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PERSONALISM IN THE LUBLIN SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

(CARD. KAROL WOJTYŁA, FR. MIECZYSLAW A. KRAPIEC)

As we know, the problem of person has a very long history in the philosophical tradition. We also know that, in the beginning, this was a question of Divine Persons—the concept of person which, on the basis of Greek terminology (*hypostasis*, *prosopon*), was formulated in connection with this question, and made it possible to explain the crucial truths of Christianity: namely, the One God in Three Persons and the ontic unity of Jesus Christ. The Fathers of the Church (e.g., St. Augustine) had already been aware that the notion of person is the most suitable for expressing the specific and special character of the human being. The awareness of this became even sharper in the modern times when the problem of human being started to be undertaken outside a theological context. But the anthropological turning point came only in the twentieth century, which was connected, firstly, with the rise of philosophical anthropology as a separate branch of philosophy, and secondly, with a philosophical trend called “personalism.” This trend was neither uniform nor clearly defined. Some viewed it as a kind of protest against an incredible contempt for the human person which was so pervasive in twentieth century totalitarianisms. Some treated personalism as an intellectual and cultural movement which, analogically to

Renaissance humanism, was designed to focus general attention on the issue of the human person and his problems. Others noticed the possibility and, at the same time, the necessity to consider the whole reality from the perspective of the person and to treat the person as the starting point and the key to interpretation of any reality. This has given rise to personalistic systems which originated from the primary experience of personhood as the phenomenon directly given; then, in the light of this phenomenon, these systems formulated a universal and systematic explanation of different realms of being. Personhood appears here not only as the cognitive, methodological, and praxeological key, but it is also the principle of existence. As Czesław S. Bartnik puts it “not only the world of things but even God Himself could not exist nor could they be the object of cognition provided they were not personal.”¹

Nevertheless, the rise of personalistic systems has not proved to be powerful enough to bring the problem of person into the issues domineering contemporary philosophical and cultural reflection. The variety of attitudes, significant differences in the understanding of personhood, and consequently, mutually exclusive interpretations of different spheres of human life and activity, have caused the concept of person to be perceived as having little merit for cognition and even for ethics. Such perception of the concept of person has been quite considerably influenced by naturalism—so popular nowadays—which by program rejects any transcendental sphere in human being, having granted the right for scientific study of man mainly to naturalistic and evolutionary anthropology. Another factor which contributes to the diminishing and relativization of the concept of person is the fast-developing cultural and social anthropologies. These perspectives advocate conventional definitions of person, claiming that cultural variety does not justify any unanimous criteria of “being a person.” Also, certain difficulties stem from some sort of “confessionalization” of the

¹ Czesław S. Bartnik, *Szkice do systemu personalizmu* [Sketches for the System of Personalism] (Lublin 2006), 49.

issue of person. The religious origin of person means, in the opinion of some people, that this concept should not be used and explained outside a religious context. This is opposed by the view that because the concept of person comes from the Christian theological tradition, it cannot set up claims to universality. So introducing such concepts into contemporary cultural discourse which has “liberated” itself from religious determinants is just a “conceptual surplus” or “semantic abuse.” The above-mentioned difficulties contribute to gradual elimination of the category of person from both philosophical and cultural discourse. Some other concepts such as “personality,” “character,” “dignity,” “freedom,” “creativity,” “value,” “human rights” seem more adequate for describing humans.

Has personalism then become cognitively useless? Is the concept of person so “burdened” with the Christian tradition that it may not be used universally in a broader sense of describing all the richness of the reality called “human?” Are modern categories describing the specificity of man more primary than “person?” Do they not need justification by categories which stem from deeper layers of experience? How far can they be rationally systematized so that they could coherently describe and explain various realms of human existence and activity, avoiding, at the same time, all kinds of reductionism? And even if the category of person is allowed, is it not just one more anthropological category used as a certain linguistic convention? Similar questions may be asked about personalism. Is it not a purely cultural product? And is it not, just like other “isms,” a certain kind of narration which tries to describe reality in such a way so as to get its participant to acquire some habitual “linguistic behaviour” or “social practice” that would enable him to communicate well with other people and thus sustain the good communication necessary for the well-functioning and well-being

of society that, in turn, because of this becomes able to fulfil all needs of its members?²

I will try to show that the concept of person results from a philosophical reflection on human being and not only from a religious tradition, though, undoubtedly, the concept was discovered within Christianity. I will make an attempt to prove that this concept stems from fundamental human experience and this is why it is essential for discovering the basic characteristics of human being. Also, the concept of person allows one to grasp the specificity of man, placing him in the privileged position not only in the world of nature but also in society. In this light it will result that personalism is not just one of many “isms,” but it is a proposal of objectivistic interpretation of human fact. As such, personalism is universal and able to enter into dialogue with other conceptions of man. But first of all, so-defined personalism is not just a dry theory describing the specificity of human person and his position in the world; so-defined personalism is a matter of practical life whose focus is all spheres around a human person, treating him as the highest and the most valuable ontic formation in the order of nature.³ As a result, all the spheres of human acting should be governed by what is good for the person; in other words, these spheres should serve for a fulfilment of man in which he could fully realize his personhood.

