issue that is well worth mentioning is the fact that Gogacz also had publications on religious topics that won him many readers. He published hundreds of short popular science articles in Catholic weekly magazines, in which he often touched upon philosophical issues. His religious books were published in a relatively large amount (for the time) of copies: four editions of *On ma wzrastać* [He

⁶ J. Niepsuj, "Sprawozdanie z uroczystego pożegnania z WAT i wręczenia honorowych odznaczeń Panu Profesorowi dr hab. Mieczysławowi Gogaczowi," *Studia Philosophiae Christianae* 34, no. 1 (1998), p. 138.

⁷ W. Przetakiewicz, "Pożegnanie Pana Profesora Mieczysława Gogacza," *Studia Philosophiae Christianae* 34, no. 1 (1998), 139.

⁸ "I have asked the Reader to accept this book. It is a basket of the crumbs of the real bread of philosophy and theology, images of the present day, exposing current everyday affairs to the Catholicism that we value" (Brdc, p. 6).

⁹ A. Andrzejuk, "Profesor Mieczysław Gogacz – biografia wyznaczona ogłoszeniem książki," in SL, p. 120.

must increase]¹⁰ and three editions of a prayer book entitled *Dzień z Matką Bożą* [Day with Our Lady].¹¹ In 1965, the Sisters of Loreto Publishing House published the book *On ma wzrastać* [He must increase]. The title was taken from the Gospel of St. John, in which St. John the Baptist said in reference to Christ: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (Jn 3:30 ESV). From that moment, Gogacz simultaneously published both scientific and religious texts.¹² Out of the latter two, *He must increase* enjoyed the greatest appreciation among readers. In private letters and conversations with the author, many people emphasized that they owed their conversion to this book.¹³

Gogacz described his scientific and didactic activity as a defence of Christian culture.¹⁴

INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS

Mieczysław Gogacz, during his foreign scholarships in the 1950s in Paris and Toronto, established international contacts in medievalist circles. In 1967, he participated in the International Theological Congress in Toronto and in the Third World Congress of the Lay Apostolate,¹⁵ which was held that October in Rome. Also in Rome, in 1974 at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum), Gogacz took part in a congress in honour of Thomas Aquinas.¹⁶ In total, Gogacz visited 25 countries.¹⁷

¹⁰ The number of copies of the first edition amounted to 5,000, and it was rewritten on typewriters by the readers themselves to disseminate its content (HMI, p. 7).

¹¹ A complete list of all publications can be viewed at http://katedra.uksw.edu.pl/gogacz/cv_gogacz.htm (accessed: 16/11/2017).

¹² A. Andrzejuk, “Profesor Mieczysław Gogacz – biografia wyznaczona ogłoszeniem książek,” in SL, p. 108.

¹³ From the introduction: “This book interacts in more plentiful ways than other books” (HMI, p. 4).

¹⁴ Cf. *Encyklopedia filozofii polskiej*, vol. 1 (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasz z Akwinu, 2011) (entry), p. 425.

¹⁵ For a report of the congress in Rome, see SC, pp. 226–249.

¹⁶ For the report of the congress, see SC, pp. 76–78.

¹⁷ A. Andrzejuk and T. Klimski, “Historia Filozofii,” in *Wydział Filozofii Chrześcijańskiej na ATK 1954–1999*, ed. J. Bielecki and J. Krokos (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2001), p. 24.

Gogacz described his travels as follows:

For six months I watched France from the Sorbonne and the Catholic Institute. For seven months, I got acquainted with Canada through the Centre for Medieval Studies in Toronto. Three months were given to me for Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Israel, Greece, the United States, England, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria. I travelled through parts of Syria and Czechoslovakia.¹⁸

Gogacz was strongly involved in the issues raised at the aforementioned congresses and seminars, e.g. the definition of a person and its precision—a problem discussed at scientific sessions at the University of Paris XII (now UPEC) in 1982 and 1983.¹⁹

The author has published over 30 articles in foreign languages; mainly articles in French, but also several in English and German. In the 1980s, most of his articles in French were published in Paris in the *Journal Philosophique*. Gogacz published several articles in English in the quarterly of the Polish Academy of Sciences, *Dialectics and Humanism*.

Gogacz also wrote in the Polish language press. In the 1960s and 1970s he published seven articles in the Catholic monthly *Nasza Rodzina*, published in Paris. In the 1980s four articles appeared in the weekly *Głos Katolicki*, also published in the capital of France. He also published an article in the monthly *Pielgrzym* and in the *Związkowiec* magazine published in Toronto. In the 1990s he often published in the London-based *Gazeta Niedzielną*.

Papers delivered at foreign sessions, seminars and congresses were published in post-conference volumes, and Gogacz published information from these meetings in the form of reports, mainly in the journal *Studia Philosophiae Christianae*. These were mainly medievalist congresses organized by the Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale and philosophical colloquia organized by the Centre de Recherche Philosophique de Saint Thomas d'Aquin. Two of these colloquia in Paris were concerned with the problem of the person.

¹⁸ SC, p. 187.

¹⁹ EPP, p. 25 and "Subsystencja i osoba według św. Tomasza z Akwinu," *Opera Philosophorum Medii Aevi* 8 (1987), p. 203.

GLOSSARY OF BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL TERMS

Anthropology, philosophical: the philosophical study of man, done eclectically nowadays. Thomism intends to formulate coherent metaphysics of man as a being, with regard to the problem of a person and personal relations.

Accident: being, which in its action and persistence depends on an independent being. Accident is inherited (subjected) in the independent being. It is that which it is, and acts for its own sake, but it exists as long as it is inherited in substance, of which it is an accident.

Act: that which is factual, real and dominant in being. An act is the basic element of being, the very first and initiating principle. Existence is the act of being; form is the act of being's essence.

Actualizing: the manifestation of the power of the act of existence. It causes the mutual connection of that which has been constituted in potential essence with the one individual being under the influence of its final causes. It refers to beings initiated by the derivative act of existence.

Being: that which is real due to its initiating act of existence; that which is real as an individual structure. Being in its constitutive principles is the object of metaphysics.

Cause: being or principle, which brings about being or principles of being. Effects, which are not beings, are assigned only to principles, not to causes. Thus, a cause is the being or principle which brings about being. In consequence, a cause is a being grasped in its function of bringing about an effect.

Contemplation: contemplation is the joyful and loving intellect's and will's testimony of the direct cognition of existential relations as well as of their consequences. Due to contemplation, intellect acquires such dispositions as wisdom and distances itself from knowledge. Will acquires a disposition to the right choice for the good for us, thus, will is able not to interpret it as a good itself.

Creation: the way of making the derivative act of existence real by the subsistent act of existence. The internal elements of an individual being do not pre-exist a created being. Such a created being is initiated by a derivative act of existence, which makes a being real and actualizes his constitutive elements.

Culture: in the subjective aspect, culture involves acquired volitive and intellectual dispositions as well as inner spiritual life as a part of a personality; in the objective aspect, it is a group of products (works) in which human spiritual life has been fixed. The relation between internal and external culture comes from the influence of products upon human personality by means of education and upbringing.

Distinctiveness: a manifestation of the act of existence in a being. It points out the act's power of designation of the area of a being's individual structure. Distinctiveness makes the difference between two individual beings clear. It is a content of the principle of non-contradiction (the principle of the non-identity of being and non-being).

Essence: a cause of that in a being which is in its potential aspect; made real by an internal act of existence, which actualizes the proper constitution of an essence under the influence of final causes. They are basic and necessary principles of the essence, which make being that which it is.

Ethics: philosophical discipline, which points out the principles of the choice of actions, which should protect persons. Wisdom, contemplation and conscience are among these principles. In ethics, as well as the theory of principles, there is also the theory of values, because the choice of being as good requires the choice of values. As such, ethics directs us to consider metanoia and culture, where relations to persons create humanism and religion.

Evil: in the metaphysical sense, i.e. in the aspect of being, it does not exist at all: it is a deficiency of good and being. In the physical sense, evil is a deficiency of some appropriate accidents of being. In the moral sense, evil is the incompatibility of some actions with wisdom (understood) as a main principle of the choice of actions. We call it evil from the position of valuation. Thus, evil is regarded as something that is evaluated highly negatively. Evil is bothersome in reality, however it is just an evaluative (axiological) approach to deficiency.

Experience, mystical: a kind of cognition which is caused by God, who is cognized as an existence by the potential intellect directly through the speech of the heart. Such cognition occurs with an exclusion of internal and external speech, sensitive powers and agent intellect. In the mystical experience God is cognized as a principle. Mystical experience is a rapid, short and internal impression; a man is not able to prepare for it. It is not experience of the persons of the Holy Trinity, because they are not principles impressed by potential intellect. It is not a necessary condition of higher levels of religious life.

Faith, relation of: relation connecting two people based on the transcendental property of truth. It is a result of a mutual opening up to each other and making oneself available to other people. It is also a result of an entrusting to others of what we are and how we live. The personality of the person to whom we entrust ourselves is important here. We incorporate their spiritual life. There is a similar relation between a man and God.

First principles: judgements at the level of internal speech and statements at the level of external speech. Their meanings express themselves in the intellectual grasp of transcendental properties (distinctiveness, unity, reality and derivative separateness).

The properties are received by potential intellect at the level of the “speech of the heart” as an effect of acting being. Potential intellect acquires dispositions in using the principles. Due to its acquired dispositions, intellect does not mislead transcendental properties as a manifestation of a being’s act of existence with the internal being’s principles as well as with a being itself. At the order of clear cognition, first principles are the output sentences of metaphysics. There are: the principle of non-contradiction (distinctiveness), the principle of identity (unity), the principle of sufficient reason (reality), and the principle of the excluded middle (separateness).

Form: an act with a regard to matter, which is inside the essence of being. It is made real by existence, which is proper for being and initiates it. Form is related through essence with an existence and is influenced by final causes.

God: the subsistent act of being, constituted of only one principle, though it is its own cause of existence. As an act of existence, it does not depend on other causes, because it is the source of all causes. He is in itself (*ens a se*), what we call subsistency. A subsistent act of existence is a principle of all principles and, as such, it is also a principle of derivative acts of existence and intellectuality. As a source of existence and intellectuality, He is a person. As a person, He relates to other persons with love, faith and hope. He refers to persons like a father. Such an attitude results from His position as a first principle. Moreover, God revealed his paternal attitude to persons in the Revelation. The Revelation is the basis of religion, which is the conglomerate of personal relations connecting people with God as their Father. In metaphysics, God is a being, that is, subsistent existence. In religion, God is a Father, who relates to people personally. Relations and their history are explained in metaphysics as well as in theology.

Good: one of the manifestations of the act of existence in being. In the metaphysical sense, good is able to give rise to positive references to other beings. In the physical sense, good occurs when being has all its accidental equipment. In the moral sense, good is an accordance of the choice of the action with personal wisdom. As such, it is the basis of the recognition of evil as a lack of good.

Hope, relation of: a relation between two people which is based on the transcendental property of good. It is a consequence of the expectation of being together and mutual openness. It relies on a need to be among kind and faithful people, on a need for love and faith. From the aspect of God, hope is a supernatural disposition of strengthening love and faith, which are given to us by God. Hope introduces love and faith.

Humanism: in culture, humanism is understood as a group of habits acquired by a person and as a conglomerate of external works which express spiritual human life. Humanism is a result of actions which protect personal relations and persons (as such, they protect the very existence of persons). The actions direct to reality, truth and good.

Idealism: in the theory of cognition, it is the view that only that which is caused by thought exists, and a man is able to cognize only those thought constructions. Idealism assigns thought as a result of thinking—a power of causing that which exists, and a power of unifying real elements into thought compositions. It is the consequence of the idealistic thesis that intellect as a cognizing subject or thought as a result of thinking or thinking as an action is the first principle of reality (instead of individual being).

Identification: a method of metaphysics, a way of research process, which is based on maintaining the separateness of being and its principles. As a metaphysical method, identification helps to differentiate effects and causes, and is also able to specify a cause by an essential system of causes and effects. Further, it is able to specify principles and beings in themselves instead of grasping them in a reference to us. Identification allows us not to confuse the manifestation of an act of existence with essence's accidents; it adapts realism in every kind of cognition, especially in the aspect of the “speech of the heart.” It also employs the first principles, which express transcendentals as ways of existence of being.

Love, relation of: a relation connecting two people which is based on the transcendental property of reality. It is a result of people's being together and relies on mutual kindness.

Making real: the manifestation of the power of the act of existence, which makes other principles real. A self-subsistent act of existence makes the derivative and external acts of existence real, because as a mere existence it does not have anything real inside itself. Derivative acts of existence make being real by initiating it, that is, by co-composing itself with actualized principles into one individual being.

Manifestation of an act of existence (transcendental properties, transcendentals): an act of existence manifests itself in being as distinctiveness, unity, reality, truth, good and beauty. Therefore, the whole being manifests and takes over that which is an act of existence.

Matter: an effect of form's influence, which extends it. Extent concerns potency, which is not form and makes it subject to physical accidents. Matter as an effect of form concerns the essence of being in its potential aspect, which is made real by its proper act of existence. Final causes should also be taken into account while considering influences of matter actualization. Such final causes involve material potency essentially.

Metanoia: the distancing of oneself from culture by a change in one's way of thinking. Instead of thinking being directed towards products, one starts to direct his or her thoughts towards beings. Metanoia is an effect of a belief that humans are protected by persons and personal relations. As such, it introduces humanism. Also, metanoia is a subdiscipline of ethics (after the theory of principles and the theory of values).

Metaphysics (the first philosophy, philosophy of being): philosophical discipline, which, in accordance with the right subject of potential intellect, identifies internal and external principles of individual being.

Nature: an account of essence from the aspect of its adaptation to its proper actions by the influence of external principles.

Person: an individual being, whose act of existence makes intellectuality real. Among the constituting (*constitutiva*) elements of

a person are existence and intellectuality. The entire being is a person. A person is the whole human being, whose essence is the soul with intellectual potency and the body made real by the dependent act of existence. Similarly, an angel is a person. Also, God is a person, who is the subsistent act of existence, because this act is the principle of all other principles, including intellectuality.

Pluralism: the way of being's existence as distinct, separate, internally unified and real. These properties are designated by the act of existence of beings. Pluralism is also a belief that there is no common timber of being—instead each individual being is constituted by its proper, unique timber, which builds up the internal principles of being. The unique timber of being requires the creation of the proper act of existence, which actualizes and makes the entire individual being real.

Potency: that which is made real as an essence by an act of existence. Also that which, under the influence of final causes, actualizes (for example, in a man) the intellectual (spiritual) sphere, which involves form. Also, it actualizes the material sphere, which outlines particularity in the essence. Potency always limits an act, i.e. it causes an act to make only certain potency real as an essence of being. Regarding the essence, form is a direct act of spiritual and material potency.

Presence: the effect of personal relations among people. It is characterized as a personal relation and its direct subjects. It is love, faith and hope. It is also being together (reality), mutual personal openness (truth) and maintaining with love and faith (good). With regard to action, it is the mutual service of people held by being's reality of presence, truth and good. It is an effect of a person's metanoia and humanism, brought by people to culture.

Principle: that which co-creates an individual being and co-exists with individual beings. Principle makes an effect which is proportional to itself. On the one hand, a principle might be internal and as such, it is a component of a being. On the other hand, a principle might be external and as such, it is an independent or dependent being (accident), which gives rise to the internal principle of a being.

Product: an intellectual merger of individual beings into a new composition. The composition is made by a mechanical tie of being's properties for some new purpose or function. The composition is not ontologically one, it is only functionally one. Thus, it does not have its own act of existence, which is specific for substance. Among the internal causes of a product are accidental individual beings. Thinking, which composes a product into the visible form of human knowledge, is a product's external cause. It can be said that product is being for us (*quo and nos*), a constituted, sensible form of human knowledge.

Realism: in the theory of cognition it is the opinion that beings exist independently of our cognition and creation; also, that we recognize those beings instead of our own thoughts and effects of thinking. It is the consequence of the thesis that an individual being is the first object of metaphysics.

Reality: a manifestation of a being's act of existence. It indicates the virtue of causing by the act (understood as an internal principle of being), that a being is real. It makes clear the difference between being and not being. It is a content of the principle of sufficient reason (the principle of the reality of being).

Relation: dependent (accidental) being, which connects two other beings. Among these two beings, the first one (*unum*) is a subject of relation or a sender of relation. The other (*aliud*) is an object, an end or an addressee of relation. In other words, relation is a reference between two beings (*ordo unius ad aliud*). Relation is designated only by its subject and its end. There are relations merely according to speech and relations according to being. Metaphysics examines relations according to being. They are internal (transcendental) and external (categorical). Among categorical relations, there are existential ones (personal, non-personal and effective) and essential ones (action, cognition).

Religion: the group of personal relations which connect man and God. From the aspect of a man, the relations are based on transcendental properties and are protected by intellectual and volitive human operations. As such, they reveal the humanistic dimension of religion. From the aspect of God, who brings into these relations

the fact of who He is, i.e. His life proper to God, the relations reveal the supernatural dimension of religion. Since existence and action are the same thing in God, God exists where He acts. He exists in the essence of a person, and is surrounded by personal relations. Metaphysics explains the natural reality of the relations, whereas theology explains the supernatural character of the relations.

Soul: form, which is the principle of identity of being. Soul refers to the area of the essence of being.

Speech of the heart: a conglomerate of real effects and real relations made in cognizing beings by other beings, which acts upon the potential intellect. These effects are the potential intellect's passive reception of the essential principles of being. They are the reception of being's transcendental properties, the born word of the heart, the potential intellect acquiring dispositions in its understanding of the first principles of being as well as acquiring wisdom.

Substance: independent individual being constituted of proper principles.