Such an understanding of person and such a conception of personalism were exercised by two Polish philosophers: Karol Wojtyła and Mieczysław A. Krąpiec. Both of these men were the framers and the main representatives of the Lublin School of Philosophy. I will start to present their conceptions of personalism with an attempt to place Wojtyła and Krąpiec within the framework of the above mentioned types of personalism. Then at the beginning of the proper presentation of

² Richard Rorty, *Filozofia jako polityka kulturalna* [Philosophy as Cultural Politics: Philosophical Papers, Volume 4], Polish trans. B. Baran (Warszawa 2009), 59, 69, 126.

³ Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Metafizyka. Zarys teorii bytu* [Metaphysics—An Outline of the Theory of Being] (Lublin 1998), 325.

their conceptions I will ponder the problem of the cognition of man as personal being. Next I will talk about the issue which is fundamental to personalism, namely the specificity of personal being. I will of course finish with some conclusions. This presentation, for obvious reason, does not pretend to fully embrace the topic; it aims at making the reader aware of the main motives in the personalistic thought of the two aforementioned Polish philosophers.

Some Specific Features of Wojtyła's and Krąpiec's Personalisms

Karol Wojtyła (1920–2005) and Mieczysław A. Krąpiec (1921–2008) received philosophical formation in exactly the same historical context and largely under the influence of the same people. This was, for Poland, the time of the Second World War and the post-war period, when intellectual circles were not very numerous, not only because academic professors were massively killed during the war in Katyn, Siberia, and the German concentration camps, but also because Poland, until 1918, had been under a one hundred and twenty year subjugation divided between three neighboring countries and, consequently, education had been severely limited. Both Wojtyła and Krąpiec studied in Cracow, their thinking was shaped by Catholic thinkers. As kindred spirits in their views they quickly became cooperators at the Faculty of Philosophy in the Catholic University of Lublin (CUL), at that time the only university independent of communist ideology. Up to a point and in reaction to Marxism, they both developed realistic philosophy that was metaphysically oriented, focused on the problem of man, and explained different dimensions of man's life and acting. Krąpiec started with developing metaphysics and on the ground of metaphysics he formulated philosophical anthropology which, in turn, became the basis for a philosophy of cognition, philosophy of morality, law, culture,

politics, and art.⁴ Wojtyła, as the head of the Ethics Department at the CUL Faculty of Philosophy, was assigned the task of developing ethics. Next he underpinned his ethics with anthropology, claiming that it is impossible to deal with ethics without anthropological and metaphysical foundations.⁵

As I suggested, up to a certain degree, the personalistic thought of the two philosophers was developed in the act of protest against a Marxism which as a result of its collective orientation, violated human rights and the human dignity of an individual person in both theory and practice. But more than just a protest it was rather another philosophical proposal which, on the ground of realism, sought answers to fundamental questions concerning man and the world. The two philosopher's main objective was not to join some intellectual and cultural movement. They wanted to build solid theoretical foundations under the Christian and humanistic culture that suffered under Marxism's huge pressure, both intellectually and institutionally, not infrequently violently. For this very reason it is not quite accurate to view Wojtyła's and Krąpiec's philosophies as personalistic systems in the strict sense of the word. They did not build their philosophies around the notion of person, subordinating the whole structure of philosophy and the explanation of the whole being to the interpretation of person. Moreover, these philosophers broadly drew upon other philosophical currents, taking from all philosophical traditions everything that could enrich human cognition and lead to—more faithfully to experience and more systematically—a broad, adequate vision of the world, man, and God. Nevertheless, both philosophers' thought is thoroughly personalistic because the question of man is at the center and the unique value of the human person is explained and emphasized. Both philosophers' thought lays claim to complementarity in the sense that it views man in a broad context of the

⁴ For more extensive information, see *Encyklopedia Filozofii Polskiej* (Encyclopedia of Polish Philosophy) (Lublin 2011), vol. 1, 764–770.

⁵ See *id.*, vol. 2, 826–834.

world, society, and God; also, it takes into consideration the respective achievements of other currents of philosophy as well as theology and particular sciences. Both thinkers devoted much space to the person in their lifelong work. Let us mention their chief philosophical books on person: *Person and Act* by Wojtyła⁶ and *I-Man* by Krąpiec.⁷

Having sketched the broader context of both philosophers' thought, I will now touch upon the philosophical conditions that played a decisive role in the way they developed their conceptions of person and their theories of personalism. Of course, a comprehensive presentation of this problem would involve a separate lecture, so I will just limit myself to mentioning these philosophical conditions.

Firstly, their personalism is based on metaphysics, which means that it takes into account the whole of reality understood as the objective world, external to man and not being a construction of man's mind, the world whose unique and exceptional element is man.

Secondly, the philosophers presented here do not start from the position of skepticism, but in the very beginning they note and acknowledge man's ability to both cognize objective truth and to communicate it in universal categories as well as to verify it on the ground of experiential rational procedures.

Thirdly, they share a substantialist concept of person, which means that they acknowledge the existence of permanent identity and ontic continuity whose core is a substantial subject existing in himself and for himself.

Fourthly, they both acknowledge the existence of an objective human nature that determines the specific features of human being dis-

⁶ Here I refer to: Karol Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne* [Person and Act, and Other Studies in Anthropology] (Lublin 1994). Hereafter cited as: *Osoba i czyn*. In English, the *Person and Act* by Wojtyła is known as *The Acting Person*, trans. A. Potocki and ed. A.-T. Tymieniecka (Dordrecht 1979).

⁷ Here I refer to: Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Ja-człowiek* (Lublin 1991). For English translation, see *I-Man: An Outline of Philosophical Anthropology*, trans. M. Lescoe and others (New Britain 1983).

tinguishing man amongst other beings, especially in the aspect of acting.⁸ So conceived nature embraces what is common to all humans and makes them belong to the human species. This also defines what is specific to a concrete individual and constitutes the source of his specific individual actions. Thus human nature includes rationality, freedom, emotionality, subjectiveness, sexuality, social character, morality, creativity, and spirituality; such a nature, with all its components, enters, as its inseparable part, the conception of a personal human being.

Now after defining Wojtyła's and Krapiec's position within the framework of personalism and after outlining the main metaphysical assumptions of their personalism, we have come to the problem of cognition of man as a personal being.

The Cognition of Man as a Personal Being

On the background of metaphysical assumptions the cognition of man presents itself as transcending external perception and directing itself towards the inner dimension of man, towards his human psyche and consciousness. Analyzing the long tradition of strife between objectivism and subjectivism, both philosophers proclaim themselves in favor of the fundamental role of inner experience in the cognition of a human being as a person. Their analyses are, to a great extent, complementary because they view the same experience from different perspectives.

Karol Wojtyła starts from the experience which he labels as "the experience of man." He considers it the richest of all the experiences man has and, at the same time, the most complex. By the "experience of man" he means the cognitive contact that man has with himself; this experience is present in all other experiences of man, since "he never experiences anything beyond himself without having, at the same time,

⁸ See Juan M. Burgos, *Personalizm. Autorzy i tematy nowej filozofii* [Personalism. Authors and Themes of the New Philosophy], Polish trans. K. Koproński (Warszawa 2010), 162–172.

the experience of himself.”⁹ Although a man is for himself mostly “in-ner-ness,” he always experiences himself simultaneously both from the inside and from the outside, so it is impossible to separate the internal experience from the external experience and *vice versa*. In such a whole experience engaging a whole man he is given his own subjectiveness. Such experience embraces not only himself but also all the other people who are in direct cognitive contact with the man.¹⁰ According to Wojtyła, a special moment of the experience of man is man’s action understood as *actus humanus*, that is a conscious and volitional action, and not as *actus homini* (activation independent of consciousness and will). Man’s action (*actus humanus*) opens his subjectiveness to cognition. Also, through action man actualizes himself as a person, so action gives not only the best insight into man’s subjectiveness, but also into man as a person—into the inner ontic structure of personhood. So the object of experience is a dynamic correlation between a person and his action reflected in consciousness. In such experience the fact “man acts” is experienced consciously and sourcefully. The fact “man acts” reveals the basic personalistic value, that is the value of a person who performs volitional and conscious action. This is the starting point for Wojtyła’s analyses which consist in “studying action that reveals person” and aim at “a study of person through his action.” A person’s action is composed of some stable elements which can be grasped through induction and then through the procedure of reduction they can be reduced to what is basic or constitutes the ultimate reason for person and his action. So for objectivization of the experience of person and his action Wojtyła uses both phenomenological and metaphysical methods. The former serves as an exploitation of the content of the fact that “man acts,” the latter enables him to discover the ontic reasons by which a given fact is determined. The purpose of Wojtyła’s investigation is to find out what the efficacy of action consists in or, in other words, he

⁹ Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 51.

¹⁰ *Id.*, 10–11.

wants to discover the inner structure of the person who performs his action. The analysis of a person's actions allows one to discover three main moments of which the dynamics of person is composed. These are: transcendence, integration, and co-acting (participation). We will come back to these aspects while talking about the specificity of personal being as understood by Wojtyła.

Mieczysław A. Krąpiec sees experience a bit more strictly, connecting it with common-sense cognition in which one grasps the factuality (especially the existence) of concrete objects and oneself. He distinguishes between the outer and the inner layer of experience emphasizing that cognizing oneself is the only moment when those two aspects of experience overlap. However, it is necessary to distinguish between them because of the different kinds of perception involved in each of them. Additionally, the distinction of those two aspects of experience make the cognition of a human being more valuable, because personal being as subject is revealed in two ways: from the inside and from the outside. Following common sense, Krąpiec emphasizes that already in the outer experience man-subject is revealed together with his specificity among other beings. This specificity is indicated by creating tools whose purpose goes beyond biology, by language, culture, conceptual cognition, apparently useless contemplative cognition, reflective cognition, decision-making, etc. But it is the inner experience that Krąpiec values even more. In the inner experience man experiences himself directly as the subject of his own actions. In the human action "I" is disclosed as the subject different from his actions which he views as his own ("my own"). "I" is always immanent in relation to what is "mine." "My" acting does not come from outside, it is "I" who is the author of it: "I" cognize, "I" feel, etc.; "I" is the only subject of my actions. Beside immanence a man experiences the transcendence of his "I" over his particular "my acts." "I" is never "used up" in any of those acts, "I" is always much more than the acting as such. "I never experience myself—writes Krąpiec—as the 'sum' of my actions, I never un-