Theology: an explanation of the personal relation between man and God, which refers to Revelation, as well as an explanation of God's reference to creatures. God has revealed Himself as a loving Father, saving the Son of God and sanctifying the Holy Spirit. Having become a man, the Son of God showed us the value of the permanent lasting of the love and presence of the Holy Trinity. This is called salvation. Theology could be regarded as an explanation of the revealed values or as a revealed axiology, or as an explanation of the history of salvation. Such an explanation always requires the proper identification of God as a being and Father, and of the relations between God and a man, so it requires the metaphysics of existing real beings. In this aspect, theological explanation is dogmatic theology. Various aspects and problems of Revelation constitute the objects of theological disciplines. So as well as dogmatic theology, there is Christology, mariology, ecclesiology, mystic theology, and moral theology.

Thomism: the trend of understanding Saint Thomas Aquinas' thought, which appears in each historical area. It indicates a form of

philosophical erudition of scholars, their thought patterns and their understanding of an act of existence.

Truth: the manifestation of an act of existence in being. It relies on making the principles of being and cognition available in an encounter. It is the openness of a being towards other beings. As such, it is called metaphysical truth. In the epistemological sense, it is an accordance of the information of being that has been received in an encounter and cognition with the being itself. In the logical sense, it is a property of statements. It is a basis of intelligibility, which is designated by an act of existence; also, it is a basis of the accordance (adequacy) of knowledge and cognized being. And thus, it is also a basis of a recognition of falsehood as an incompatibility of knowledge and cognized being.

Unity: a manifestation of an act of existence in being. It shows how an act of existence is capable of appointing the subordination of an internal being's principles to an act: an essence is subordinated to an act of existence, because there is no essence without acts of existence making it real. Material or intellectual potency is subordinated to form, because without form there would be only unspecified potencies and they would not constitute any individual being. Unity emphasizes priority in being or the domination of an act and the internal structure of being, which is designed by an act. It is a content of the principle of identity (the principle of the internal content of being).

Value: the lasting of personal relations. Value is neither independent, nor a dependent being. It is not a relation either. It is lasting, because we appreciate the relation we are in and we desire to stay in it.

Wisdom: an intellectual habit of grasping a being in the aspect of its results and recognizing it as a cause. Also, wisdom is the insightful reception of truth, i.e. all beings and all their results. At the same time, wisdom is the skill of revealing the will of good for us. It relies on grasping being from the aspect of truth and good by identifying a cause of being through its result (it is proper for the metaphysics of being). Aristotle understood wisdom as an intellectual grasping causes and results, and thus he identified wisdom with metaphysics. Nowadays, it should be said that metaphysics is the result of wisdom.

Word of the heart (*verbum cordis*): a result of the acting of essential principles of being upon potential intellect. These principles cause the meeting with us, which is born and which is not made a result. It motivates a will to get directed to a being, which acts upon us as well as motivates us to acquire a contact with the being within existential relations.

World: the sum of individual beings, which manifest their properties. These properties are the basis of relations with other beings.

II.

MIECZYŚLAW GOGACZ:
SELECTED WRITINGS

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All the quoted books by Mieczysław Gogacz have an Internet edition, available at http://katedra.uksw.edu.pl/gogacz/mieczyslaw_gogacz_start.htm. In this volume we refer to this edition only. We provide the abbreviations used in this volume in brackets. The numbering of pages refers to the web editions.

1. *Filozoficzne aspekty mistyki* [Philosophical Aspects of Mystics], Warszawa 1985 [PAM].
2. *Szkice o kulturze* [Sketches on Culture], Kraków–Warszawa/Struga 1985 [SC].
3. *Modlitwa i mistyka* [Prayer and Mystics], Kraków–Warszawa/Struga 1987 [PM].
4. *Elementarz metafizyki* [Introduction to Metaphysics], Warszawa 1987, Suwałki 1996², Warszawa 1998³, 2008⁴ [IM].
5. *Mądrość buduje państwo. Człowiek i polityka – Rozważania filozoficzne i religijne* [Wisdom Builds the State: A Man and Politics – Philosophical and Religious Reflection], Niepokalanów 1993 [WBS].
6. *Osoba zadaniem pedagogiki. Wykłady bydgoskie* [Pedagogy in Service of the Person: Bydgoszcz Lectures], selected and edited by A. Andrzejuk and K. Kalka, Warszawa 1997 [PSP].

METAPHYSICS

M. Gogacz, *Elementarz metafizyki*, second edition, Suwałki: Wyższa Szkoła Służby Powszechnej, 1996, Internet edition.

INTRODUCTION

Metaphysics should be understood as an identification of internal and external principles of being. Metaphysics searches for the first and real causes of what the being is. What I try to do is to show the method of obtaining metaphysical theses. Thus, metaphysics is a kind of heuristic account, which reveals a being in a more adequate manner than as just a set of theses concerning being. However, metaphysical theses are not optional or arbitrary. Their source lies in the effect of an encounter, which is also called an unclear cognition. So, metaphysics as a set of theses on principles of being is constituted as an accurate account of effects of encountering the being.

Metaphysical theories differ from each other only on the level of clear cognition. Their difference lies in the disturbances in transferring an experience from the level of unclear cognition to the level of clear cognition.

The disturbances are caused by culture.

The accurate and faithful description of the encounter with a being which acts upon us is a first and initial knowledge of the internal content of being. Through reasoning, we could make this knowledge more precise and we could develop it. A metaphysician does not defend metaphysics, he always defends reality and the truth of being. A metaphysician is faithful to the existence, the essence of being, and he or she is not stuck to accounts or theories. A metaphysician defends only knowledge, which claims faithfully that being exists and describes it

essentially, as far as being reveals its own essential content. The existence of being is the measure and test of our knowledge. Intellect and cognition cannot play this role, because they only fulfill what the being transmits through the encounter that it evokes.

[IM, p. 5]

ENCOUNTER WITH A BEING AND ITS EFFECTS

An encounter is each relation connecting two beings. The nature of this relation depends on the nature of the beings. Let us note that when the encounter involves two people whose relation is based on the manifestation of existence, it is called presence. However, not every encounter is a presence. At the moment, we consider only this very first encounter, which initiates contact between beings as such. Mostly, it is about the effects of such an encounter.

The encounter is a source of knowledge and an object of science. We want to consider it as a relation between a real being and a human being who is also a living being. A human being is gifted with an ability to receive what the being transmits itself in the encounter.

Let us also note that, by being, we understand that which really exists, and that which acts as a separate, internally composed unit.

We consider existence as the origin of being and its primary component. Existence, together with the other components of being, composes itself into the real individual being.

An essence is a set of internal components. All the components make the individual being a separate real being. Nature is an essence because of its connections with corresponding, influential beings. Thus, nature is an essence enriched by the effects of living beings. The effect is always what is induced in the other being by the acting being. We just want to describe what makes the human being a real being.

While getting to know, for example, the forest, we realize that there is a picture of the forest in us, that we have got some information about it. Something in us has changed, but nothing has changed in the forest. It follows that something is changing in the person receiving the information and nothing changes in the being which delivers the information. This being only affects the receptors or cognitive powers of a man.

We also learn that an encounter is a cognition. Such cognition is based on the following direction of interaction: the being that informs acts upon the being which is receiving the information. Such direction of evoking information is called realism. Idealism is the reverse direction, that is, the cognizing man is guided to a cognized being and chooses the information he is interested in.

By assuming realism, we can detect that each cognitive power is sensitive to the proper elements of the cognized being. Firstly, we realize that the sensitive powers are receptive. Each being that informs us about itself goes through these powers. We realize that later on. This does not mean, however, that the first sensitive content we receive is the first effect induced in us by the informing being. For now, we are still talking about what we are aware of. What we are aware of, however, must be firstly found in us, so that it can become the object of awareness. Consequently, it is important to distinguish knowledge that is not yet known from the knowledge of which we are aware. This is called unclear cognition and clear cognition.

When we talk about an encounter as a source of cognition and the object of science, it is about unclear cognition, i.e. about this acquired information, which we slowly realize and order in such a way that, depending on what the acquired information concerns, an appropriate discipline of science arises.

So, when there is an encounter between a being and the human perception through the receptors or the sensitive powers, information about the physical nature of the tree is transferred to us and it makes us turn to the tree. The acquired information concerns the forest and, at the same time, the individual tree, which we distinguish from other trees. So, we come to the information that we see not only the greenery shared by all the trees, but also something that allows us to move to a particular tree as a separate real and self-identified being. If the tree was not real, it could not affect us, because nothingness, which is nothing at all, provides no information. If we continue to move to the same tree, it follows that, apart from the common physical features of all trees we have received information about the contents of the tree that cause its distinctness and individuality. Also, these contents make that which the tree is within itself a real being. These deepest contents of the tree and every other being are called the inner components of the being, or its principles. We say that, along with the components received by the senses, there is another cognitive power,

known as the potential intellect. The potential intellect has received the essential principles of being in their unity, because they direct us to this particular being. So, the first result of the received or unclearly cognized principles of being is our directing to this being.

Describing the effects of unclear cognition, St. Thomas Aquinas thinks that in the encounter of the potential intellect with existence we have received the essential principles of being and their unity. Potential intellect is receiving them through the senses. The knowledge of principles is not realized, because they are obtained through the cooperation of other cognitive powers. The potential intellect takes the knowledge of the principles from the senses, and under their influence produces the word of the heart, that is, the motive or stimulus that affects the will and directs us to the acting being. Both intellect and will and other intellectual or volitional powers do not leave the ontological area of man and do not reach the being which is the source of information. They are only active in the context of information we collect and receive. Intellect and will make sure, however, that on the level of the manifestations of our co-existence, the relation is the way we make contact with a being.

These relations, built on the manifestation of existence, are co-existence, which is full of compassion (love), the mutual opening of beings (faith) and the presence of this compassion and openness (hope).

So, the contact with the being which acts upon us is loving and trusting. The word of the heart is the motive of a loving and trusting encounter when it is caused by an informing being. By reaching this being through a relationship of love, faith and hope, we are amazed and surprised that the internal principles we receive are in fact in a being, and that they really are and exist.

When their existence is connected with them, namely when we combine these principles with their real existence, we begin to build metaphysics. At this point, Aristotle's words that metaphysics is born of astonishment are more readily understood.

However, when we are surprised by the encounter with the principles of being and we stay close to them, we will be amazed at their very existence. Our amazement will lead to a prayer, which is—in this case—a full glorification and contemplation of existence. This gives rise to the natural religion, the unclear finding of God. It is true that God is the very existence. It is, however, different from the existence of such existence which results in the principle of the individual being

real. The lack of distinction between these two existences, that is to say, existence in itself and the existence of a real being which makes the potential essence real, can give rise to pantheist religion. Only by knowing clearly can we distinguish these separate existences, and we will not confuse the beginning of metaphysics with the beginning of religion.

We are still describing the effects of the encounter on the level of unclear cognition that St. Thomas calls the speech of the heart. This is the level at which we do not yet produce concepts, but only react with real references to the real impact on us of internal principles of the being which transmits information about itself. At this level of behaviour is the motive or stimulus of our pursuit of the principles St. Thomas calls the word of the heart.

[IM, pp. 9–12]

FORMULATION OF THE OBJECT OF SCIENCE

In the previous description of unclear cognition, we have already touched upon the problem of the distinctness of sciences. When we begin to consider and develop the reception of the physical qualities of being in the form of impressions and transform them into common concepts, we will begin to create a theory of cognition. However, it would be an account of such philosophers as René Descartes and Immanuel Kant. Such an account would not explain the source of the meaning of names. Descartes thinks they are innate. Kant believes that the meanings which describe the essence of things have their source in cognitive powers. They engage the forms of sensual forms, categories and ideas.

When we begin to consider being and its physical characteristics, we will work out the sciences. Only physical qualities are directly recognized by the senses and physical apparatus, and these are the tools of the study of the natural sciences.

When we begin to take not only the reception of the physical qualities of being into account, but also all that constitutes the speech of the heart, we formulate the theory of cognition in a more extended way. It is always an examination of the ways of receiving information.

When we focus our attention on the subjects that receive the information, e.g. on the potential intellect and sensitive powers, we will

discover also the subjects themselves, namely the soul and the body, which together constitute the essence of man, the real human being, the act of being. In this way, we will begin to build philosophical anthropology. By drawing conclusions from the existence of a human being, which also actualizes a human intellectually, we arrive in the area of philosophical anthropology with the conclusion that man is a person. Obtaining this thesis is a wonderful result of the philosophical account of man. In this perspective, the subject of personal relations, which are based on the manifestations of beings and which connect people to each other with love, faith and hope, also takes place. Other relations, such as cognition, only cause a meeting of beings. Making present is the result of an encounter with a being and its principles. It only works for people. As for other beings, it is only a loving and trusting encounter with them. However, this causes confusion about presence.

When we consider the principles of being, but not those that are recognized and found in our potential intellect, but instead those which are in a being acting upon us, we begin to build metaphysics. So, we make the principles clear as far as we can grasp them as factors which constitute the being. We distinguish them from the very being and its manifestations of existence. These properties, such as distinctness, uniqueness, unity, and reality, become the content of the first sentences on being, which are called the principle of non-contradiction, the principle of the sufficient reason, the principle of identity and the law of the excluded middle. This in turn makes it possible to distinguish the essence of the principles from the essence combined with manifestations of existence. This is called the problem of *quidditas* and subsistence. These distinctions reveal the difference between being and existence, and in turn they lead to the problem of external causes of being. This is a whole set of issues that make up the metaphysics of being.

It may be added that the problem of the external causes of being determines the problem of God, which as such belongs to the metaphysics of being. This requires a distinction between the metaphysical view of God and the religious and theological viewpoints.

The loving turn, at the level of the speech of the heart to the being that acts upon us as a good, determines the basis of ethics and axiology as a study of values.

When we take the knowledge of God into account, we should differentiate between deducing God's existence from external causes

of being and the religious relation with God as well as the mystical cognition of God. Many of these subject matters concern different studies.

[IM, pp. 12–14]

ACCOUNT OF BEING

1. Speech of the heart as an experience of being

Let us recall that an encounter is a real relationship, but it results in effects such as knowing and knowledge, which are orderable in separate studies. This encounter at its deepest level results in unclear knowledge, which is also called the speech of the heart. The encounter becomes a presence when we approach a real being with love, faith and hope. So, presence is a relation which connects two beings with love, faith and hope. It is fulfilled in interpersonal relationships.

The meeting precedes the presence and is the source of the first information about being. This is information at the level of unclear cognition, in which concepts, names, judgements, reasoning or sentences are not yet created. They all are created in clear cognition, in which we distinguish between internal and external speech.

While describing a being from the perspective of an encounter and cognition, we will use all kinds of cognition, mainly external speech, because it requires the transmission of the results of the encounter and the realization of these results in internal speech. We shall thus infer the origin or heuristics of the knowledge of being, which through an encounter determines the very being.

The term “experience” is used to describe the genesis or heuristics of knowledge, that is to say, that the being is and what the being is. It is a term, the meaning of which is limited to sensitive experiences. It is true that all information is transmitted to both intellects only through senses. Experience limited to sensory experience does not explain all intellectual content. The source of this intellectual content is so-called internal experience, which is not confirmed or even excluded by unclear cognition. It is no longer possible to accept the eidetic experience, i.e. the experience of the essence of being without the mediation of senses. They can only be perceived as intuitive and fragmentary references to the speech of the heart. This experience,

which has been narrowed to the sensory senses, is regarded today as a criterion or a test of the truth of acquired knowledge. Experience is an initial stage of cognition, so it cannot be its own verification. If it was, we would have to admit that the cognition itself justifies its own results, that the act of cognition itself is a condition and test of the truth of the statements. The being is the condition and test of cognition, i.e. the being makes itself open and accessible to cognition at all its levels, mainly at the level of speech of the heart.

Being transmits information about itself through our senses. However, we do not realize this when we cognize being through senses, i.e. during sensory cognition. We also do not realize the reception of content available to the intellect, that is, cognitive power, which does not react to the physical equipment of being. Encountering a being simply forces us to turn towards the being that interacts with us, and not to confuse it with another one. It follows that, in our sensory experiences, being provides the information about its own essence and thus we focus on its essence. So, the experience of the essence of being is the first in the order of the intellectual encountering it. We can also say that the intellect reacts only to the essence of being, that the essence is the proper object of the intellectual account.

2. Essential principles of being (form as act and matter as potency)

In the very being, the essence is its necessary element, which determines the permanent identity of being. Because the encounter results in sensory experience and intellectual understanding, we must say that in the essence of being which is cognized by us, there are two elements that inform us about themselves. We call them the principles, the first thing, the essence. In philosophy, these two principles are called form and matter.

Form is the element that determines the uniqueness of and constant identity in essence. Form also gives its character to other elements of essence. Together with these other elements, while constituting the essence, form determines the character and specificity of the whole being. The term “specificity” refers to the type of being, that is to say, to those structural elements that allow the being to belong to a given group, i.e. to a particular species. This does not mean that the species as such exists. It only means that there are principles in

the being that are conceived by the intellect and then transformed into a species concept, for example, the concept of “man.” The term “man” indicates something other than the term “this man.” Precisely, it points out the repeated principles in all men, and the principles are different for humans and for animals. These principles allow the creation of a species concept. Science uses genus terms. Due to these concepts, we can talk about all people, while pointing out what differentiates men from species of animals.

Matter is such an element in the essence, which constitutes the substrate of characteristics and physical properties. At the same time, it is the element which brings into form its own specificity. It makes a form principle, i.e. the principle of the identity of this very being.

It is a principle separate from form, however—it is not known as a separate element. We get to know it in the area of form by the effects it produces in the form. This effect is mainly in the detailing, that is, the binding of the form to matter that is so deep that the form always remains an element that identifies only this being.

While describing the form, we point to its position as a principle that defines the nature and distinctness of the essence. By describing matter, however, we cannot define it without associating it with a form. This points to the fact that both principles are deeply intertwined. Form identifies the essence, and thus makes matter something unique in being, because its content gives the property of identity. Matter is the basis of the accidents, but it can be determined by the effects in the form, i.e. from the position of the form. Form in itself in relation to matter is the reality we call the act. Matter refers to the form in a way that indicates that it is a potency. It can be said that form is always an act in essence, and matter is always potency.

Act is situated in every single being. Act is also in the essence which co-constitutes the being; it is even in accidents, which are always factual. Act initiates the ontological structure of being, as its first principle. These principles are different in different ontological structures. Acts are different as well.

Potency does not exist without its act. It is always the subject of the property and the element introducing the details in a being. By itself, by its very nature, potency is indefinite. The act defines potency as the subject of accidents of a being. This indefiniteness of potency also indicates that there must be an act in a being, for without it the being would be indefinite and therefore unknowable, because it would

not differ the being from another. The potency, which is the matter in the essence of being, is the substratum of qualities which are similar in various individual beings. Since matter is the basis for recognizing that which is similar in a being, it is also the basis of the creating of the genus concepts. Form is the basis of what is separate, of what differentiates, and therefore it is the basis for creating the species concepts.

Due to the act as form, being is what it is. Due to the potency as matter, a being possesses proper qualities and properties which are similar to other beings. We must also say that individual being is always an act and a potency. Recognized as an essence, being is a form and matter. In other words, the being is a definite factuality. It is always constituted by act and potency. They are necessary structural elements of being. Let us add that other structural elements are not necessary. They can be accompanied by a structure of act and potency. Let us also mention that potency is always connected to an act. Act is not so deeply dependent on potency. As a matter of fact, it can exist without potency. We will find out later that an act without potency, and therefore without boundaries, becomes an absolute, and there is only one absolute act, because the full lack of diversity can refer only to one being.

By showing the necessary dependency of potency on act, we are able to realize that in the essence of a sensibly cognized being are form and matter. They are recognized as act and potency. Thus, form and matter are the necessary principles of an essence. This means that essences of beings are essences only if they are constituted of act and potency, which are form and matter, when information about the being is transmitted to the human potential intellect through the senses. Being which informs us about its own form and matter shows us the necessary principles of its essence; these principles make the essence that which it is. Essence, understood as its own necessary principles, is called *quidditas*.

3. Non-fulfilled essence (*quidditas*) and a fulfilled essence (*subsistence*)

An incomplete being, called *quidditas*, or that which being is, is constituted only with form and matter in its essence. Such *quidditas* is that which first affects us together with a sensory material and is

perceived by the potential intellect at the level of the speech of the heart, yet before being aware of it in the internal speech. This constitutes the essential principles revealed by a being, which make us turn to the being which acts upon us.

We get into this being because the unity of principles, which accompany *quidditas*, causes it. Such unity informs us that in the essence of the being acting upon us, there is not only *quidditas*, but also unity as well as reality and a capability of subjecting the accidents which are received by our sensory powers. If there was no reality in the essence, there would be no knowledge at all. What is not real, in other words, what does not exist, cannot affect the cognitive powers. Nothingness or non-being cannot act, because it does not exist. The experience of essential principles and impressions, the effects of the knowledge that they indicate, in the realm of the being acting upon us comes from real *quidditas*. *Quidditas* is not a complete being. It is just what is necessary, what is the first in essence. Essence is something more complete. This fuller essence is called subsistence.

In addition, a specific matter's readiness to subject the accidents, in addition to *quidditas*, constitutes the complete essence of being, called subsistence. Such readiness also unites essential principles and reality. Unity and reality in an essence make it a subsistence, but do not constitute what the essence is. They are something penetrating into the essence from a fuller area of being. At the level of internal speech (also referring from the history of philosophy at the level of external speech), we realize that unity and reality are manifestations of existence, that is, the act of being or the first principle that initiates the whole being, which makes it factual according to its nature, is real. If the act of existence makes the whole being real, then the essence of reality is also manifested in its reality. We perceive this being at the level of the speech of the heart as *quidditas*, engrossed in unity and reality. Such unity and, especially, reality, which are not acts or accidents of the being, refer to their source, i.e. the act of existence, which is in being next to its essence. Also, existence is the basis for the manifestation of unity and reality in the subsistence. So, grasping unity and reality in subsistence is the way to discover an act of existence in a being.

4. Internal act of existence

The act of existence is the first and dominant act in an individual being, which initiates being as its internal element. It co-constitutes the being with the essence, embraced by reality, whose act of existence grants the whole being. The act of existence makes the being real and at the same time it actualizes it entirely, i.e. it binds itself to an independent, ontic unity. It also makes the whole being separate, and at the same time makes us direct ourselves towards the being that acts on us as good. It also invokes in every being its openness to another being, made available in an encounter. Such a manner in which being manifests its existence is called the property of truth.

The encounter with being is the result of its openness towards the being which receives information. This deepest, received information in the level of the speech of the heart takes place as a real relation and causes a real referring to the acting being. Being aware of the level of clear cognition as internal and external speech allows us to assert that the being informed us about its internal structure, or rather allowed us to experience its own internal structure.

We have successively experienced, according to the capacity of the potential intellect to receive the principles, first of all what the being is, that is, its own *quidditas*. At the same time, we have experienced the unity and reality of the source of information about its essence. We have not referred to the awareness yet, as we have turned to the essence of being, and found it in its unity and reality. It surprises our intellect that everything we experienced was outside of us, that is, in the being acting upon us. We have come to admire the real element that makes a being exist. With internal speech, we begin to organize these experiences and name them. We also begin to recognize the existence of the elements that constitute it.

Thus, a being is an essence, which is constituted of act and potency as form and matter. Such an essence is fundamentally form and matter, that is, *quidditas*. But unity embraces it and unites it. The essence is also embraced by reality. This unity and reality, together with *quidditas* and the essence's capacity to subject the accidents, is a complete essence, a subsistence. Unity and reality are not necessary principles of essence, but they point to their source, which is different to essence. This source, manifested as unity and reality, is an act of existence, which is so close to the essence that it just embraces it with its own

manifestations. As an act that embraces the essence, it co-exists with it in a being, because essence as a potency for the act of existence would not be real without this act. The essence associated with the act of existence co-exists with it, and its act of existence, which makes the essence real, becomes only its own proper act. So, the being is essence as a potency and existence as an act at the same time. We have experienced these principles at the level of the speech of the heart because of the encounter.

[IM, pp. 15–21]

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ACT OF EXISTENCE

1. Plural identification of existence

The structural and genetic grasping of a being in its internal causes, all its principles and properties, reveals the dominance of an act of existence. However, it is not an act for itself, because it carries a trace of dependence on essence that it makes real and actualized. Being dependent, it points to subsistent existence and also bears a trace of origin from subsistent existence. It is thus dependent and derivative. The act of existence is also a co-element of individual being, it is being's first principle and the basic internal cause. This dependence and the derivation of the intra-being act of existence makes the whole being a contingent one, that is, dependent and derivative on being, which is subsistent existence. The dependent act of existence as a co-element of being cannot be identified with other elements in being. It is a distinctly separate principle that embraces all the other principles. The act of existence unites all principles. Also, at the same time, it embraces all transcendentals. Thanks to the act of being, the whole being manifesting existence manifests itself as unity, reality, distinctness, truth, good and beauty. Thanks to these transcendental properties, experienced by the potential intellect at the level of the speech of the heart, we are directed towards the being acting upon us, and through existential relationships we make real contact with the act of existence, which coalesces in the being to which we are directed. It invokes admiration and affirms that the fundamental principles of a being with the accompanying unity, distinctiveness and reality are in the being. They are embraced by an existence. We also experience

the truth, the good and the beauty of being. These existential manifestations of being confirm that the essential principles which are experienced in the speech of the heart are in the very being. The act of existence makes them real; we encounter an act of existence through existential relationships.

Realization is a kind of internal aspect of a transcendental relation in being. Actualization is such a relationship as well. We can therefore say that, in the face of internal causes of existence, the act of existence manifests itself in the form of actualization and realization, whereas in the case of separate beings it manifests itself in the form of transcendental properties. Transcendental intra-being relationships are only grasped in the effects of the act of existence caused by a potential act of existence. Such a potency is the essence of being. On the other hand, existential relationships, supported by transcendental properties, are dependent categorial beings. The act of existence thus dominates in individual being. It makes the being real and it actualizes the essence. Also, through transcendental properties, it ties beings to existential relationships. Through the manifestation of the property of good, the act of existence makes us protect existential relationships by the evoked effect of essential relations. And thus, we protect the whole being in its existence.

It is not about showing a lesser role of essence in being, which evokes either spiritual potency in itself, or spiritual and material potency, or only material potency. It is also not about showing a lesser role of categorial properties and essential relations in being. Rather, it is about pointing out the unique and dominating role of the act of existence in being. It is also about showing the act of existence, which is a real principle and initiates the being itself. This is not only a logical principle, by which an essence is exclusively judged. As an ontological principle, it has no source in thinking. It is a real and internal co-cause of being, which initiates a being, making the potential realm of being emerge from itself, and which is thereby made real and actualized by the act of existence. The act of existence as a real but dependent and derivative principle points both to the real essence, which co-constitutes the individual beings, and to the external and proportional reality of the act of existence in being real. Also, the act of existence points to the real subsistent existence, which is both the being itself and at the same time the external effective cause of dependent acts of existence.

So, let us repeat and emphasize that the dependent and derivative act of existence is the first principle in itself, it initiates the being. As a dependent and derivative act and, at the same time, as the internal principle of individual being, it is a co-element of this being, its internal cause, but it is of the nature of “being from” (*ens quo*). The whole potential sphere in being emerges from an act of existence; this sphere is realized and actualized into a proportionate essence. Thus, an act of existence as existence is the factuality that causes reality. Within such reality it overwhelms and penetrates the essence. It penetrates it with the other transcendentals and thus reveals the reality of individual being. As regarded in itself, it reveals its dependence and source. As recognized in relation to its effects, that is, to the essence as form and matter, it reveals its power of making things real and actualizing the essences. Also, it is capable of associating essence with its individual being. Being dominant in being and the first among the internal principles of being, existence is the basis of all that is happening in being. It is full of power and is the unique source of all actions of the other principles of the whole being. It does not substitute these principles in subjecting relations which are proper to their nature. However, it makes all the principles as well as essence real and actualized.

The act of existence is not an action, nor an operation, nor a realization of being. It is rather the reason, the basis and the source of the actions and operations which are actualized and realized inside the individual being. However, in the sphere outside of the being, this operation is subjecting existential relations through the manifestation of existence. The act of existence is also a realization of existential relations, which are actualized by the essence.

The dependent and derivative act of existence, which is different from the act of subsistent existence, is not the realm of the world, and it is not the first layer of being. It is not only one for the whole of space. As an act, it is “assigned” to the real and actualized essence. It is at its own measure, and thus it is something determined by essence. At the same time, essence is at the measure of existence. Essence and existence together constitute the one real and individual being. Such a co-existence of the individual being with existence and essence indicates that the “nature” of existence depends on the essence, and similarly, the “nature” of being depends on existence. Therefore, we should distinguish between not only beings and essences, but also between types of acts of existence.

The dependent and derivative character of the act of existence is not accidental. It is rather a reason that, as a specific principle, permits the emergence of potency, which is the constant principle of limiting the acts in the individual being. By virtue of the potency, the act of existence actualizes such essence and not any other. Thus, the type of act of existence depends deeply on the type of essence. It means that the act of existence is internally oriented to the actualization of a particular essence.

At the level of the speech of the heart, the principles of various essences influence the potential intellect. These essences are actualized by proportionate acts of existence. Yet, we are influenced by people, animals, plants, particles of matter and other beings. Their essences differ among each other with the conglomerate of their respective principles. It is always a form and a kind of potency: either purely spiritual, spiritual and material, or only material. We directly receive the principle of beings that contain matter. So, we directly know the principle of the essence of man, animal, plant, or particle of matter, compatible with the threshold of sensation by sensory powers. On the basis of an analysis of these essences in the aspect of their external causes, we understand the essence of substances that do not contain matter, and on the basis of the act of the existence of these beings, we understand subsistent existence.

We can say that a form in the essence of a man gives a reason, that is, a specific principle of sensory-mental cognition. At the same time, it is the principle of extension, which impregnates such a "part" of potency and which eventually becomes matter. It also provides the reason for movement and dimensions. On the other hand, form in the essence of an animal provides the reason for sensible cognition, movement and dimension. Form in the essence of a plant provides only the reason for movement and dimensions. Form in the essence of particles of matter provides the reason for dimensions only. The motion which is attributed to matter itself comes from the outside, as a result of the interaction of other substances acting as catalyst-specific causes. It must also be remembered that the final causes influence every essence of the being and "coerce" the act of existence into a realization of essence and make an interrelation with it. At the same time, essence constitutes itself for the influence of final causes. Thus, the act of existence actualizes the essence according to the influence of the final causes. The effect of its dependency on essence

leads existence to essence. We discover this in the structural account of being.

2. Types of acts of existence

The acts of existence which initiate the beings and which are grasped in their relation with essence must also be of different types due to the types of essences. Detached only from the essences and taken as independent beings (*ens quod*) and not as *ens quo*, acts of existence appear identical, but only cognitively. Ontologically, they are always *ens quo*, and as an *ens quo*, the co-element of a being must also be cognitively grasped. Grasped in the aspect of what they are, four variations of acts of existence appear.

Act of the existence of non-personal beings: this act of existence does not allow for the influence of purely spiritual substances, and therefore intellectuality is not actualized in the essences of animals and plants. It actualizes a form in the essence, and the form becomes the core of cognition and evaluation.

Through the form, the act of existence actualizes the bodies of animals and plant tissue. It also allows for the actualization of motion in plants. In particles of matter, it actualizes a form which releases only dimensions.

Act of the existence of the accident: accidents differ from essence and existence as internal causes of being. They inhere in essence, more precisely in its spiritual or material potency; they are separate dependent beings. They are independent *entia quod*. Thus, accidents are beings whose essence is proportional to the variation of potency in this essence. Their act of existence, which is separately created for them, depends on the existence of the substance in which they inhere.

The subsistent act of existence has been already mentioned in the group of acts of existence of personal beings. However, it is structurally so different that it should be discussed separately. It is a full one-element being, because it is filled only with existence. It is a pure act, that is, it is not related to potency and accidents. It is the very existence, and therefore it is not caused, because it is the first cause of all other acts of existence, which precisely depend on it. Without being caused or made, it simply is. It makes dependent acts of existence real by its power of subsistent existence, when a person considers it

as appropriate and decides to do so. It actualizes things outside itself, and we call it creation. Also, it manifests itself in relation to other beings in its transcendental properties, and through these transcendental properties it makes personal relations with other persons, when it desires to do so.

[IM, pp. 50–55]

SUBSISTENT EXISTENCE: GOD

1. Discovery of subsistent existence

The individual being grasped in its internal causes indicates its own external causes. An act of existence which is dominant in a being depends on its essence. It makes the essence real and binds with it in activities of actualization. It requires a clarification of its reality in subsistent existence. In other words, the real dependent act of existence points to its real effective cause. And such an effective cause is subsistent existence.

Knowledge that the subsistent being exists is indirect. Dependent existence is not explained in itself. As it is subjected to the essence, which limits it, dependent existence depends on causes. For that reason, it requires a cause.

The thesis that subsistent existence is an effective cause of dependent existence is a conclusion of metaphysics. It thus belongs to metaphysics and points to the cause, which is the external principle of all dependent acts of existence.

We have to say here that this conclusion, which is the thesis about the existence of the first being, is based on the consideration of essential schema of causes.

An essential system of causes is a combination of direct causes of the individual being that make up the internal elements of individual being. The existence as well as being's essence, which is actualized by existence, are the internal elements of being. The composition of the essence is determined by effective causes and is actualized by the created act of existence. Subsistent existence is the effective cause of the dependent act of existence. The immediate and sufficient external causes of internal causes are the essential schema of causes.

Pointing out the external subsistent existence frees us from the thesis that dependent existence is subsistent. If it did not have its external cause, it would be subsistent and dependent at the same time, because it would be limited by internal principles of being. It would be something, and at the same time it would not be something, which is absurd. Such a contradictory structure cannot be real.

If dependent existence (no existence and no being can be the cause of itself) was a cause of itself, it would mean that although it does not yet exist, it already exists if it acts. We would assume that non-existence and existence are the same. It would violate the principle of non-contradiction. Excluding this principle would give the same status to truth and falsehood. We cannot, therefore, recognize that nothingness is the cause of existence. The truth is that a being is a cause of being. This thesis is justified by the principle of sufficient reason. It also tells us that there is a proportionality between the effect and the cause. With such a cause comes a particular effect. Because there are different principles in individual beings, they must depend on their own external causes. The internal existence of an act of existence points to an external act of existence as its cause.

2. The structure of the subsistent act of existence

The subsistent act of existence consists of existence only. We can state this on the basis of the effect that is the dependent act of existence. It can be only an existence, which is always the principle of reality. It does not have to and cannot have causes which would explain it, because it is by itself the principle that explains the reality of everything else. It does not result from the causes, it is not the cause of itself, it has not been created by nothingness. It is just itself. It is a subsistent act of existence. It consists also of only one element. It contains no potency, and therefore there are no accidents in it. However, as an act of existence, it manifests itself, like every other act of existence, in transcendental properties. They are the attributes of the subsistent act of existence. Let us suppose that this subsistent existence, together with the transcendental properties, is a spiritual element and a full, one-element being. It is the only and unique structure. It is subsistent, spiritual, the first, the only one. So, it is God.