derstand myself as the one who identifies oneself with the content of my actions . . . I never see myself, never experience myself, neither understand myself in the mode of understanding things.”¹¹ Experiencing his own “I” (his “self”), a man experiences, at the same time, the primacy of the “I’s” existence as subject over the essence of his being. This is because the cognitive experience of existence is the most basic act in our cognition. This experience expresses itself in double affirmation: the affirmation of the existence of things around me and the affirmation of the existence of my “self” as the subject of my actions. This double affirmation of the existence of “the world as the object of my actions and the existence of myself gives me the right to understand person as ‘I’ endowed with the rational nature.”¹² In transcendence and in immanence of “I” over “mine” the rationality of man is disclosed because its first sign is the ability to call myself “I.” While existence is given to man primarily and directly, he cognizes his nature only indirectly through his actions. Experiencing the immanence and the transcendence of his “I,” man perceives the identity of his own subjectiveness as the only source of heterogenic acts (physiological, psychological, spiritual). Krąpiec recalls here a significant text by St. Thomas Aquinas: “Everyone experiences himself that he exists as the one who understands . . . one and the same man is he who conceives of himself that he understands and feels; and it is impossible to feel without the body.”¹³ Both the experience of the relation “I”–“mine” and the experience of the identity of man-subject needs explanation. His metaphysical approach to problems makes Krąpiec look for the ultimate objective reasons for the experienced facts. The same applies to external experience and, in the face of these, “the human fact” demands explanation.

¹¹ Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Człowiek jako osoba* [Man as Person] (Lublin 2005), 121.

¹² Id.

¹³ “Experitur enim unusquisque seipsum esse, qui intelligit . . . ipse idem homo est, qui precipit se et intelligere et sentire, sentire autem non est sine corpore” (S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Summa theologiae*, cura et studio P. Caramello, vol. 1 (Torino 1963), p. I, q. 76, a. 1).

The key to understanding the human fact is the analysis of “my” acts through which we can discover the nature of personal being, showing itself, above all, in subjectiveness, rationality, and transcendence. To Krąpiec’s mind, without embracing those matters one cannot objectivize the specificity of the human person.

The Specificity of Man as Personal Being According to Wojtyła

The original contribution of Wojtyła to the concept of person is that he sees the specificity of man as a personal being in “performing action” (*actus humanus*), which reveals the whole ontic content of personal human being. Exclusively through the analysis of performing action, it is possible to reach ontic structures conditioning the efficacy of action. The primary question is the question about the source of the efficacy of action thanks to which action is experienced in one’s consciousness as action and as one’s own. What is at stake is efficacy in its basic intransitive meaning through which a human subject becomes simultaneously a human “I.” One’s consciousness, through cognitive acts, accompanies one’s action as well as through the acts of self-cognition, reflects the action and, in this way, objectivizes it. Thus in one’s consciousness the synthesis of one’s subjectiveness and one’s efficacy takes place. Through the *operari* characteristic of man, on the ground of the *suppositum*, human “I” is revealed and, at the same time, constituted by the *operari*. The analysis of human action from the perspective of consciousness and experience leads to understanding man-subject in the sense of the concrete and the unique “I.”¹⁴ “It is the mode of specifically human *operari* called ‘human action’ that—as says Wojtyła—has basic and essential significance for the cognition of the subjectiveness of man-person.”¹⁵ The specific and rich structure of the

¹⁴ Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 382.

¹⁵ *Id.*, 383.

personal subjectiveness of man is revealed through a thorough and all-embracing analysis of human action. In other words, in order to fully understand and objectivize person, we must penetrate thoroughly and comprehensively into his proper *operari*. A specific bond of person's action to person-subject is the key to understanding person and his personhood. This character of this bond discloses itself as transcendence, integration, and co-acting. Those very moments bring out man's inherent personal subjectiveness together with the ontic structure of his personhood. Let us comment briefly upon each of these moments.

Wojtyła deals basically with the aspect of transcendence that decides human action and, whereby, constitutes personhood. He omits transcendence in the metaphysical sense, that is, in the sense of the most universal sphere of being, namely, transcendental features of being. He first of all seeks the source of a person's transcendence in the acts of will which are decisive for the inner structure of person. The chief structural moment in which the above-mentioned transcendence is revealed is defined by Wojtyła as "self-governance." It consists in determining oneself to act or, in other words, in freedom understood as self-determination. According to Wojtyła, this is the basic understanding of freedom, different from the freedom which is the feature of the faculty of will called the "freedom of choice." This phenomenological explication of the experience of self-governance allowed Wojtyła to discover structural elements of a person's will in which will has different functions. Those elements are called by Wojtyła "self-owning" and "self-ruling," since a person is "the one who owns oneself and, at the same time, the one who is owned exclusively by oneself" as well as "the one who rules oneself and, at the same time, the one who is ruled by oneself."¹⁶ These ontic structures make self-governance possible because one can govern oneself only if one "owns oneself" and, in turn, one can only own what one rules over. In the case of self-owning the will appears as the feature of person while in the case of self-ruling the

¹⁶ Id., 152.