3. God is identified with the subsistent act of existence

The term "God" is used in religion. This is not, however, an error of the overlapping of two different areas. Calling God the subsistent existence has its justification at the level of the speech of the heart. It is precisely the word of the heart that is born in the potential intellect, as a result of the influence of essential principles of being, which directs us to those principles that we perceive as good, i.e. through existential relationships. And in such contacts with being through existential relationships, based on transcendental properties, we experience astonishment. It amazes us that we have found an act of existence there. When we associate it with essential principles, we start to practice metaphysics. When we consider the act of existence separately, we begin to refer to it with worship and adoration. This act of existence, grasped in unclear cognition, is God for us. Yes, it is God. However, God is not such an act of existence which makes up the essence of individual existence; God is the one subsistent act of existence, He exists in Himself. In a blurred way, religion has its origins here. It is therefore justified both by the internal structure of the subsistent act of existence and by the position of the speech of the heart: God has to be identified with the subsistent act of existence.

God as an internal existence is manifested in the transcendental properties which are His attributes. Attributes are the names of the permanent properties of being, convertible with that being. This means that they do not bring anything new into existence and do not change it internally. As manifestations of existence, they show the ways of contacting God with other beings, when those beings already exist.

Being the very existence, God excludes the potency, and therefore excludes also the essence. Existence identifies God, and it is also the cause of His internal identity. Essence is the principle that makes a created being identify with itself. We can say that existence in God is at the same time His own essence. This essence, identical with existence, does not subject the essential properties. There are only transcendental properties in God.

However, we are able to recognize the attributes of the essence of God. We say that God is immaterial, eternal, necessary, infinite and just. These essential properties are obtained by comparing God with created beings, which are equipped with matter and are temporal, variable, finite and imperfect. By comparing God with creatures, we

determine the position of God in relation to other beings. What follows from the comparison and determines the position of a being is only an axiological property. It is a kind of evaluation which has its origin in the evaluation. Therefore, we cannot attribute any properties to the essence of God. We can, however, determine axiological properties, the contents of which we derive from the creatures of the created beings and compare that content with God, thus describing the position or status of God.

Let us repeat that a subsistent act of existence is a complete being (*ens quod a se*) filled with existence only. Existence is a spiritual element, and God is therefore a spiritual being. As pure existence, He is independent in existence. He does not contain any potency and therefore does not depend on any external causes. He is He who causes all the other dependent beings. The manifestations of His existence are His attributes. By specifying the ontological status of subsistent existence, we also refer to axiological properties. When we consider Him in relation to us, we use the language of symbols.

In regard to his possible and only theoretical causes, God appears as the subsistent existence, as the only being, independent of any cause, the first, of himself (*a se*) and in himself (*in se*).

The act of subsistent existence, grasped in reference to its effects, appears as a creator, who creates dependent and derivative acts of existence that initiate the created being. As an act of existence, it also actualizes within itself what fulfils it, but a metaphysician cannot identify this, because his identification of God derives only from the recognized effects of creation. These derivative and dependent acts of existence show their internal existence as their cause. They do not point to any other ontological content which is actualized by the subsistent existence. They point to the transcendental properties of God as His attributes. The metaphysician may add that transcendentals are the basis of existential relationships and that they associate man with God within personal relationships. We grasp these relationships from our side. By knowing these relationships, we can think that God brings into the essence of these relationships His own proper and supernatural content. The metaphysician recognizes the existential aspects of love, faith and hope. He does not recognize the essential content of relationships which bind a man to God. He knows that God cannot be the subject of these relationships, because He is deprived of potency. However, He is somehow surrounded by relationships,

when He is personally in the human essence as a person. He is not a structural element in man. He is, where He acts. He stays in us in a way of presence. He must be in the essence of the person, for if he was in human intellect, a man would experience a constant mystical union with God. And this is not the case. If God was in human will, man would have met all His expectations for a union with perfect good. All our freedom would be fulfilled, which consists of bonding with what is best for us. In the meantime, we choose from many options of good. It only remains to accept that God, who binds with us through personal relations according to His nature of subsistent existence, can present Himself only in the essence of persons, who refer to Him with love, faith and hope.

4. Creation (*creatio esse*)

The act of existence, which initiates the individual being, points to the subsistent existence as an effective cause. Such a subsistent existence as existence manifests itself in transcendental properties. These two theses of the metaphysics of individual being, and foremost the metaphysics of the act of existence, allow us to define more closely the relationship between God and other beings. Such a relationship is called creation.

Let us say that every act of existence makes things real and actualizes them. A dependent act of existence makes things real, when it enters into the being as the dominant principle and actualizes, or binds, the real essence with itself. The independent act of existence, which has no potency within itself, makes the dependent acts of existence real. It does so apart from in its ontological area, which is exclusively existence. As an act of existence that is internally dynamic, it implements some kind of actualization. The metaphysician does not know what these actualizations are, since his access to the subsistent existence is only from a dependent act of existence, which is found in the created being. The metaphysician learns from the revealed information that there are three persons actualized in God, who are one God in three equal persons in the deity. This is information from the cause. The metaphysician explains the beings from the effect to the cause. The effect points to God as being, in light of the fact that the intellect conveys only the principle, and existence is the first principle in being.

Creation must also be described from the aspect of effect. A dependent act of existence reveals its derivative nature and indicates subsistent existence as its cause. Such cause is subsistency. There is no potency in subsistency. Thus, it cannot subject any kind of relationship. Creation is not a relation of God to the created existence. It is not a movement. We can only say that a being that has not yet existed now exists, and its existence is caused by God.

God did not, however, emanate the dependent act of existence. Such an act would have the attribute of subsistency and, at the same time, the characteristic or a trace of the derivative nature. It would be both self-subsistent and non-self-subsistent, and it would be something and not be something at the same time. It is not possible to exist as something and yet also as not something. So, God does not create by emanation.

God does not create by His thinking either. Thinking in God cannot be an action. Everything in God has the nature of principle. If God created beings by thinking, their created existence would have to be an act of thinking. Beings would be identified with thinking in their internal material.

Beings are identified with existence and essence. God can only wish that beings were proportional to His nature. As the subsistent act of existence He can only cause other acts of existence. He wants to cause them. Creation is thus not a causation of derivative acts of existence by emanation, nor is it thinking. Creation is the causing of the beings by the subsistent act of existence and consists of the fact that everything that the being is, is initiated by the created act of existence.

5. Sustaining being in existence (*conservatio esse*)

The created act of existence has in itself the power to initiate the being and to actualize its essence. In doing so, it reveals that it is the first and dominant principle in being. Due to the created act of existence, the whole being is created and sufficiently equipped with the main principles. This means that creation has fulfilled its role. The created being is a fully independent being. So, it is not something which is still being created.

Looking at the being, we must say that the creation of being has already ended. God continually creates acts of existence, but He does not constantly create the existence that He has already created.

When the creation of the act of existence, which initiates the individual being, has come to an end, this does not mean that God has broken off all contacts with the created being. God maintains a connection with this being within personal relationships—or, more broadly, existential relationships—because beings that exist possess their transcendental properties.

These relationships protect the existence of beings as well as their forms, which are principles of identification of beings in essences.

The whole material and potential sphere in being is protected by accidents. Let us say, more precisely, that intellectual potency is protected by proportional spiritual substances, which are angels. Materiality is protected by physical accidents. A man in his existence is also protected by immaterial accidents, which are intellect and will in their operations of cognition and decision.

God indirectly supports our existence, precisely, within personal relationships. But when we look at creation from the side of God, which is beyond time, we can say that creation takes as long as created being exists. In this non-temporal perspective, creation is recognized as God's sustaining of existence. However, such an approach shows that we are describing creation itself in non-temporal terms, while the sustaining of lasting existence is shown in temporal terms. These two different points of view should not be mixed. Without mixing them, we can reasonably say that creation ends when the act of existence becomes the result of God, and that it gives rise to the individual being. Relations with God have not ended yet. They are existential relationships. They connote the order of presence, not the order of creation.

Let us add that the thesis of sustaining the created act of lasting existence has its source in the linear schema of causes.

The linear schema of causes relies on seeking, for example, people's immediate parents, who are the children of the parents existing before them. It is therefore a system which does not determine and does not seek the direct cause of existence, but the direct cause of birth, which is accidental. The linear schema of causes thus shows accidental dependencies, which are considered to be significant or substantial dependencies. In this line of dependency, we go back to the first cause, which is the first man. God is placed in the first place, he starts a sequence of causes. The linear schema of causes also orders less perfect beings, most often beings similar to humans, and places

only living creatures before them, which are overtaken by particles of matter. The linear schema of causes does not entail placing at the beginning of the sequence the living creatures, or God, or the simplest forms of life. This is because, in the linear schema, there is the group of observed accidents only. For example, physics points out only their direct subject, that is, matter. It does not indicate the main principle of individual being. The claim that God creates dependent acts of existence results from an analysis of the essential schema of causes. This thesis cannot be introduced into the discussion on the linear system of causes. The mixing of these two systems, like any compilation, does not justify the conclusions. But it results, however, in attributing to God the sustaining of existence, since the duration of the existence is not ensured by the order of birth. We do not refer to God directly through our transcendental properties. These properties refer to the existence of which they are a manifestation. Only the created existence points to the subsistent existence. The act of created existence as an effect indicates its direct cause. In order to recognize this, one must apply the essential schema of causes.

[IM, pp. 59–66]

PHILOSOPHY OF MAN

M. Gogacz, *Elementarz metafizyki*, second edition, Suwałki: Wyższa Szkoła Służby Powszechnej, 1996, Internet edition.

1. THE SPEECH OF THE HEART IS A WAY TO THE PROBLEM OF MAN

At the level of the speech of the heart, a being acting upon us informs us about the unity of its essential principles. These principles cause the birth of the word of the heart in the potential intellect. The word inclines the will to be directed to the being whose unity of principles has been received. This all happens as a group of real relations.

In making these issues more precise, we are already using internal speech, which helps us to make concepts and sentences which express what happens at the level of the speech of the heart. We realize that, through sensory powers, the information about the essential principles of being and their transcendental properties are received. They are immaterial contents. Thus, the receiver of the information has to be some kind of immaterial cognizer. While claiming this, we distort the attention from the being that has acted upon us and keep it on ourselves, and thus we can reflect on the origin of human metaphysics.

Therefore, at the level of the speech of the heart, we learn that, as a result of the encounter with being, there are sensory powers in us as well as the potential intellect which passively receives the information. We are already using names from the area of external speech. Sensory powers are not independent beings, because they are something in us. Similarly, potential intellect is not an independent being. They all are dependent beings, accidents. If there are accidents in

us, there has to be a subject in which they inhere. Such a subject has to be an essence, because accidents are actualized only in essence. Because the accidents are both material and immaterial, human essence is constituted by principles of both materiality and immateriality. The potency is always the principle of subjecting the accident. Thus, in human essence, there is material and immaterial potency. We already know that potency does not exist without form. So, there is a form, which decided the identity of our essence. According to the essence's dependency on existence, there is a principle of reality, which initiated a human as a being—a specific and created act of existence. While realizing the mutual relation between accidents and their subjects, potency and act, we discover the internal principles which constitute a human being. We also know that the order of cognition is not the order of existence.

2. THE ONTOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF MAN

In accordance with the order of constituting a human's internal principles, we can say that there is an act of existence in us which initiates a man and makes human essence real as well as actualizes it. Such essence is fulfilled with a form and material and immaterial potency. Immaterial potency is the basis of the spiritual powers of man, such as potential intellect and will. Material potency subjects the sensory cognizing powers. These are conclusions of understanding acquired at the level of the speech of the heart. The identification of ontological principles in a man in accordance with the order of being is a structural account of man.

3. GENETIC ACCOUNT OF THE INTERNAL PRINCIPLES OF MAN

A genetic account of principles shows their mutual relations and the internal unity of man, and allows a differentiation between the internal schema of causes and effects in man. Such internal schema will show external causes.

The human act of existence initiates the whole ontological area of man. Such an area is potential, so it can be made real and actualized only by existence. As long as nothing can rise from non-being, potency,

which co-constitutes a man, has to come from the proportional act of existence. The dependent act of existence has no power of creation. The power of creation can be attributed only to God. However, God creates only acts of existence. The created act of existence makes internal potency real and actualizes it. If, however, it does not create it, it emerges it from itself. There is a trace of derivation from God in the act of existence, the specific property of its dependency. This is a reason for the emerging of the whole potential sphere in man. Such a sphere is tied up with the dependent act of existence. In its first stage, such potency can be undifferentiated. Such potency is the human soul and body. We know that from the analysis of the structural account of man.

If this is so, we have to point to the external causes in the genetic explanation, referring to the essential schema of causes, which make that potential area become soul and body. Potency alone cannot get constituted by itself, because nothing can be its own cause. The dependent act of existence cannot make it either, because it can only make real and actualize. Thus, the act of existence can only actualize the essence, that is, it can tie it up as a determined composition, the character of which has been determined by external final causes. These are not effective causes. They influence the potency, so it can become the determined composition, whereas the act of existence allows the influence and actualizes the essence in its actual composition. The essence of man has been constituted in soul and body.

4. SOUL OF MAN

The human soul is a structurally grasped form which identifies a man, and is the intellectual potency which accompanies the form to subject intellectual powers and operations, like intellectual cognition and decision.

The genetically grasped soul is an effect of the influence of such final causes, which do not contain matter in their essence. Substances built only of existence and essence, which are form and intellectual potency only, are angels. In order to constitute the soul in the area of potency, angels have to cause such an effect. They are recognized as final causes. As the soul co-constitutes a man and does not contain matter in its ontological structure, it could not be constituted by itself.

Thus, angels are recognized as external causes of essences of human souls, in accordance with the proportionality between cause and effect. Let us add that the human soul, which is built analogically like the essence of angels, is not an angel itself, because it is a measure and principle of the body. It is an autonomous substance in being. However, it is not autonomous as a species. It belongs to the essence of man as well as matter. They both—soul and matter—are the reason of the species identity of man. Matter, when it is actualized by form, is a reason for the individuality and particularity of man.

5. BODY OF MAN

The body of man is a matter inside human essence, and as a group of physical accidents inherent in matter it does not belong to essence. Matter is a potency, not an act in essence, and as a subject of accidents it makes the whole body dependent on structure. The body is not a substance. As a dependent composition, the body requires an actualizing act, which is form. The combination of form and matter, as act and potency, causes the ontological unity of essence. The body can be structurally described in such a way.

From the genetic perspective, we should point out two groups of reasons of the constitution of the body of man. The first reason is the soul, in which intellectual potency is a principle of human cognition, that is, sensory and intellectual cognition. In order for this cognition to be realized, the soul acts upon the potency which has been constituted into the soul, and it causes the accident of quantity. The second reason, or group of reasons, is the external final causes, which act upon the accident of quantity. They are substances, which contain a matter in their essences. They influence the accident of quantity and extend it to the whole area of material potency. Such a quantity is called extensibility. Fulfilled with quantity or extensibility, potency becomes a matter of spatiality and a readiness, also induced by the soul, to subject physical accidents.

The external group of final causes of the human body influence the fact that an act of existence actualizes such material accidents that come from the influence of final causes on the matter's readiness to subject the accidents. They are material and physical accidents. Final causes influence all accidents, still external to human essence, and matter within

it. Because accidents do not belong to the essence of man, despite the fact that the subject, that is, matter, is an essential element, final causes co-exist in the human body at the level of its accidents.

Thus, our body is a composition of essentially internal matter and an external group of accidents, which are mixed with final causes. We could therefore say that we do not see our body as it is itself. We can see it only together with final causes. Final causes in this context are those substances that specifically catalyze the operations of physical accidents and cause them to compose themselves into the body's organs. We can see such substances as, for example, carbon, water, or amino acids, which we often consider as elements of our body. We could also say that the final causes of the human body are the genetic codes of parents, oxygen, the sun that provides heat, and food. Let us make this more precise: parents are only the final causes of their own child. They provide human genetic codes. In addition, the mother is the environment in which a conceived man acquires his human qualities, primarily his body. The source of these human qualities is the soul.

6. EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CAUSES OF MAN

God is the first external and effective cause of man. The angel is the external final cause of the human soul. Those final causes, which contain matter, are the external causes of the body.

The created act of existence and essence—that is, the soul and matter, which compose themselves into the human body together with the physical accidents—are the internal causes of man.

7. MAN AS A PERSON

This is not yet a full picture of the effects of the human equipment of the principles and their properties. The bond between essence and existence, and mainly the human soul and existence, point to the important structural aspect of man. Cognition at the level of the speech of the heart does not inform us about this. We make this clear at the level of internal and external speech, when we grasp the essence of man as subsistence, i.e. as an essence in its bond with existence.

Let us recall that subsistence is the essence which, besides form and matter, also includes the reality which penetrates the essence. This reality points to its source, which manifests itself. Existence is such a source, which is an act in man and makes an essence-potency associated with the act real. The soul is a form in subsistence, together with intellectual potency. This potency, together with the form, and under the influence of the intellectual final cause, has been actualized by the act of existence, which initiates man. This is a wonderful, unique act of existence, which actualizes human intellectuality. Thus, it is a basis of intellectual power, which is called the potential intellect. Intellect is the basis of intellectual cognition. Because of such cognition, the intellect grasps principles of being and being themselves; the intellect understands beings, recognizes causes and effects, and encompasses the entire cosmos of beings. It makes man rational as well as self-conscious, it cognizes itself. The act of existence actualizes human intellectuality and makes a human a distinct, autonomous and highly self-sufficient being. In other words, man is a person.

Each being, in which there are acts of existence and intellectuality, is a person. When there is a body in its essence, such a being is a human person. When there is no matter in its essence, it is an angel. When existence is merely an act of existence, the consequences of the principles do not appear in it. Subsistent existence is the only first principle. Such a being is a divine person. Let us add that according to the Christian revelation, actualization in God is expressed in three persons.

8. THE DIGNITY OF A PERSON

A man as a person is thus equipped with an act of existence and actualized intellectuality. This is the ontological equipment that differentiates man from substances such as animals, plants or particles of matter. It places man among these substances in a position of someone distinguished and ontologically richer, capable of succeeding in such operations as intellectual cognition. The equipment of a person is a group of internal causes with a unique position among animals and plants. In order to have proportionate references to other people, final causes must be recognized and accepted by other people. Such

a recognition of intellect, which accepts and enjoys something good for us in these principles, is an external cause of placing a man in the position of a man. Dignity is one such position of a man.

Wisdom relies on grasping the truth in its connection with good. Contemplation relies on enjoying the truth and good. We can say that the internal causes of human dignity are its internal principles. The external principles of human dignity are intellectual wisdom and contemplation, which make internal personal principles more precise and make them the reason for the unique position of man as a person. The affirmation of this position has its source in the intellectual comparison of persons to irrational substances. The recognition of dignity based on such a comparison makes dignity an axiological value. Dignity is not a person itself, nor an accident, nor a transcendental property. It is not only a concept either. It is the position of a person among beings, recognized and protected by the wisdom and contemplation of persons.

Each being is initiated by the created act of existence. Also, a person is determined by an act of existence, which actualizes intellectuality in its essence. We can observe here that an act of existence manifests itself through transcendental properties. Such properties are the basis of existential relations between beings. If a being is a person, there are existential personal relations among existential relations as such. These relations have been identified by Thomas Aquinas. Except for the existential personal relation, we also know the relation of creation. We still cannot describe other existential relations, based on the transcendental property of unity and beauty. We know, however, that the relation of love between two persons is built on the transcendental property of reality. The property of truth in two persons results in a relation of faith. The property of good in two persons is the basis of a relation of hope.

9. LOVE AS A PERSONAL RELATION

Reality, as a manifestation of existence in being, relies on kindly people being together. The relation of love, which builds up on the realities of two people, acquires the same content in its essence. It is a kind of contact of two people, a mutual and specific enjoyment, full and basic kindness. It is not motivated by anything, because the

existence is primary and it manifests itself in the reality of people. For this reason, love is our first and most profound reference to people.

Faith, which comes from people referring to each other with their property of truth, manifests its existence in connection with essence. It is also a primary relation, but it is conditioned by the essential equipment of a person to some extent.

Hope is expectation for humans' lasting in love and faith. Hope directs us, like love, disinterestedly to persons.

The relation of love, which is in its essence disinterested kindness, being together, enjoyment, has several levels.

The lowest level of love is enjoyment (*complacentia*). This is constituted by a correspondence between two persons, that they just are. However, persons are whole beings, made of existence and essence. Thus, such correspondence, based mainly on existence, concerns the whole person, including his or her essence. The essential content of the relation of love does not dominate as it does in the relation of faith. The presence of existence definitely dominates here. Because the existence of a person cannot be separated from his or her essence, the relation of love at its lowest level is people's correspondence in existence and essence. Because of the personal character of human nature, the relation of love is called the correspondence of natures (*connaturalitas*). Love (*complacentia*) at its lowest level has a form of the correspondence of natures (*connaturalitas*).

A higher level of love results from the fact that within our enjoyment we embrace the existence of a person, mainly the body in its essence, because we cognize another person's body earlier than we cognize their soul. Such love is enriched by the delight induced in us by other transcendentals of the person and by the accidents of the human body. We expect the effects of contact mainly within the accidental side of the human body. Love at this level is acquiring good for oneself and is searching for that good. Such searching for good is called desire. Thus, love at this higher level is enriched by acquired good, and it is called love of desire (*concupiscentia* or *concupiscibilitas*).

The highest level of love relies on the fact that we embrace a person with enjoyment not only because of her existence and body, but also because of her soul. So, we embrace the human person with the deepest kindness in her most basic principles. By admitting her soul, we accept the understandings and decisions subjected in her soul. By accepting them, we desire the other person's good. The relation of

love at the level of acceptance of all that the person is as well as accepting her truth and good is complete love. It manifests itself in serving other people for the sake of their own good. Love, which is specific for persons (*dilectio*), has four kinds.

Friendship (*amicitia*) is the most well known kind of love among people. It relies on faithfulness and on such confidence that it does not cause anxiety because of separation, and it always enjoys a meeting. Let us just say, more precisely, that absence does not cause pain, but presence always causes rejoicing.

Love in the form of full concern for the good of another person (*caritas*), completely selfless, which does not expect reciprocity, completely sacrificial, forgiving, always protective, discreet, is the most common form, though it is rarely seen and preached. It characterizes mothers towards their children, serious paternity, and brotherhood. It is so peaceful that it is treated as something that should belong to us anyway. It could be a support in crises, but we prefer to look for support in friendship that exchanges some good. At the level of *caritas* we are still gifted and we generally do not donate. Perhaps that is why we feel that this kind of love is like home, from which we take a lot, but to which we do not give anything. This love is characterized by constant presence. We refer to it as to a mother, who is required to be there for you whenever you need her. It is like bread that you can never run out of.

Love associated with suffering (*amor*) is a typical love of people. It depends on the fact that the other person is our support, our constant help. It continually rejoices when the beloved person is here. It is accompanied by pain when the beloved person is not there. The absence of the beloved person causes pain and suffering, which is conscious pain, transferred to the soul. Here, patience comes and, together with the pain, creates longing. You can bear the absence then.

The love that accompanies suffering (*amor*) is also the typical love of man for God. God cannot be directly experienced, hence longing is the sign of love for God at all stages of religious development. When longing lasts, even the greatest distress and breakdown in religious life do not destroy the relation of human love for God.

God's love for man (*agape*) is characterized by absolute selflessness. God does not expect reciprocity, but also as a pure act of existence He cannot take such reciprocity. He has no potency in Himself, He has no basis of subjecting. But He wants us to direct our love to

Him for the sake of our good, because God can cause the irretrievable continuation of this love, and yet love makes us happy and places us in eternal co-existence.

Let us say that presence is people being together, their mutual openness and their continuity in co-existence and openness. It has a form of love, faith and hope—and only these existential relationships constitute presence. Other relationships only result in meeting.

10. FAITH AS A PERSONAL RELATION

Truth, as a manifestation of being's existence, is the mutual openness of persons to each other. The relation of faith, which builds itself on the property of truth of two persons, acquires truth in its essence. It is a mutual openness of two persons to each other, the mutual sharing of one another in both existence and in essence. Such mutual sharing reveals essence rather than existence. It dominates in the relation of faith.

Faith, when it is grasped subjectively, for the sake of us, results in trustful reference to another person, who is received by our intellect as truth and is willingly chosen as good. It is a feature which deepens wisdom.

Faith, when it is grasped objectively, for the sake of a person's openness towards us, is bringing into us that which another person is.

When the relation of faith connects a human person with the person of God subjectively, namely for the sake of us, it results in anxiety or joy. It causes anxiety, because intellect does not confirm God's existence, since it does not experience God directly. It is based only on reasoning, which cannot always be reliable. Also, faith enjoys when we are certain of God's existence and when we open ourselves to Him.

Objectively, so for the sake of God, faith is the relation through which God gives Himself to us supernaturally. He becomes present in the essence of the human person. He provides theological virtues for our spiritual powers. These virtues are the ways of making contact with God. He also gives us gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are dispositions of receiving divine gifts, which God brings to human powers.

These theological additions show the faith that connects God with man. Religion is such a connection. Our religious reference to

God is already discovered at the level of the speech of the heart, when we respond with astonishment and love to the existence of being. At the level of internal and external speech, our faith is awakened by Revelation, which comes to us through learning about God. Faith is placed only in intellect and will. It is then exposed to the opposite information. And it is then that it causes most anxiety. These anxieties disappear when we recognize faith as a way of presenting God in the essence of our person.

11. HOPE AS A PERSONAL RELATION

Good, as a manifestation of existence in being, relies on expecting that the whole person, who influences with good, is endowed with kindness and trust. The relation of hope takes over these contents of good; hope is built on the property of the good of two persons. So, hope is expecting that the presence of another person would be available, accepted and chosen in her entire existence and essence. Hope is the specific need for lasting in a relation of love and hope.

12. HUMANISM, RELIGION, AND THE DARK NIGHT OF LOVE

Personal relations, which connect human persons, result in humanism. Due to the intellect and the will, humanism is the protection of personal relations as well as transcendental properties, existence and persons. Personal relations, when they connect man and God, constitute religion. Religion, when it is grasped for the sake of man, has a dimension of humanism. Humanism is understood as the protection of all persons, including God. Such protection expresses itself in reference to love, faith and hope in God. Religion grasped from the aspect of God has a supernatural dimension, which means bringing personal content into these relations. This content contains the internal life of God, made available to man by God. Thus, religion gives a man an opportunity to take part in the internal life of God.

It should be stressed, however, that personal relations are bilateral. This means that a person is a subject of love when she refers to the other person, who receives this love as the *terminus* of the relation. Next, the other person reciprocates love for their subject, and a person

who has already referred to us with love becomes the *terminus*. The relation of love builds essentially on that which is brought by two persons. These two contents in one relation require arrangement, adjustment. It can go along smoothly or dramatically and painfully. A dramatic and painful adaptation is some kind of crisis, which is called—from the aspect of experiencing it—the dark night of love. The crisis has its own stages and there are ways to overcome it. However, it can lead to a breakdown of love. Then, we go back to a level that is just the correspondence of natures, that is, to a degree of presence which is no different to the meeting, in effect. However, man stands out as being able to associate with people at the level of *dilectio*, that is, on the level of selfless concern for the good of the beloved person.

[IM, pp. 71–82]

ETHICS

M. Gogacz, *Elementarz metafizyki*, second edition, Suwałki: Wyższa Szkoła Służby Powszechnej, 1996, Internet edition.

1. THE OBJECT OF ETHICS

The relation of action is a kind of essential relation. It is subjected in man by a categorical power of will. Being as a good is its terminus, to which it is directed. Will subjected by relation cannot leave the ontological area of man. It does not achieve being, to whom it is inclined. The will only acquires a good in us as a manifestation of existence. It can only stimulate existential relations, based on our transcendental properties. These properties put us in contact with being as a good. For this reason, we can admit that the word of the heart induces us to an action and this action is evoked by essential principles of the encountered being. Such action brings us from the order of encounter to the order of presence, which is the existential relation of love, faith and hope. We can also say that an action, which relies on referring to the being as good, brings us from the encounter to the relation of hope, because a transcendental property of good inhered in two beings is a subject of the relation of hope.

Ethics then specifically results in hope. The ideology of hope, which is nowadays culture, has its roots in ethics. Love and faith have their roots in religion, mainly in persons who influence each other primarily by their existence and intellectuality rather than by the will as a subject of choice. For this reason, the metaphysics of being and religion is needed by contemporary culture and man. These branches facilitate contact with real beings in their existence and essence.

Let us also stress that each identification of internal causes of being, that being is and what it is, and each identification of external causes of being constitutes metaphysics. In metaphysics, it is established that the relation of action exists, and it also establishes what it is.

Ethics dealing with action does not identify the existence of action, but concerns the choice of action, i.e. the essential relations that protect the co-existence of persons. From the fact that the relation of action brings us from the encounter to presence, it follows that the object of ethics is the protection of personal relations and of persons at the same time. In ethics, which is a branch of philosophy, the making of man's choices is not the point. Choices are culturally determined. Ethics as a philosophical study connects us specifically with the object of metaphysics. Metaphysics identifies the internal principles of being, because the intellect is sensible to these principles and grasps only them. Thus, ethics does not deal with the identification of principles of beings, but identifies principles of choices of action which protect personal relations and persons. In this way, ethics acquires its own object of research and becomes an autonomous and independent study. Neither the sentence of metaphysics nor religion belong to the area of ethics. More specifically, ethics is not particularly related to the subject of metaphysics, but deals with principles similarly. Ethics establishes the principles of choices of action, not the ontological principles of the relation of action. We can illustrate this by an example: when such principles as wisdom or contemplation are referred to the being of person as external causes, we discover the dignity of a person, her status among other substances, which is called the axiological property of a person. When the same external principles are referred to an action, we discover and choose those actions which protect persons and their dignity.

2. PRINCIPLES OF ACTION (CONSCIENCE, CONTEMPLATION, WISDOM)

Now let us find these principles of choice of protective actions, which are the proper objects of ethics. Let us remind ourselves that the will is the subject of relation of action. Also, the will is activated to action by intellectual information about being, which reveals being

as good. Good becomes a reason for will's inclination and direction towards being. Such dependency has arisen as a result of education of the will, that is, by improving the will in its reception of intellectual information. Will prefers to base itself on rather emotional and sensual information. Will is not aware of its motive. It concerns the powers of decision, not of cognition. Will's inclination towards not being motivated by intellectual information about being as good connects us with being, which destroys persons, rather than protects them. Man opposes ethical action then. So, if the will bases its decision on intellectual information, the intellect becomes the main principle of action. However, the decision about an action is made by both intellect and will. Will directs us to being as good. This is due to its inclination to good. If the will makes a mistake and takes as good something that does not protect persons, we feel anxious and we have remorse. This capability of the will to choose good is called conscience.

Conscience is then the permanent capability of the will to choose being as good. It is an inclination, which requires information about good. Conscience is therefore not only a principle required for an ethical action. According to its nature, will is inclined to search for such a principle in the intellect. Discovering it requires reflection as well as a conviction that such a principle has finally been found. Reflection and joy are the nature of contemplation.

Contemplation is an operation of potential intellect at the level of the speech of the heart. It is an astonishment, which penetrates understanding. We are delighted that the will, moved by the word of the heart, has directed us towards the being that is affecting us and that we have found an act of existence there, which manifests itself as good. Contemplation is therefore both an operation of the intellect and the will. It reveals their cooperation. It results in joy in the conscience, when a chosen being presents itself as good. Such admiration of the will and delight of the chosen good does not mean, however, that we have established a relation with a good for us, namely with a good protecting the person. It only follows that the conscience has to use contemplation according to the fact that the will is guided by intellectual information. Contemplation is the simultaneous action of the will and the intellect. It is necessary for a conscience. What is more, contemplation supports conscience in its choices.

Intellect can, however, motivate a will by using information from the area of knowledge. This means that it communicates information

about every being as good. Each being presents itself as good and has a specific, complete and identifying essence. This essence itself delights with its structure. It does not follow that it is good for us. Knowledge is not enough, because knowledge shows good in itself in beings, whereas will has to choose good for us. At the level of knowledge, intellect contemplates both convenient and inconvenient substances for a man. Will, which is informed about these substances as good in themselves, can connect us with something which both destroys and protects human existence. Perhaps, humans' choice of both drugs and vitamins has its source in the fact that the will uses only intellectual knowledge while choosing among goods. Both drugs and vitamins are intellectually presented as various goods.

In the meantime, we have to choose those substances that are good for us. It is not enough to be guided only by conscience and by contemplation. Both these principles operate at the level of unclear cognition. They have to be supported by a principle from the level of clear cognition, i.e. strict reflection, which would allow one to differentiate between good and evil, which is understood as a destroying effect of being. Contemplation induces us to reflection, but not to making truth and good as well as their effects precise. Wisdom is a recognition of being's causes and effects.

Wisdom is the decisive principle of the choice of protecting people. It recognizes being as good in itself, but it shows it to the will only when it recognizes it as good for us. Only then does a connection between will and good protect man.

Contemplation helps the intellect in such sapiential accounts, because it allows one to keep or break the relation of cognition, to consider the effects of the connection of being with man in a friendly and happy relation to the being. It is the intellect using the essential schema of causes and effects. We see here how using the essential schema of causes works. It allows for a choice of good for us and makes our action protective for persons.

The relation of action is determined by three principles: wisdom, contemplation and conscience.

Wisdom is the disposition of the intellectual recognition of effect as truth, which results in good in man.

Contemplation is the simultaneous operation of intellect and will in reference to a being in its truth, without determining whether it is good for us.

Conscience is the capability of the will to direct to being as a good. Conscience is not enough to distinguish between good in itself and good for us. Conscience recognizes every good as good for us.

Let us add that wisdom, or rather intellect in its disposition of wisdom acquired in clear cognition, operates in the area of the speech of the heart. For this reason, action is not always a clear and precise human operation. It is so, if we misunderstand wisdom and contemplation. Contemplation is not a clear recognition of a good for us, because delight constitutes it as well, and this disturbs clear understanding. Wisdom is the operation of an intellect at the level of the speech of the heart. However, intellect already uses external and internal speech, distances knowledge and clearly recognizes truth as well as good.

3. THEORY OF VALUES

Intellect recognizes good for us when it establishes the effect following our connection with good. So, it compares effect and cause specifically. Such a comparison results in axiological and evaluative responses. Ethics requires comparing the effects, so it requires evaluation. Except for the theory of principles of action, ethics consists of the theory of values.

Value, in brief, is a recognition of being as a good for us. Precisely speaking, good is the basis of our recognition of something as a value. Let us make this even more precise. A relation with such a being, whose effects are good for me, is valuable for me. If this is so, we should attempt to last in a relation with this being which is good for us. The lasting of a relation which protects us with good is a value.

Let us repeat here that being is being, being is not a value. Its property of good is good, and this is not a value either. A relation with a being is a relation, and not a value. However, lasting in such a relation is something we should care for. In order to acquire such permanence of relation, we should keep it with intellectual and volitional relations. Then the relation lasts. Its lasting is something valuable for us, it is a convincing purpose, a task, it is a value. As a purpose and task, value would be of an epistemological nature. Perhaps this is why some metaphysicians consider value as an intellectually grasped transcendental property of being. That, however, is only an account and

a kind of knowledge, and cannot protect us in reality. Only real relations can protect us, logical relations cannot. Logical relations are only a motive for protecting real relations. Value situates itself in the area of being of the lasting of personal relations, which protects persons. Protecting these relations in their lasting refers our action and ethics to being. Action is then not a realization of an abstracted idea, a model of life, nor is it a reference to cultural transformations. It is being together with persons, connecting with persons. It is a lasting of the relation of presence. Thus, persons make contact with each other, they constitute their environment, the home of persons.