will fulfills the function of the faculty which is employed by a person to serve himself. Both aspects constitute the moment of self-governing decision—"I want"—in which a man determines himself to undertake a specific action. Therefore free choice is not only an intentional act but, first of all, it is an act of self-governance assuming the awareness of who one is and the disposition of the will to choose the value which is proportional to that awareness. In this way freedom, according to Wojtyła, reveals the spirituality of man which, thus conceived, does not have to be defined merely as the opposite to materiality.¹⁷

So freedom in the sense of self-governance is the source of a person's dynamism. The basis of so-conceived freedom is the dependence on one's own "I." This dependence is the condition for the experience of efficacy. The superiority of "I" over one's own dynamism is called by Wojtyła "vertical transcendence," which is the proper transcendence of person over his action. This vertical transcendence is distinguished from a horizontal transcendence which has an intentional character and consists in transcending a person-subject's borders and going out horizontally towards objects in the acts of cognizing and wanting them.¹⁸ Self-governance, due to its vertical transcendence, reveals an autonomy of person that radically distinguishes him from all natural beings. This means that personal being does not realize himself exclusively through a "reactive" dynamism, that is, through activations resulting from vegetative or emotive potentialities. This means that a personal being, first of all, realizes himself through the dynamism of a will which comes from a person as such and consists in "being-from-himself" and "belonging-to-himself." That is why, according to Wojtyła, transcendence is the second name of person.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ignacy Dec, *Transcendencja człowieka w przyrodzie. Ujęcie Mieczysława A. Krąpca OP i kard. Karola Wojtyły* [The Transcendence of Man in the Nature. An Approach of Mieczysław A. Krąpiec and Krol Wojtyła] (Wrocław 2011), 213.

¹⁸ Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 123.

¹⁹ Id., 15.

The dynamism of performing action by a person involves a motivation which is constituted by a value perceived by the person as an objective good. An “I want” (or “I don’t want”) act appears here as a free response to the value which is defined by the truth about its goodness that indicates the will’s dependence on the truth which is external to the will. Because of this, performing action always has a moral aspect where a crucial role is played by conscience, whose role is to show the dependence of action on the truth. In this way, value passes into shouldness and shouldness, in turn, passes into responsibility. On such a basis Wojtyła claims that man as a person inheres within the realm of responsibility in an essential way and he must always feel responsible “for”—of course each time differently—and, ultimately, he is responsible for the moral value of his own “I,” for actualizing and realizing it according to the measure of his existence and his essence.²⁰ Therefore, performing action is strictly connected with fulfilling oneself as a human being who, through his actions, realizes his potentialities, aiming at happy serenity.²¹ This means that man cannot develop his personal potentialities without freedom. Man’s fulfillment through performing (fulfilling) actions is accompanied by another feature characteristic of the strict connection between person and his act that is the integration of person in his action.

Whereas the efficacy of action reveals transcendence, the subjectiveness reveals its integration. Integration first occurs within the realm of person and his action where the action is not a simple sum of dynamisms, but the effect of self-governance; then integration happens in the psychical and somatic spheres. Integration basically means that a person subordinates to his self-governance both the sphere of his psyche and the sphere of his somatics. Therefore integration consists in

²⁰ *Id.*, 214–215.

²¹ In Polish there is the same word “spełniać” for “performing” action and “fulfilling” oneself; so there is a natural immediate connection between “fulfilling [performing] action” and “fulfilling oneself.”

actualizing one's wholeness and oneness which pass from person and his action into the sphere of psyche and somatics. As for the psyche, Wojtyła attaches a particular importance to emotiveness which is mainly expressed in one's sensitivity to values. On the basis of various emotional forms such as desire, arousal, being moved, or affectionate, one's psychic subjectiveness is created. It is the result of the integration of different areas of emotiveness conditioned, ultimately, by the strict connection between person and his action in the act of self-governance. As far as somatics is concerned, the integration causes the body together with its inherent drives and reactivity to become the expression of the person himself. So, as we see, the integration of person in his action is, for Wojtyła, the key to understanding the psychosomatic unity of man.²²

Another moment which reveals the connection between person and his action is the co-acting of persons or, in Wojtyła's words, participation. Participation is such a feature "whose power causes a man—who exists and acts together with others that is in different configurations of inter-human or social relations—to be able to be himself and fulfill himself."²³ Thus participation is about such forms of social life which can be formed thanks to the transcendence and the integration of person in his action. Those forms are labeled as "personalism" by Wojtyła in contrast to individualism and collectivism. The latter actually lead to the alienation of person (the opposite to participation). Within the framework of personalism it is the common good that makes the basis for community. Only thanks to transcendence and integration authentic attitudes are possible and in having authentic attitudes a person is able to recognize the common good and accept it as his own. In this way the need for love arises in man. This need for love does not exhaust itself in relation to his own self, neither does it exhaust itself in

²² Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 236

²³ Karol Wojtyła, *Osoba: podmiot i wspólnota* [Person—the Subject and the Community], in Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 393.

relation to the dearest ones; it acquires the universal character of loving another person just because he is a human person. This fully corresponds to Wojtyła's theory of morality based on the personalistic norm which proclaims that "a person is such a being towards whom the only proper and fully valuable relation is love."²⁴ According to Wojtyła, love means "firstly to notice a person and what is good for him and, secondly, transcend one's own egoism and direct oneself towards another man."²⁵

On the basis of what has been said so far about Wojtyła's concept of person, we may define a person as a substantial being existing by itself and for itself in both the subjective and the objective sense, spiritual and material, rational and free, realizing himself both within himself and in community with others, fulfilling himself in acting and efficacy.²⁶

Specificity of Man as Personal Being According to Krąpiec

As we said, according to Krąpiec, the specificity of personal being manifests itself mainly in subjectiveness, rational nature, and transcendence. Let us have a look at how Krąpiec tries to deepen the understanding of this characteristic of human person.

Emphasizing the relation of "I" towards "mine," Krąpiec undertakes the question of man as a subject who is revealed by actions coming from him. The character of those actions, just like a mask (*prosopon*) in a Greek theatre, shows the character of the man-subject who is their source. Man's subjectiveness is strictly connected to his substantiality which, except for a concrete existence in itself, is rational. As Boetius defined it *persona est individua substantia rationalis naturae*.

²⁴ Karol Wojtyła, *Miłość i odpowiedzialność* [Love and Responsibility] (Lublin 1986), 42.

²⁵ *Id.*, 33.

²⁶ See Czesław S. Bartnik, *Personalizm* [Personalism] (Lublin 2008), 85.

When we analyze the manifestations of man's rationality, especially their irreducibility to pure materiality, we must pose a question about the nature of man-subject. Besides traditional pointing out to the composition of a substantial human being from soul and body, where a soul is a substantial form of the body and determines essential features of *compositum humanum*, Krąpiec deals with a problem which, according to him, is more basic for the understanding of human subjectiveness, namely, the problem of man's existence (*esse*). If soul explains the unity and the identity of a subject and the strict connection between the acts emanated by him, what then explains the very existence of the subject and the specificity of this existence? Standing on the ground of a metaphysical theory which stresses the primacy of existence (*esse*) in the structure of being, Krąpiec claims that soul as a substantial form of the body must, at the same time, be the act of existence of the human being, in accordance with St Thomas Aquinas' intuition that "the substantial form gives being absolutely."²⁷ For this reason soul, relating to the body as an act towards potency, defines the way man-subject exists. But then a question arises: Is man's existence subjected in the whole psycho-physical subject or is it only subjected in the soul as the subject existing in itself? If man's existence is subjected in the psycho-physical subject, and not in the soul itself, then how could we explain the transcendence of such acts as cognition and love? When acting is the prolongation of existing, then here in the case of those acts acting would be ontically higher than the mode of human existence. Yet the being that has material structure cannot be the cause of the act of immaterial structure. For this reason we must assert that soul as the proper source of human acting may exist in itself as the subject, which means that some form of substantiality must be attached to it. If then a soul is the subject of existence it cannot exist with the potentiality of matter, it must have its own existence whose contingency demands an explanation by showing the ultimate cause of existence. To Krąpiec's mind, the only non-

²⁷ "Forma autem substantialis dat esse simpliciter" (*Summa theologiae*, p. I, q. 76, a. 4).

contradictory explanation of the genesis of the soul is pointing out the common cause of all being, that is, the Absolute Being.²⁸

The body, in addition, is in a sense “owned” by soul, it is the primary “mine,” but on the other hand, this very statement assumes the mediation of the body indicating the inseparable unity of the two elements: for, ultimately, the body and the soul are a substantial unity at the fundament of which there is one act of existence, that is, the soul. This is the only way one can explain the oneness of a human being as well as the experience of this oneness in performing various actions. So there is one existence for a human being and as such it cannot be subjected in many heterogenic elements. For Krąpiec, it is clear that a man exists with the existence of his soul though as man-subject he possesses a carnal-and-spiritual nature.²⁹ It means that at the basis of viewing man as a personal being there lies the fact of the existence of the soul since a man is a substance because of the act of existence. So a human person possesses a spiritual way of existence which distinguishes him among all other natural beings. He is, as Thomas Aquinas says, “the one who is the most perfect in the order of nature.”³⁰ But above all he is a “self-existing ‘I’-subject.”

As such the ontic structure of a human person allows one to understand his dynamism. Analyzing this problem, Krąpiec refers to the notion of a rational nature which he re-interpretes in his own way. Originally the notion of a rational nature was linked to substantiality and it was explained with the help of such notions as essence, matter, form, or accidents. However, according to Krąpiec, none of those notions explain an element constitutive for personhood, though, in spite of that, for ages they tried to connect person with some ontic content having some kind of oneness. Most often it was oneness resulting from

²⁸ Krąpiec, *Człowiek jako osoba*, 18.

²⁹ *Id.*, 19–20.

³⁰ “[P]ersona significant id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura” (*Summa theologiae*, p. I, q. 29, a. 3).

belonging to one species. Ontic self-containment and a subject's completeness within the framework of rational nature defined the specificity of a personal being, which was expressed in Boetius' definition.