4. METANOIA AND THE HUMANISM OF CULTURE

In order to be maintained in real relations, in the personal relation of love, faith and hope, we have to distance things or even the entire world from ourselves. On the other hand, we have to direct our intellect towards persons in such a way that the intellect could protect persons and personal relations intellectually and volitionally. Thus, we have to open ourselves directly to persons and to each being. Such an opening is the nature of truth and faith. Finally, we have to see good in it, to connect with persons by hope, to contact with good for ourselves. In order to trust persons and real beings and recognize them as a good for us, we have to let them influence us. This influence will free us from fear, uncertainty and misleading cultural information. In order to get that, we have to distance ourselves from culture, change our way of thinking, hitherto directed to products and abstracted from beings. Such change is called metanoia. So, metanoia is the third ethical branch, after the theory of principles and the theory of values.

Metanoia, which is an effect of such thinking that we are protected by personal relations and persons, introduces humanism. It is an effort made for keeping personal relations. Metanoia is acquired in humans by protecting the transcendental properties, existence and essence of beings, mainly persons. It causes that the products we create—which reveal our understanding, decisions, feelings and experiences—we do as something what protects people, existence, truth, good and relations built on these transcendental properties. Due to that, all objectively grasped culture becomes humanistic; it results in

human dispositions as an internal culture. It results in a capability of connecting with real beings by existential relations.

Humanism and culture, as effects of metanoia, become the next branch of ethics in the aspect of the effects of being guided by the principles of wisdom, contemplation and conscience.

5. PROBLEM OF DUTY

Let us add that the relation of action places us in real connections with persons. These connections come from real subjects, who are existential and essential properties of being. All relations have their source in real beings. Thus, our cognition does not decide on the reality of relations. They are not duties though, a proper and specifically legal consensus on what the common good is, which would be beneficial for both sides. The relation of action justifies and activates the group of real existential and essential relations. Thus, ethics is the way of being among persons. It is not imagined duty. Duty should belong to law rather than to ethics. While claiming that the intellect is the main principle of being, Kant suggested that a contract, called a duty, is the main problem or nature of ethics. Yes, duty and law are needed. They regulate daily life. However, they do not have the power to make personal relations real, the protection of which mainly concerns the principles of the choice of protective actions.

[IM, pp. 91–97]

PEDAGOGY

M. Gogacz, *Osoba zadaniem pedagogiki. Wykłady bydgoskie*, selected and edited by A. Andrzejuk and K. Kalka, Warszawa, Oficyna Wydawnicza "Navo", 1997, Internet edition.

1. EDUCATION AS CAUSING MAN'S RELATION TO TRUTH AND GOOD

The term "education" points to the operations which cause man to refer to truth and good. That which is true and good has been recognized and accepted by a man, because this is a condition of such a relation. When a man does not yet recognize truth and good and when he is not able to make a decision, which I call an acceptance of relating to the object, the preceptor does it instead. Besides, a man is a preceptor to himself, because he must also be inclined to make a relation with the true and the good.

So, the term "education" can be expanded. It can be admitted that education is the preceptor's influence on the student. As a result of such an influence, the student makes relations with the proper object.

Education is always needed, because a man in himself or in someone else has to distance a domination of cogitative virtue (*vis cogitativa*). Cogitative virtue is the power which relates to any kind of object which is induced by that sensory internal power mechanically and mindlessly. To outdistance himself from the dominance of *vis cogitativa*, man has to improve his intellect and his will. This means that he has to recognize beings according to their very nature, according to the truth, and relate only to those beings which result in good. In this sense, education is related to truth and good. Education as an outdistancing stage of relating to any kind of being does not have to

go by trial and error. It can follow from the capability of recognizing truth and its choice as good. This is the preceptor's capability. In this case, wisdom is a norm or a principle of the choice of operations, which makes the man relate to truth and good.

2. PRECEPTOR'S KNOWLEDGE AS PEDAGOGY AND ITS DIFFERENCE FROM PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHICS

Let us note here that an education concerns a man and his relations. Education is the sum of the preceptor's operations which advise a student to make proper relations.

Philosophical anthropology concerns man; it is also called the philosophy or metaphysics of man. Ethics establishes the principles of the choice of relations towards truth and good. If man is to be guided by these principles, he has to be influenced by an education. If a man knows how to educate, he becomes a preceptor or pedagogue, and the teaching of what he knows is called pedagogy. The character and effectiveness of pedagogy depend on the preceptor's knowledge about man and the principles of the choice of relations towards truth and good. In other words, pedagogy belongs to philosophical anthropology and ethics. It is dependent in the sense that "it implements in life" what is defined by metaphysics and the metaphysics of choice of proper human actions.

Let us make it clear: the metaphysics of man shows the principles which constitute a man. Metaphysics presents a man as a real individual being, constituted of soul and body, unique and personal. In this real individual being, existence is a principle of or reason for its reality. It is also a reason for manifestations such as distinctiveness, unity, truth, good and beauty. These manifestations of existence are causes of relations of love, faith and hope. Form is the principle of or reason for human identity. Also, form is a human soul and, together with immaterial potency, a subject of intellect and will. The principle of reason of human individuality is a matter which—as a subject of physical accidents—constitutes a body together with accidents. The existence which actualizes an intellect in a man, together with the intellect, makes a man a person. And when we claim it, we present the unique position of a person amongst beings. Such a position of a person is her dignity.

Ethics shows the principles of choice which protect persons and personal relations. If they are principles of the choice of actions, they have to be found in intellects. We know from philosophical anthropology that intellect mobilizes the will to refer to the good. A look at being from the position of truth and good is intellectual capability, which we call wisdom. So, wisdom is the principle of actions protecting people. Contemplation supports wisdom, because contemplation is the intellect's testimony, which is accepted by the will, that relations connecting people remain. Conscience supports wisdom. Conscience is the intellectual motivating of the will to direct to the good. We can add here that if a man refers these principles to action, which is the starting point of ethics, and if, thanks to these principles, man chooses actions connecting him with truth and good, he will use actions which protect persons. And this is the point of access of ethics, the task accomplished by ethics.

In order for a person to use protective actions that cause good, she must be encouraged to do so, and she must be educated. And this is where pedagogy comes in.

Generally, pedagogy is a study which establishes principles of improving the human intellect up to the level of wisdom. Also, it improves human will up to the level of righteousness, that is, the right choice of good and keeping to it.

In particular, pedagogy establishes principles of recognition and the choice of truth and good in contemporary external culture as well as minimalizes the bad effects of the influence of cultural evil and falsehood. These effects often destroy education and upbringing.

We have to add that both intellect and will can be educated and brought up. Emotions also can be educated.

Education is the capability of recognizing what is true and good.

Education of the intellect relies on improving its recognition of principles, which co-constitute being.

Education of the will is teaching the choice of the good indicated by the intellect.

The formation of emotions is the acquisition of the sensibility of beauty. Let us add that emotions are the relation of the appetitive sphere to the physical good or the relation of emotion to the imagination of this good.

Education is the sum of operations which cause man's connection to truth and good.

Education of the intellect is improving it in its love for truth, in remaining in that which is right.

Education of the will relies on keeping what intellect has chosen and what intellect presents as resulting in good.

Education of the emotions is training them in subordination to intellect and will.

3. SENSORY AND INTELLECTUAL REACTIONS

All that which has been said hereto concerns the philosophical education of man. Sometimes it seems that there is no other humanistic education of man. Every education is a philosophical one. Only philosophical education exists. Let us make this more precise.

Sometimes we are dominated by some kind of behaviour caused by *vis cogitativa*. We relate to everything that cognitive and appetitive powers have informed us about. *Vis cogitativa* connects an experience with desire or cognition with a decision mechanically, without a deeper understanding. Thus, we desire and want those things which we have seen or cognized. It is now necessary to improve the intellect in the recognition of truth and in opening the will to good. However, not every truth and not every good can be cognized and chosen, but only the truth which results in good in us. Not every drink is good, only a healthy one is good. Not all knowledge is good, only true knowledge is good. So, evil cannot be chosen, only good can be chosen.

If intellect and will start to react this way, we have to acquire wisdom in the intellectual domain and we have to acquire righteousness in the volitional domain. So, children should learn wisdom urgently and they have to learn how to rely on wisdom every day, in every decision. In order to get it, the proper pedagogy should be involved, to encourage actions that lead to relations with the truth and good. Pedagogy should be connected not with experimental psychology, but with the metaphysics of man. It should also be connected not with any kind of ethics, but only with ethics of the protection of personal relations and persons. The principle of education must be applied at the same time as the principle of reducing the bad effects of wrong theories in contemporary culture.

4. WISDOM, FAITH AND PATIENCE AS THE PRINCIPLES OF PEDAGOGY

Let us look closer at which actions should be undertaken in the field of education and philosophical upbringing and how to introduce the principles in the common pedagogy of philosophical upbringing.

Let us remind ourselves that upbringing convinces a man to make relations with truth and good. What is true requires understanding. Such understanding is education. Upbringing necessarily connects with education. We have to bring young people up as well as educate them. This concerns intellect, will and emotions.

If upbringing connects with the truth and good which are cognized intellectually, wisdom is the reason and principle of upbringing and philosophical education.

We know that only a wise man can teach—programs and institutions cannot. Thus, the preceptor causes philosophical upbringing. Such a preceptor is a person who brings others up, or a person who brings herself up.

Wisdom is then the basic principle of upbringing and philosophical education. Education is the sum of the actions which induce the student to relate with truth and good.

There is an apparent paradox, however: wisdom is the purpose of philosophical upbringing as well as its principle.

There is a deep truth in this paradox, for instance, in order to learn how to play the piano, we should play the piano; in order to learn how to read, we should read. Therefore, in order to learn how to relate to truth and good, we should relate to truth and good. At the same time, relating to truth and good is wisdom. It concerns every young person, starting from their childhood. Teaching philosophy to high school graduates involves more specific pedagogy.

We also have to remember that wisdom is the potential intellect's disposition, and such intellect is a subject of passive cognition, which receives ontological principles of objects. These principles are accompanied by manifestations of existence, such as reality, distinctiveness, unity, truth, good and beauty. The intellect receives them and exercises itself in grasping reality as separate beings, the real ones, of internal unity, which make their principles available and provoke positive reactions and admiration. The content of this existence's

manifestations, as soon as we realize them, becomes the first principles or philosophical ways of grasping being. The manifestation improves the intellect in grasping them and in referring to them while communicating with real individual beings.

[...]

Vis cogitativa is induced to relate with everything we encounter.

Wisdom is induced to relate with only that which is true and what makes good results for us.

The student learns how to recognize truth and good and he has to overcome the mechanism of bonding with anything. The preceptor helps him.

The preceptor is a person who is trusted. Trust is the kind of faith provoked by the ontological property of truth between persons.

Faith is then the second principle of upbringing and philosophical education. Faith as trust connects the student with the preceptor and makes the philosophical upbringing the result of the interpersonal relation of faith.

Let us add that cognition and understanding, the entire speech of the heart, all occur between being and intellect, which is open to principles' operations of individual being. Such openness or availability of beings is truth understood metaphysically. Truth provokes cognition when it acts upon the intellect and provokes faith.

Human cognition happens in the field of faith. Faith, therefore, as a personal relation between the student and his preceptor, is in the field of cognition and philosophical upbringing.

There has to be patience in the student as well as in the teacher. Patience is the will's equivalent of the intellect's potentiality. We have to experience a good many times in order to acquire a disposition of easily connecting with it. We have to experience a good many times patiently. We have to repeat this experience.

Patience is the contribution of the will to philosophical education, just as faith is the contribution of the intellect. Patience is also the principle of philosophical education.

We can stress here that wisdom, which unites operations of intellect and will, truth and good, is the basic principle of upbringing and philosophical education. Faith is the second principle, and comes from the side of the intellect. Patience is the third principle, and comes from the side of the will.

Let us add that the problem of faith is associated with the problem of God.

The metaphysics of being allows one to recognize all beings, including God as a subsistent existence and the first being, who causes the existence of all other beings. We relate personally to subsistent existence. When we make such a relation, God introduces in our existential layer His own internal life of the Holy Trinity. Religion thus arises.

5. COURSES CAUSING UPBRINGING IN PEDAGOGY

The problem of metaphysics and religion which is expressed in dogmatic theology, based on the explanation of the articles of faith in metaphysics, leads to courses in teaching. The question is, what does the student have to relate to?

Intellect and will should contact the principles and transcendental properties of being through the metaphysics of being and dogmatic theology. By improving personal relations, humanism and religion gain strength.

Good and proper imagination provoke good emotions. An evaluating imagination is shaped by learning a native language through the noblest and most beautiful texts. The Book of Psalms should be one of them.

The beauty of literature and every kind of beauty improves the will in searching for good. The will thus becomes the right will, in the words of Thomas Merton.

In such a manner, the principles of philosophical upbringing facilitate gaining intellectual wisdom and volitional righteousness.

6. HUMILITY AND MORTIFICATION

AS PRINCIPLES OF A PARTICULAR PEDAGOGY

Now let us consider what cultural operations should be undertaken in order to educate and bring up a man in truth and good.

Let us note that culture in its subjective aspect is the sum of intellectual and volitional dispositions. In other words, culture is that which is acquired in upbringing and education. However, culture in its objective aspect is a group of works which express wisdom and

righteousness, good emotions and experience, which protect wisdom and righteousness. Objectively, culture could be a group of works which provide falsehood, evil, hatred and scandal, the negations of truth and good.

Wisdom and righteousness protect us from the danger of culture. Before we become wise and righteous, we are helped by a wise and righteous preceptor, because we base ourselves on the preceptor's experience. In order to use the preceptor's advice, we have to become humble. But the negation of everything, which can be interesting, does not help us in getting closer to the truth and God. It requires mortification. Mortification is ignoring everything which is not necessary. Such mortification is taught by beauty, which influences us with its harmony of the whole, with its proportions of necessary elements and clarity of content, with the truth and good of culture's work.

Humility and mortification are two principles which induce the will and intellect to choose that which is valuable in culture.

Humility is the intellect's consent to the truth.

Mortification is the will's consent to the choice of that which is right, even in cases when it is painful to ignore what fascinates the will so much.

In regard to humility, there is an obedience to the preceptor, which is the result of trust.

In regard to mortification, there is the perspective of poverty. This is a term from the field of ascetics or the theory of a mainly religious upbringing, but it expresses a relation to persons rather than to material things. An excess of material things excludes poverty. This is not about intellectual poverty, but rather about a literal transition from erudition and an excess of information to persons, to their properties of truth and good. Only by these first manifestations of existence is a man able to reach the real being.

Humility and mortification, together with obedience and poverty, direct one to persons, to parents and preceptors. They all can be trusted.

7. COURSES TEACHING UPBRINGING IN A PARTICULAR PEDAGOGY

You must never fail to trust. By referring to the preceptor we learn the choices of truth and good as long as they are faithful to truth and good. We learn from the preceptors how to use wisdom. At the same

time, while knowing the preceptors as real persons, we formulate our first accounts of personal relations because we experience such personal relations. In time, we formulate the sentences that are elements of philosophical anthropology.

Teachers and preceptors should follow the path of making the student communicate with persons. They should advise philosophical anthropology, written in culture and ethics, in which a man is grasped as a person and is connected with others by personal relations. They should also recommend the metaphysics of man and ethics by Thomas Aquinas. They should also recommend the theory of education, which informs the student about operations connecting persons with faith, hope and love. If the students have the faith which relates them to other people, they will be able to relate to God as well.

8. ROLE OF CONTEMPLATION IN UPBRINGING

The choice of persons and personal relations rather than material things requires a specific kind of cognition, which is called contemplation.

Contemplation is the intellect's testimony and the will's acceptance that there are personal relations. Personal relations remain and connect people.

The good which is caused by relations—for instance, love, the astonishment of beauty (*concupiscentia*), the adequacy of our longings (*connaturalitas*), the care for the good of a beloved person (*dilectio*), selflessness in giving love (*caritas*), the joy of love's lasting, fidelity in friendship (*amicitia*), experiencing support from others (*amor*)—all show the importance of relations with persons and their exceptional position among other beings and things, the position which is their dignity.

Dignity is the unique position of persons among beings and things. We discover the position by comparing persons with other beings and things. They are distinguished by their existence, which has liberated their intellect and will. We understand what these powers are. We know that, because of them, a person acquires wisdom.

A philosophical upbringing, thanks to the particular pedagogy which directs one to the truth and good in culture, is the recognition and decision of being together with persons at the level of wisdom.

9. THE PERSON AS A SPECIFIC PRINCIPLE OF PEDAGOGY

Let us add that pedagogy—in inducing a man to relate with others by relations based on manifestations of existence, that is, faith, hope and love, which Aquinas' philosophical anthropology talks about—is guided by wisdom and contemplation as principles of choice of the operations that are called upbringing. These principles do not differ from ethical principles. In ethics, however, they are more the principles of recognizing actions than of protecting people. In pedagogy, there are reasons for doing so.

Let us also add that principles which are involved in both general and particular pedagogy are efficient only then, when they are personal equipment. It is not necessary in philosophical anthropology and ethics. It is necessary in pedagogy.

We can say in short that the main principles of upbringing are the person who brings another up and the person who is brought up. They both decide about upbringing, including the philosophical one. So, it is a role for loving, wise, righteous, faithful, patient and humble persons, who are capable of choosing mortification. Such persons are faithful to each other by obedience and they always appreciate persons because of their dignity, as persons capable of acquiring wisdom. This is the role of upbringing which characterizes a pedagogy that looks for its anthropological foundations.

[PSP, pp. 13–21]

POLITICS

M. Gogacz, *Mądrość buduje państwo. Człowiek i polityka – Rozważania filozoficzne i religijne*, Niepokalanów: Wydawnictwo Ojców Franciszkanów, 1993, Internet edition.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICS

In modern and contemporary culture, politics has gained the position of the first and the most important field which points out the rules of life. At the same time, it is related to the importance of the ability to undertake and solve problems concerning man, social groups and the state. The ability reminds us of the connection between politics and the art of ruling in medieval culture. As an art, politics emphasizes the role of politicians.

The concept of politics is commonly related to making decisions on economic and social issues as well as establishing contact with other nations and their governments. We could even say that establishing contacts is more related to politicians, and less to governments. This is indicated by the practice of confirming international agreements with each newly elected prime minister or president of any country. Politics appears to be the current *rationale* of the state and the political program that which executes this *rationale*. We can even argue that the *rationale* of the state is not always revealed, that the political program is what is presented more often. This is also reflected in the structure of political studies, which usually entails exploring the history, social and economic systems of individual countries. Getting to know these areas is a way to prepare for diplomatic tasks. At the same time, politics consists of each government defending its own political program, defending its inviolability and influencing other governments to accept the proposed point of view.

Politics in the present sense is, to a large extent, the art of gaining approval for one's own political program, and at the same time, according to one's own point of view, achieving a balance in the fields of beliefs, economic exchanges, and military force, which is often called the pursuit of peace.

In various historical periods, the *rationale* of the state was not always constituted by a clearly defined human theory, written on the legal or pedagogical recommendations of the political program. This is evident in the political documents of the French Revolution. This accent also appears in the concept of politics of some countries. In general, however, the socio-economic field, which is also the subject of contacts with other states, predominates in political programs. They tie together the fields of sovereignty and democracy.

1. DOMINATION OF POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

In European culture, the set of goals, tasks and values that define the everyday lives of people as well as their needs and concerns takes the first and the most important place. These needs and issues need to be addressed through administrative structures, including even upbringing. This set of goals, tasks and virtues is called politics. It is also an object of interest of the philosophy of man. However, it is sometimes described differently in philosophy and politics. Here a kind of conflict arises, which is most often won by a politics that uses a broader set of pedagogical persuasion methods than those of the universities and specialized institutes that practice human philosophy as the subject of their research. This is highlighted by the notable fact that, in the present culture, anthropological philosophies and their goals, tasks and values that are proposed to the people are not universally disseminated by universities, but by political institutions and organizations which do not always benefit from the truth-based theories of man, which reveal that a man is an individual person, that he is and who he is. Yes, politics often provides such answers, guided by specific purposes, tasks, and values; it proposes how people can settle needs and issues in their daily lives.

The basis of this domination by politics is not only due to the decisions and superiority of the politicians in the state, but also to its culture itself.

The dominance of these fields can also be called their validity in the aspect of the education and upbringing of people, of their worldviews and ideologies, of the subjects of literature and art and the fields of science and technology. Politics was established as a decisive authority for solutions and answers in the first and the highest place.

Politics has gained its unique position in modern and contemporary times. It was not so cultivated in the Middle Ages, nor in the ancient cultures of the West and the East. The high position of politics was pointed out and then consolidated by the programs of the French Revolution and the October Revolution, and then by positivism. We may suppose that this was due to some sort of manipulation, not as a result of the reflection and decisions of people seeking truth and good. It turns out that this established politics has set secular tendencies in culture and it has protected them. We have got used to the fact that politics neglects the problems of God, man, religion and humanism. Politics was situated above particular individuals, above God and human beings, and has become the basis for defining relations of reality. The consequences of this domination of politics over reality are evident in the destruction of the natural environment, in people getting used to deciding about everything according to the category of accepted worldviews.

In contemporary culture, which has been secular since the Renaissance, the following order of the importance of the branches of culture has been established: politics, law, social studies, and natural sciences.

(1) Politics acquired its first and most important place in culture as a result of the denial of the philosophy of reality and religion. Philosophy has been accused of not being able to obtain true claims, and the human intellect has been accused of not being able to cognize the truth. Agnosticism and scepticism have been established as the fate of man. "Philosophy" justifying this very fate of man has been built since then. Excluding the possibility of recognizing the truth and thus expressing the truth in philosophy has undermined trust in religion. Religion is now considered to be a private matter for people, as their need for a dream of a happy life. This dream is called alienation today, that is to say, it consists of assigning a reality to what we merely think. It is also said that religion can only be a form of mysticism, which is a direct experience of God. This experience is not transferable and

is not available to all people. A religion understood as mystical cannot be the foundation for defining the goals of man, his tasks and his values. The testimony of some people who speak of their mystical experience of God is subjective and possibly recognized only by trust in the nobility of the mystics. So, the philosophy of reality and religion cannot help us in any way. Therefore, only interpersonal relations are left. These relations are regarded as the only field of real human operations by politics. Politics describes the aims and tasks of interpersonal relations, and the values that man has to choose and receive in these relations. All this is our real everyday life, fulfilling human needs and problems that matter. It is believed that these are the issues that matter for the society, the city, the state, and every human being, the relationships that are needs, and the administrative and economic affairs. The realization of these values is made by science and technology, literature and art, worldviews and ideologies, education and upbringing. It is established by politics and done by the state. So, the institution of the state becomes a disposer of politics. The name "politics" itself is derived from the Greek word "*polis*," which means a city or a state. If the state decides about politics in its institutions, it is the ruler's or the ruling group's view. This means that politics has its origin in decisions, and therefore in the will of the rulers. It is the result of the predominance of voluntarism over intellectualism, that is, reliable intellectual truth which describes a man and his ontic structure, and his needs and affairs. Without the bond between need and concern and the nature of man, politicians can freely bypass human beings while defining his goals and tasks. Without the connection between human needs and human nature, politicians can freely define human goals and tasks, and they can also define important human values.

Politics, which has its source in voluntarism and freedom of recommendations, can be accused of maintaining the dominance of decision over the recognition of human nature. This is because culture justifies the priority of politics, which is not the philosophical identification of a man, his needs and affairs, but rather a set of recommendations concerning the achievement of his goals, the fulfilment of his tasks and being guided by certain values. Culture, however, justifies the political description of human goals, tasks and values.

(2) Below politics, the law is ranked in second place. The law is a set of established norms, introducing the principles of the order of administrative and economic activities. They are supposed to bring order into interpersonal relationships. The direction of the achievement of order is pointed out by the legal regulations, which explain the law. By obeying the laws, the community and the state become ordered structures; this structure reassures and creates the belief that interpersonal relationships are implemented properly. However, a man does not always obey the law. Such violations are detected by a specialized control group, namely the police. The detected violation of the law gives people a sense of security and gives rise to the belief that they owe it to the law. They do not consider that love was the basis for obeying the law. It does not seem right to anybody today to build politics, law and control on the norm of love. This points to the domination of politics over identifying the nature of man, whose basic reference to people is love, determined directly by the existence of persons.

No one is questioning obeying the law and following the rule of law. It is just hard to accept such a position of a law in culture that takes on the role of the norms of morality. Nor can it occupy second place after politics. The law, becoming a set of its realizations in politics, comes to be identified with politics for people. Some scholars, who work on the structure of contemporary culture and point to the importance of the field's hierarchy, often say that the law has been the first and most important field of culture since the Renaissance. There is a psychological and organizational problem, which relies on the fact that the norm of love cannot be placed beyond the first and the highest layer of culture. In the ordinary sense of people, let alone the results of the philosophical identification of man, love transcends the law and, moreover, love allows the discovery in reality of the rules of order for the administration and economy, rather than the decisions of the rulers.

(3) Social studies are in third place in the hierarchy of fields. This is the way of checking the effectiveness of the law in directing the interpersonal relations. Social studies concern the accordance between interpersonal relations and current politics. It can be learned from applying different methods in social studies. The methods are mainly statistical. They do not characterize people themselves and

their relationships, but the relations' conformity with the political program. Sociologists often have no sense of a political role in their research. They come to their statistical results with the help of questionnaires that are developed according to the rules and standards of contemporary culture. In this culture, politics designates a field of study that is not only a group of interpersonal relationships, but also a set of goals, tasks and values.

(4) Natural sciences take fourth place in the discipline's hierarchy in culture. Yes, indeed, they have their own methods of research and subject matters. But because of their structure, natural sciences are subordinated to politics, which shows them their proper goal, that is, identifying ways to activate and improve business. We can suppose that social studies serve to achieve administrative order and that the natural sciences serve to achieve economic order. This order, and the direction of the ordering of all interpersonal relationships, is determined by the law, and the law is directed by politics.

The interdependence between the studies, their goals and the tasks given to the people determine contemporary culture by the hierarchy of studies. This hierarchy is the reason for the domination of politics today.

A separate and difficult issue are the reasons why the Renaissance, the two revolutions and positivism led to the dominance of politics and its secular character. We can only know that the method of obtaining such a cultural structure was to question the truth of classical philosophy, and primarily the metaphysics of being and religion in its Catholic version.

[WBS, pp. 36–37]

THEORY OF CULTURE

M. Gogacz, *Szkice o kulturze*, Kraków–Warszawa/Struga: Michalineum, 1985, Internet edition; M. Gogacz, *Mądrość buduje państwo. Człowiek i polityka – Rozważania filozoficzne*, Niepokalanów: Wydawnictwo Ojców Franciszkanów, 1993. Internet edition.

CULTURE'S CHARACTERISTICS

Culture comprises all mechanically composed products which are made of previously existing real components. Culture is also the dispositions of a person acquired mechanically, for example, a skill of action (virtue) or a skill of manufacture (art), as well as theories, ideologies, institutions, machines, and cars.

Thus, objectively, culture is the group of works and disciplines made by man in his entire history. These are works of art and techniques, made by adding real components, which express the thoughts, decisions, emotions and experiences of the authors of culture.

Subjectively, culture is the spiritual life of people, which relies on improving intellect and will and harmonizing emotions and experiences. Such improvement is acquired through the cognition of works and disciplines which are made by men. In turn, this improvement allows the creation of works and disciplines.

Products which contain both internal (dispositions) and external (works and disciplines) worlds of culture are ahead of us in the genetic sense, they are earlier than we are, but they are subordinated in a structural sense to human beings, so they are the products of man. We have the right to change them as their authors and we have a duty to protect them, because they are a common good of people.

[SC, pp. 122–123]

DIAGNOSIS AND THERAPY OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

Independent in its existence, the reality of the real being is ahead of our thinking and culture as the internal improvements of man and the works he creates. Culture is therefore both a faithful understanding and thought of reality, and a group of works expressing the reality through our understanding. Through this faithfulness, culture becomes a way of our contact with real beings, with all existing persons, and also with God, who is the person. This understanding of culture embraces the themes and works of humanism, religion, and technology. Culture contains all the things created by man, provided that they express an understanding which is in harmony with the reality. Culture which is not built on fidelity to the real existence is false and threatens man and the world in their existence, as evidenced by the distorted spiritual life of man and ecological problems. These dangers and problems arise when the source of culture becomes arbitrarily constructed by human theories, so that the constructs of thought, not the reality of real beings, are the basis of new, imagined constructs.

Culture in its basic structure is precisely the truthful understanding of reality and, faithful to this understanding and reality, a group of works as internal improvements of man and of what he has created outside. In a more detailed view, culture includes ways of getting people to improve, using dispositions to protect personal relationships through the use of thought and decisions, fascination and feelings.

It also includes goals, tasks and values as well as the ways of creating them as works that are needed to obtain knowledge, wisdom, and prudence. Wisdom and prudence govern the conduct of righteousness, courage and moderation. Knowledge and wisdom are the dispositions of the intellect, prudence, justice, courage and moderation we associate with the operations of the will. Moreover, all these dispositions support us in obtaining cultural imaginations, fascinations and emotions. All of man, all his internal powers, has to express internal and personal culture as a measure of the external works which constitute external culture.

It might seem that culture, as a faithful and improved referring to beings, expresses itself mostly in morality. Yes, the high morality of people is proportional to their personal and internal culture. It is also

the sign of the culture as a reference to persons. God is one of these persons, unique and extraordinary. Therefore, we should act morally in front of God as well. At the same time, it should be remembered that morality is intended to protect personal relationships, and to protect people through these relationships. Personal relationships refer us to people and to God. Protective actions are also such actions which are the subject of protection. Briefly speaking, there is humanism and religion. They are the content of that which we protect by moral actions. This content is love as the absolute kindness and acceptance of people; as a faith that makes everyone available to each other in their personal internal lives; and as hope, which is the joyful need to live in association with people through love and faith. The strengthening and deepening of these relationships is not reduced to their protection, and therefore to moral behaviour. It could consolidate a state that is not yet deeper and full of love, faith and hope. We strengthen and deepen our personal relations by other actions. If there are relationships with God, then, according to the fact that both persons connected by personal relationships bring their internal life into this relationship, God, for his part, brings what He is. Culture must, therefore, include at the same time the ability to undertake what God is in us. Culture must always be fidelity to the reality of real beings, to what is happening between people, and thus also to the revealed information about the supernatural relationship between God and man. Culture cannot ignore the knowledge of beings and persons as the philosophy of being and the philosophy of man and persons.

The personal culture of a man reveals wisdom. It is the dominating disposition in a person. It can be ascribed to God as a person. Wisdom is the principle of choosing moral actions which protect personal relationships, and among them mainly love, co-occurring with the relation of faith and hope. This wisdom guides not only the moral conduct of the people. It is also the principle of correctly obtained knowledge and understanding consistent with the beings in the activities of distinguishing the effects from the cause. Wisdom is then the principle of recognizing the good and bad effects that we can induce in ourselves with which we want to associate ourselves as the cause of expected effects. Wisdom is, in the order of humanism, an irreplaceable principle of all good references, and at the same time the principle of acquiring other improvements, which constitute our internal culture. In the order of religion, wisdom is the principle of

the loving relationship with God. Wisdom is the principle of what we express in the form of works of culture.

External culture, determined by the personal culture of man and faithfulness to persons and all real beings, also reveals wisdom or its complete absence in the works that constitute this external culture or, as we say, culture objectively understood. If culture does not reveal the wisdom of works, there might be two reasons for that. Firstly, there are not many people who have achieved a high or normal level of personal culture. Secondly, in the creation of cultural works, those people who have achieved a high personal culture are influenced by the deviation from fidelity to oneself and real beings. Contemporary culture is generally not faithful to the reality of beings. It expresses idealism. It follows that the personal culture of people is exclusively private and that these people express what is suggested by politics.

One of the dominant threats of contemporary culture is the inconsistency between the personal culture of people and the external culture. These threats are many. They need to be discussed separately.

In sketching the shape of culture, a model of our culture, we can say that its basic source and the principle of its fidelity to the ontological structure of individuals and all individual particular beings, the principle of internal human improvement and external works is wisdom, which is the result of improvement caused by being influenced by the structure of a being. We can thus say that wisdom is the principle of common culture, a specific criterion of acquiring internal improvements and creating external works.

[WBS, pp. 80–82]

PHILOSOPHICAL-THEOLOGICAL THEORY OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

M. Gogacz, *Modlitwa i mistyka*, Kraków–Warszawa/Struga: Michalium, 1987, Internet edition.

Religious life is a connection of love, hope and faith between God and man, which follows from the grace of God's presence in us; the grace is developed and strengthened by our effort in active purification, and mainly by God's effort in passive purification, which is the skill of receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit. God becomes present in us and connects us with a relation of love, faith and hope when we love Christ.

By clarifying these terms, let us note that prayer reveals and asks for our relationship with God, its development and level, that is, the specific intensity of love. It reveals the real relationships between man and God. Thus, prayer is a sign of the real relationship between man and God, and a request that the relation could last. Religion is the real connection between man and God. In other words, prayer reveals the level and intensity of our religious life. If religion reveals the very reality of our relationship with God, and prayer is a group of ways to deepen it and a group of signs of the level of religious life, then prayer is what we call asceticism.

Asceticism is just a way of expressing love to God and of developing the capacity to associate with God.

Ascetics relies on being aware of ascetic acts and their theories.

So, all that we choose for ourselves as a way of expressing love and affection for God, all that we choose from the rich experience of the Church and the traditions of the religious life of the saints, all that the confessors or leaders of the spiritual life advise—all of this is the ascetic. Being aware of it is ascetics.

We will see later that as we purify ourselves and our references to God by ascetics, it is called active purification in the ascetic tradition. Let us add, however, that God Himself helps us to see our way to Him, He helps us to consolidate the way and deepen it. What God offers us as a way of protecting our relationship with Him is called passive purification.

In Christian ascetics, prayer reveals and counsels both ways of establishing real relationships with God. Thus, it is a significant theme in ascetics and the way of shaping religious life. It is not religious life itself, for it is love, faith and hope. Rather, it is the way to protect and develop love, faith and hope.

According to active purification and passive purification, there are different kinds or modifications of praying. This means that they reveal another state of our relationship with God and are requests for a different, deeper and more enduring level of these relations.

The variations of prayer that result from our passive purification by God show that our relationship with God is already deep and fixed. This set of prayer variations and religious life is often called mysticism in religious literature.

According to some theologians, mysticism is the advanced and deepened religious life of man, resulting from passive purification, since the so-called prayer of active contemplation that is already inflicted by us in God is permeated by the human project of religious life.

Let us add that such an understanding of mysticism is accepted by theologians whose explanation of religious life is based on the Neoplatonic philosophical tradition. In this tradition, the main thesis is a linear and hierarchical system of beings. Similarly, prayer is explained here as a linear sequence of expressions of love to God and improvement in an ever-increasing effort for the development of religious life.

Theologians who refer to the Thomistic tradition do not accept the linear sequence of beings, nor the linear stages of the development of prayer and religious life. They think that the same relation of love exists and that it connects man with God, and also that human prayer reveals and asks for love's intensity and lasting. So, depending on the intensity of love, the way and the level of prayer are changed, just as the mode of conversation between people changes; it changes from the moment of ordinary acquaintance to a stage of close friendship. Accordingly, for the theologians who explain prayer

in the Thomistic tradition, the understanding of mysticism changes. According to them, mysticism is not a higher stage of religious life. So, we get another, correct definition of mysticism.