In modern times the problem of personal being is closely connected with the consciousness which constitutes the essence of such being. In Krąpiec's view, we can find a much better solution in St. Thomas Aquinas' thought, although this solution was not given any notice by later Thomistic schools; what Krąpiec means here is that only this element of rational being constitutes a person which constitutes being and this is one individual existence of this one concrete rational nature.³¹ So if the act of existence actualizes rational nature, then it also determines its specificity. And because soul is the act of existence of a human being, it is the soul that determines the specificity of both rational nature and the personal being. In this light a man is a "self-existing" personal being who is consciously experienced as an "I-subject" that organizes for himself his individual nature through emanating from himself both spiritual and physiological acts which are "my acts" endowed with the content given by "I."³² Although spiritual acts are not "more mine," it is them that shape "individual 'nature' as the permanent source of determined acting having definite personal features."³³

So human nature is not the result of organizing matter, but "the organization of human matter is an essential, formal function of a self-existing soul that in spiritual and bodily acts expresses oneself as a self-existing 'I-subject' vivifying all the material elements and calling them into existence."³⁴ This does not of course exclude purely biological elements, though in the situation of personal nature's self-realization

³¹ Krąpiec, *Ja-człowiek*, 404.

³² *Id.*, 415.

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ *Id.*, 416.

these elements are, up to a certain degree, subordinated to “the laws of spirit.”

For showing more fully the connection of I-subject with an individual nature, Krąpiec introduces a notion of potentiality which is necessary for explaining the subject’s dynamism. This dynamism is realized according to the dispositions inhering in nature and determined by the principle which founds existence, namely by the soul. Dispositions reveal the dynamism of the self-existing “I” manifested, first of all, in the acts which transcend matter. For, in spite of the fact that those acts are connected with matter, it is impossible to conceive of them quantitatively—to measure them or define them in terms of time and space, which points out to their transcendence. These are such acts as intellectual cognition, love, decision, or creating. It is these kinds of acts that make up human activity, its external expression is culture created by man. Thus the purpose of culture is to create conditions for realizing and perfecting personal acts. A special attention is attached by Krąpiec to the acts of decision in which the connection between “I” and what is “mine” is most fully revealed, since it is through one’s decision that actually what is “mine” constitutes itself as a new being for the existence of which I am responsible. Thus person is a self-existing “I,” conscious of his acts, forming for himself the concrete individual source of rational acting. Having such a source, acts performed by a person show the transcendence of the person over the surrounding reality, since a person is the only being who self-determines (determines himself) and who constitutes his own “individual nature.”³⁵ That is why the conception of person must be complemented by showing his transcendence.

Krąpiec sees two kinds of person’s transcendence: over the world of nature and over society. The first form of transcendence is manifested in such personal qualities as intellectual cognition, freedom and love. These qualities are closely inter-related and they determine one

³⁵ Id.

another.³⁶ The synthesis of these acts makes one talk about oneself as “I” and experience oneself as a real subject of one’s acting. Transcendence is also indicated by religious acts which in the whole order of nature are characteristic only of man. Thanks to cognition, love, and the acts of decision, man enters relationships with other people and then such his qualities are revealed that indicate his transcendence over society. These qualities, as the subjectiveness in relation to the law, completeness and dignity, are strictly connected with the ones previously mentioned and all of them condition one another.³⁷ Thus only through an act of decision a person can accept a norm of the law as his own and make it the norm of his own actions. Otherwise the law binds man as an object in the mode of forcing him instead of being rationally and freely accepted by him as the law binding him in his conscience. This, however, assumes the necessity to distinguish between natural law and positive law, because it is exclusively the former that is the object of inner obligation to realize what is good for man. That obligation results from interpersonal relationships. Only when related to the natural law, the proclaimed law becomes a common good. The completeness of person, which is another factor contributing to the primacy of person over society, means that thanks to a unique and unrepeatable personal existence, a concrete person is a fuller form of being than society; this does not change the fact that society is the only guarantee of the personal development of man. Mutual subordination of a person and society is special and unique because it goes along the plane of actions which transcend the world of nature. Consequently, as Krąpiec put it, “the better is a society—that is the organization of various interpersonal relationships—the more it enhances personal development of man.”³⁸ Dignity

³⁶ As a result “man’s personal cognition is specific, because it is free, selective, emanated under the influence of love. Personal love is a spiritual love characterized by rational willing and freedom. Freedom is also rational, directed by rational will that is a responsible love” (Krąpiec, *Człowiek jako osoba*, 129).

³⁷ *Id.*, 130.

³⁸ *Id.*, 131.

of person means placing personal human being in the highest position in the hierarchy of beings on the basis of his way of being that transcends the world of nature and indicates his relationship with the Personal Absolute. It is exactly for this reason why a human person, as I. Kant noticed, should be the end in itself and never a means. The culture that overlooks or hinders the growth of people's personal qualities is, *de facto*, a defective culture and, in extreme cases, even anti-culture.

In the light of what has been said, according to Krąpiec, a human person is an ultimate spiritual and material subject of a human being's existence and of all his actions and, also, he is the basis of his dignity and his rights.