Mysticism is a sudden, short-lived, inner and immediate intellectual experience of God's self-existence. God allows us to experience Him as a direct object of cognitive authority. Mysticism in this sense is only a natural cognition, an extraordinary and unique knowledge of God, which, bypassing in our process of cognition the stage of sensory perception, assures the intellect that God exists. This allows the man to survive the heavy period of doubt that attacks his religious life. This heavy period or crisis in religious life is called the dark night of the soul, or more broadly, the dark night of love in ascetics.

The dark night of love happens in our experience, within the psyche, which is the sum of the actions of the soul and the body, the actions shaped by culture in their purposes and the means of achieving our goals. The influence of culture often makes us oppose the influence of God. For we often do not understand God's ways of our being together with Him in a religious contact. We are more faithful to our project of religious life than to God's proposition. Removed in passive purification, our proposition of our connection with God makes us believe that our religious life breaks down and dies. In the meantime, God transforms it. Not knowing everything and not being able to recognize God's actions, we experience anxiety and crisis. When we worry about all this, we experience "a dark night of love." When we retire from further in-depth contact with God, we enter a stage of so-called coldness or the stage of atheism. Thus, God sometimes gives us a mystical experience because He wants to protect us from this. The mystical experience is a specific experience of Him through the intellect, which strengthens our natural certainty that God exists.

[MM, pp. 7–10]

PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTICS

M. Gogacz, *Filozoficzne aspekty mistyki*, Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1985, Internet edition.

1. REMARKS THAT JUSTIFY THE SUBJECT

In modern culture, which is characterized mainly by practicism and practical materialism, we can observe a common and strong tendency of searching for mystical experiences. It is mainly young people who are searching for such experiences. If one considers that the need for these experiences is an important part of the program of thousands of young people, the search for mystical experiences should be considered as an important and current factor of the profile of contemporary culture. We can say that our times are characterized by a group of very subtle and difficult needs.

These experiences, and generally speaking, mystical experiences, are today sought primarily in three ways:

- (1) in drugs;
- (2) in sources and traditions of Eastern poetry and theology;
- (3) in religious life, shaped by the Gospel.

The historian of the theories and trends of mysticism and the historian of philosophy might be concerned about the misunderstanding of ascribing to drugs and poetry, and also naturalistic theology, the power of evoking mystical experiences. These experiences cannot be evoked even by the Gospel. If mystical experience is the internal and direct experience of God's presence in us, it can be caused only by God Himself. Such experience assumes a personal contact

with God, or religious life, because religious life is based on the personal relationship between man and God. Sometimes God, personally related to us, makes us experience His own presence. Only a functionalist concept of religion, that is, a recognition of religion as a group of external signs, can result in the belief that repeating these signs will evoke the real presence of God in us. This understanding is close to the naturalistic and gnostic approaches, according to which our own, purely mechanical action, which is chiefly cognitive, can cause an actual and mystical encounter with God.

With regard to signs, I will skip the problems of Christian sacramental signs, which according to E.H. Schillebeeckx are the saving presence of Christ in us, causing this presence.¹ I just oppose the functionalist view, according to which every activity, treated as a liturgical action, has the power to result in the real presence of God in us. Supposing that the mystical experience is within us—within the psyche or consciousness—encounters with God, in some circles of young people, the mechanical means of transforming the psyche into the extension of the possibility of, as it is supposed, embracing God, are popular. It is a mistake of mixing the real religious life, which is created by God, and its functionalist, naturalistic and wrong interpretation.

As these issues are a current and quite large area of human affairs, an important factor in the culture of our times, as well as fashionable issues for today's young people, they should be taken and explained carefully. They must be taken prominently in Catholic theology above all, and mystical experiences should be properly placed in the religious life of persons who seek the encounter with God in the Gospel. The Catholic youth cannot fail to encounter the problem of mystical experiences and assume that only theologies of the East lead to the living God, and that Catholicism does not lead to Him, when He is often identified in popular and evil theology with a system of injunctions and prohibitions. Perhaps this popular theology still lacks a dimension which is a manifestation of the personal and living relation of man with God.

I would like to answer only one question, namely, what is the mystical experience? Because philosophy answers this question, I call it a philosophical interpretation of mystical experience.

¹ E.H. Schillebeeckx, *Chrystus – sakrament spotkania z Bogiem*, transl. A. Zuberbier (Kraków: Znak, 1966), p. 111.

2. THE SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

In the period of positivism in Europe, which assigned the value of legitimate claims only to the specific sciences, at the end of the nineteenth century, Henri Bergson, a professor at the Sorbonne in Paris, began to proclaim that the experience of mystics is proof of the existence of God. Bergson described the issue quite shockingly for naturalists, but at the same time, according to the positivist postulate of sciences. If only statements describing the experience, or other statements that can be reduced to these protocol statements, have the status of science, then the statement about the existence of God is just a statement describing the experience of the mystic.

Let us note, however, that the experience of mystics and the experience of that which a naturalist talks about are different.

So, what is the mystical experience, how does it come about and in what conditions does it appear? These are the questions we have been trying to answer in a number of publications in the fields of psychology, psychopathology, parapsychology, and the history of religion. The answer has been searched for—according to positivism—in the natural sciences. The mystics themselves have not often been asked for the answers. So, the history of mysticism has not often been studied, because it requires knowledge of theology, and sometimes of various theologies, as well as knowledge of philosophy.

Mystical experience should be mainly searched for in theology and philosophy, because this experience occurs in the area of religious life which is discussed by theology. We turn to philosophy because of the fact that it is in philosophical metaphysics that it is established what the thing is, and therefore what the mystical experience is.

Bergson informs us that sometimes people claim that they have experienced the presence of God. They wrote down their mystical experience and described it. Mystics are serious, normal, mentally healthy and respected people, so we have no basis to question their testimony. So, Bergson's proposition, namely, to ask mystics about the mystical experience, is the right methodological rule.

Therefore, the mystics' testimonies are the source of our knowledge about the mystical experience. Among the sources, there are also their texts and their testimony protocols.

It seems we have no other scientific approach to this problem. Our own mystical experience is only valid for us. When we want to analyze it, it becomes a text, information, which, like every text, is subjected to research. How can we verify mystical experience? How can we check that it is not an illusion? How can we distinguish it from the so-called mystical state? What kinds of criteria for the truth of this experience can be used? That is, what is the sign that it was indeed a mystical experience, an experience of God's presence? Do specific sciences, such as the natural sciences, in which the question of God is not present at all, explain the experience of the presence of God, of whom they know nothing? Which they do not investigate in the area of their object and the available methods of research? So, what is the mystical experience, the experience that arises and constitutes at the moment of direct knowledge of the presence of God? Could this experience be explained in psychology, medicine, parapsychology, psychopathology or other specific sciences by their own methodological means? Specific disciplines can determine the phenomena accompanying the mystical experience, for instance, concentration, ecstasy, the physiological state of the nervous system, dynamics of tensions, moods, even manifestations of thought processes. However, they cannot follow God's encounter with man in the situation of a direct mystical experience.

So, it is methodologically justified to search for the source of knowledge about the mystical experience in the testimonies of mystics. If, according to their testimony, the mystical experience is a direct experience of the presence of God, it is also methodologically justified to use theology in the interpretation of this experience. And because theology speaks mostly, as we know, in the language of classical philosophy, we have to use philosophy in the study of the mystical experience.

For this reason, the subject of this account is the philosophical interpretation of the mystical experience.

3. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

We can observe an interesting methodological phenomenon, which consists of the fact that, in order to determine the problem, we need to say in general what the mystical experience is in the first place.

In all mystical texts, both of Catholic and Christian mystics, as well as in the texts of Hindu mystics and mystics of Islam, in other religions and even in African cults, there is a constant motive for the direct experience of the presence of God. In these different religions, texts and testimonies, God is understood differently. In any case, as Bergson emphasized, the distinguishing feature of the mystical experience is the direct experience of the presence of God. Let us add that a further feature of this direct experience of God is the conscious experience of this presence.

We can now identify three main features of the mystical experience:

- (a) it is an experience of God;
- (b) it is a direct experience;
- (c) it is a conscious experience.

The mystic knows that, at this moment, God is directly present in him, and He is accessible to his spiritual cognitive authority in a specific experience.

Let us also note that in the literature of mysticism, these issues are not questionable. They are not discussed at all. All mystic theorists and mystics themselves emphasize that, in the mystical experience, God is experienced directly, and that it is known that this is a direct encounter with God.

However, the procedure of the mystical experience is indeed discussed: the question is, which aspect of man's own being experiences God? How can we know that this is the experience of God, and not another being? Thus, it is discussed who God is.

Most of these discussed problems belong to philosophy, which is concerned with what the thing is. We ask, what is the mystical experience? Who is God? What kind of process is an experience in a man?

While considering the ontological structure of being, the philosopher concludes that if being is limited, it is not self-subsistent. Because of its reality, there is a subsistent effective cause of being's existence. God is the effective cause. The philosopher discovers that between effective cause and man, there is a relation of efficiency.

The philosopher as philosopher also discovers that between effective cause and man, there is no direct cognition. However, the theologian mentions such cognition. The theologian knows about it from religion, which he explains. Various understandings of religion cause

various theologies. Different understandings of religion and theology result in different understandings of the mystical experience.

The mystics experience God in religious conditions. Theology talks about religion in philosophical discourse. Thus, we need to search for the interpretation of the mystical experience in theology and philosophy. Let us ask, in what kind of theology and in what kind of philosophy?

A full and justified answer to this question would require a wider analysis than the allowable framework for this approach. Let us apply another framework, namely, let us describe the mystical experience as we find it in the texts of Catholic mystics and interpret this description within the framework of classical philosophy. The advantage of this description (in relation to the description of, for example, Hindu mystics) lies in the fact that a man is here understood as a person. As a result of the mystical experience, the human person is more integrated, internally enriched and ennobled. A man does not disappear, he is not depersonalized. This mystical experience is in favour of man. This is where you can see the chance for this description and its justification to use—as an example—a Catholic mystic.

4. THE TERMINOLOGY OF THE MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE: A CATHOLIC APPROACH

(1) God in the philosophical sense, recognized as the efficient cause of the existence of non-absolute beings, is a spontaneous existence. He constitutes Himself as a separate, absolute personal being.

(2) God in the theological sense, revealing His love, is the one God who is also the Trinity of Persons.

(3) Religion is not an ideology, an opinion, nor is it a spiritual culture. It is a group of relations, which connect a man with the Divine Persons. These relations are reality, they are not just a theory. Religion is the reality of personal relations between man and God.

(4) The theology of religion is an ordered academic explanation of religious reality, treated as a group of relations, which are non-independent beings and connect man and God. The lasting of this connection is a personal value of saving. For this reason, theology is revealed axiology.

(5) Religious faith is a personal relation, which is sustained because of a decision to accept cognized and revealed information. We accept Revelation, because we trust in the truthfulness of God. The motif of trust is a human opening to God and loving Him. God helps man to make such decisions.

(6) Mysticism is theological knowledge about a conscious and direct experience of the presence of God in man.

(7) The mystical state is the manifestation of the effects of love in man, which are transformed by God in us. Love binds us more and more with God through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, who is sent by Father and Son. The Holy Trinity is present in us, and the mystical state creates our saving relationships with God.

(8) The prayer is a manifestation in the human person of the state of love transformed in us by God. It is also a way of expressing love to God.

(9) The mystical experience is a sudden, uncontrolled, conscious and direct experience of God in whom we believe, and can be directly experienced by our spiritual cognitive powers.

(10) Ecstasy is the suspension of sensual cognitive powers and the passivity of the spiritual authority, the intellect and the will. God gives to human spiritual authority His own presence not through faith, but through a direct and conscious reception of that presence.

5. SHORT DESCRIPTIONS OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE IN THE TEXTS OF TERESA OF AVILA AND JOHN OF THE CROSS

Teresa of Avila, in her book *Life*, writes that “reason, as it seems to me, does not think, does not lose itself, as I say, it does not work, as it is threatened by the magnificence of things which it sees.” Teresa adds that it is a “spiritual perception,” a “perception of divine presence.”

John of the Cross, in the book *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, adds that the “soul needs to be united directly with God and to be close to Him, to join with the dark cloud.”

The quoted statements and their contexts show that, according to Teresa and John of the Cross, the experience of God is received by an intellect which “does not think or lose itself.” Intellect receives

God's presence. This moment of the "dark cloud" means that the mystical experience does not provide concepts, it is not expressed in terms. The mystical experience is not a contact with God as the object of conceptualization, but with God who allows man to experience His presence, His being in the human person.

6. PHILOSOPHICAL COMMENTARY

A Thomist philosopher, when asked about his opinion about the description of mystical experience, is struck by the concepts, which can also be found in existential Thomism. And Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross knew nothing about existential Thomism. This means that existential Thomism describes the structure of being according to reality.

Firstly, let us consider the problem of God's actual presence in the human soul, which is "directly united with God."

Considering the relations between man and God, the relations of a personal encounter, the philosopher discovers that the relations of an encounter between human persons result in the exchange of effects. It means that a man as a being is unity, truth and good. However, an encounter between man and God results not in effects, but rather in the presence of God in man. God, who is a structurally simple being and the very existence, is not divided by essence and actions. If God contacts man personally, He remains in the essence of man as an entire person, as an entire being. The mystics claim rightly, then, that they experience the mere presence of God, not His kindness, for example.

Then we notice that the intellect is aware of God's presence. Man knows, he is aware, that he experiences God, who is a spiritual being. Man can experience God only by his intellect. Thomas Aquinas was right when he claimed that knowledge is the intellect's domain. Bernard of Clairvaux was wrong, because he thought that only love receives and experiences the presence of God in the mystical experience. Will and love have no chance to realize what they experience. Will and love are the subjects of acceptance, rather than cognition. They accept what the intellect has cognized or experienced.

The next problem concerns what the intellect cognizes in the mystical experience.

From the mystics' experiences, we know that in the mystical experience, the intellect is passive, it only passively receives God's presence. It does not formulate concepts, it does not see clearly, so the intellect experiences only God's existence, which is present in him.

Thomas Aquinas was not referring to his own theory of existence in his analysis of mystical experience. He believed that cognition is only the formulation of concepts. However, a man creates concepts only through sensible experience. God is a spiritual being and because of that, His essence cannot be grasped in man's life. Thomas said, therefore, that the mystical experience, that is, the conscious reception of God who is present in the human soul, is only "*quasi experimental cognition*" ("*cognitio quasi experimentalis Dei*").² The cognition of the essence of God, formulated through concepts, is acquired only by Revelation in this life.

Jacques Maritain taught us, however, that according to Thomas, potential intellect cognizes both the essence and existence of beings. While experiencing the presence of God, a mystic does not use the active intellect, because he cannot formulate concepts which describe the essence of God directly. His passive intellect is only able to experience God's existence. A mystic cognizes the experienced existence of God and does not formulate the concept of the essence of God.

7. THEOLOGICAL COMMENTARY

All Catholic theologians agree that there are three main features of the mystical experience:

(1) The awareness in a man, without the help of imagination and reasoning, that God is experimentally present in the human soul.

(2) That this experience does not provide any new concepts, it is only looking at the Supreme Good with enormous love.

(3) The knowledge that the experience of God's presence appears suddenly, that it does not depend on our will. Will does not have the power of inducing or stopping the experience. Spiritual powers are

² Thomas Aquinas, *Super Sententias* 14, 2, 2, 3.

passive, and in the innermost layers of the soul there is a close encounter, a union with God.

Theologians differ in their explanations of how and by which spiritual authority man receives God's presence. These differences, however, are understandable and depend on the philosophical tradition by which a theologian explains the mystical experience.

Theologians, referring to the accounts of Saint Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, Bernard of Clairvaux or Saint Bonaventure, think that man experiences in himself the direct presence of God with his love. Love would be the highest "peak" of the soul in terms of ecstasy, that is, the suspension of the activities of sensual and spiritual powers. This ecstatic experience is possible after practicing moral virtues during an intense and deeply religious life.

Theologians of an Aristotelian orientation assume that the intellect, accompanied by love, experiences the presence of God, caused by God. We can place Thomas Aquinas in this group.

The opinions of theologians who continue Aquinas' opinion can be divided into three groups:

Mystical experience is not different from the act of faith. It is only a manifestation of the more intense operations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, just a stage in the development of religious life. According to Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, the intellect recognizes a deeper love within us, shaped by God, and this recognition is an indirect mystical experience. According to Maritain, whose theory of cognition does not refer to the interpretation of mystical experience, it is the acceptance of the knowledge of God, knowledge that is deepened by the gift of wisdom.

Mystical experience is possible in terms of religious faith and it relies on grasping God in the stage of superconsciousness, according to Joseph Maréchal. Joseph Guibert thinks that it is a kind of perception of supernatural life. It is not an intuition, and it is not mere knowledge through faith.

Mystical experience is a direct experience of God's existence in man by his potential intellect, when God wants not only to give Himself to us on the granting of our faith, but also wants to be cognized by human intellectual powers. This is the opinion of the author of this book.

8. CONCLUSION

We need to add that mystical experience occurs in the lives of very religious people. It is caused by God, but it is supported by the gifts of the Holy Spirit in human intellectual powers. We do not acquire any new concepts, we do not formulate knowledge of God in the mystical experience. It is the experience of the existence of God who is present in us, who wants to be not only the object of our faith, but also the object of our direct cognition. This experience is accompanied with the deepening and strengthening of our love for God.

Mystical experience is never a mood, an emotion, a mental disintegration. It is a sudden awareness of man that his intellect is directly experiencing the presence of God, with whom he has communicated through the act of faith.

[PAM, pp. 7–16]

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