Conclusions

The conceptions of person, sketched above, were the basis for philosophical anthropology, developed by Karol Wojtyła and Mieczysław A. Krąpiec whose ambition was to find a solid theoretical fundament for Christian and humanistic culture. This was the reason why their anthropology sought grounding in metaphysics on the one hand and, on the other hand, it was opened to investigating all crucial spheres of human life in both its individual and social dimensions. Wojtyła studied the problem of man's morality, anthropological basis for community and social life, the meaning of love and human body; all of these problems found their fullest expression in his papal teaching in which it would be difficult even to count the topics linked to human person. In the case of Krąpiec, his anthropological reflection on human person included in fact all the main areas of human acting, being focused on the four primary branches of culture: human cognition, morality, art, and religion. So the efforts of the two Polish thinkers led to a personalistic—broadly conceived—thought that may be labeled as integral personalism. In conclusion and to sum up this article, I would like to note general features of such a personalism, both in the aspect of the research method and in the aspect of the achieved results.

First, this conception of personalism comes from experience and it seeks verification in experience; it does not accept any a priori explanations or theses, though it does not shy away from drawing upon different branches of knowledge in its attempts to broaden experience, being aware that not everything is given to immediate experiential perception. With this, knowledge based on experience expands, in turn, the scope of experience. In the interpretation of experience a crucial role is played by systematic explanation which reflects the systematicity of beings and this is why cognition of person is being carried out both in relation to society and in relation to other beings.

Second, Wojtyła's and Krąpiec's personalism wants to draw on the whole philosophical tradition, taking into account, at the same time, the findings of different sciences of man or humanities which broaden the experience of man or contribute something to the interpretation of experience. Both philosophers' achievements include, among other things, deepening many classical notions such as person, man-subject, substance, nature, innerness, consciousness, freedom, love, relation, common good, carnality, sexuality, etc.

Third, bringing together genetic empiricism and methodical rationalism, the two Polish philosophers were able to avoid radicalism in the explanation of man, making a successful attempt to join in a complementary way these aspects of personal human being which carry some opposition. The list of these opposition-laden aspects reconciled by Wojtyła and Krąpiec is long, here are some of the most significant ones: person–nature, somatics–psyche, substance–self, carnality–spirituality, an individual man–society, rationality–emotionality, morality–law, subject–object, innerness–outerness, etc.

Fourth, their conception of person does not bear any traces of antagonism since it is not directed against anyone. In the light of this conception every human person has a character of the honest good which is the unconditional good, that is the highest and the ultimate good not competing with the value of anything else. That good is always the end

in itself and as such it has always a character of the common good, so the realization of this good never leads to the alienation of any human person.

Fifth, Karol Wojtyła and Mieczysław A. Krąpiec proved that the conception of human person lies at the basis of understanding society, culture, ethics, law, politics, economy, art, and even religion. Therefore, in their opinion, the spirit of personalism should penetrate all realms of human life in order to serve and enhance the integral development and self-fulfillment of person. Otherwise, when person is not granted the highest value in the natural order, the above-mentioned realms become anti-personalistic. The effects of this are not only theoretical, but also practical. When society is understood in an either collectivistic or individualistic manner, culture is deprived of any criteria, so no matter what man does becomes culture; ethics is deprived of any objective and universal norms, so it gives way to technology; law becomes the result of the power-games between influential interest groups; politics is reduced to the battle for power; economy is exclusively oriented towards financial profit which becomes the only measure of human work and labor; and religion which disregards the personal goodness of a human being is nothing but ideology serving the purposes of politics. Wojtyła and Krąpiec knew all too well from their own experience about these kinds of abusing man, because as members of the Polish nation they were witnesses to radical anti-personalism during the Second World War and then in the long communist period after the war. So their theoretical reflection deserves careful attention because it was, in a way, verified by practice. All in all thanks to sticking closely to experience as well as rational systematicity and drawing upon the most enduring philosophical traditions, their conception of person and personalism can be a good inspiration for contemporary man to seek answers to his most significant and urgent questions.

**PERSONALISM IN THE LUBLIN SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY
(CARD. KAROL WOJTYŁA, FR. MIECZYŚLAW A. KRĄPIEC)**

SUMMARY

The article presents the conception of personalism and the understanding of human person developed by two Polish philosophers: Karol Wojtyła and Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, the framers and the main representatives of the Lublin School of Philosophy. The author comes to the following conclusions: (1) Wojtyła's and Krąpiec's conception of personalism comes from experience and seeks verification in experience; it does not accept any a priori explanations or theses, though it does not shy away from drawing upon different branches of knowledge in its attempts to broaden experience, being aware that not everything is given to immediate experiential perception; (2) Wojtyła's and Krąpiec's personalism wants to draw on the whole philosophical tradition, taking into account, at the same time, the findings of different sciences of man or humanities which broaden the experience of man or contribute something to the interpretation of experience; (3) bringing together genetic empiricism and methodical rationalism, Wojtyła and Krąpiec are able to avoid radicalism in the explanation of man, making a successful attempt to join in a complementary way these aspects of personal human being which carry some opposition; (4) Wojtyła's and Krąpiec's conception of person does not bear any traces of antagonism since it is not directed against anyone; in the light of this conception every human person has a character of the honest good which is the unconditional good, that is the highest and the ultimate good not competing with the value of anything else; (5) Wojtyła and Krąpiec prove that the conception of human person lies at the basis of understanding society, culture, ethics, law, politics, economy, art, and even religion.

KEYWORDS: Lublin School of Philosophy, Karol Wojtyła, Mieczysław Krąpiec, personalism, philosophy, metaphysics, person, man, experience, nature, culture.